

Wednesday 18 November 2020

Updated advice on mouth and nose coverings for schools and colleges

From today, older students in schools and colleges will be advised to wear mouth and nose coverings when they are moving around communal indoor areas.

The guidance will apply to students in Years 11, 12 and 13 and above who are attending further and higher education. The guidance will apply when they are moving around indoor communal areas. Students will not be required to wear mouth and nose coverings in their classroom, or in outdoors communal areas.

Teachers, staff and adult visitors to schools are also being advised to wear a face shield or mouth and nose covering when teaching indoors or moving around indoor communal areas.

The advice has been issued following a recommendation from the Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell (STAC), in response to the increase in cases among older students.

Some children (and adults) will be exempt from the advice. This includes:

- People who cannot put on, wear, or remove a mouth and nose covering because of a physical or mental illness, impairment or disability
- People who would experience severe distress putting on, wearing, or removing a mouth and nose covering
- People who are speaking to, or assisting, someone who relies on lip-reading, clear sound, or clear facial expressions to communicate

Exemption cards will be available from the school for both members of staff and pupils. These can be applied through via the school office. Parents and students should contact schools directly with any questions about exception cards.

Deputy Medical Officer of Health, Dr Ivan Muscat, said: "Mouth and nose coverings - including cloth masks, disposable masks, and clear face shields - can help prevent the transmission of respiratory droplets, and help prevent the transmission of COVID-19.

“While there is growing evidence that younger children are not super-spreaders, the risk of transmission is greater in older children and young adults which explains why we have limited face coverings to this group.”

Minister for Education, Senator Tracey Vallois, said: “When we made the decision to re-open schools in early June, I was clear that the safety of students, staff, and their families was our priority.

“As the COVID-19 situation is changing, so is the guidance we are issuing. Along with the Deputy Medical Officer of Health, I have already written to parents and schools to explain the new measures.

“This new advice will help keep our schools safe, without disrupting the teaching and learning experience.”

- ends -

Notes to Editors

1. For further information, please contact the press office on 01534 440430 or pressoffice@gov.je
2. Staff, students and visitors can use a clear face shield can be used if a cloth mask would cause distress or discomfort, or cause health issues.