



# St. Julie's Catholic High School

Headteacher: Mr. T. Alderman

*"Serve the good God well with much liberty of spirit"*

17 September 2020

## Requirement to wear face masks in school

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to you because Liverpool is experiencing a large surge in cases of COVID-19. On 16 September Liverpool City Council published their COVID Report, covering data from 7 to 13 September. Within the report it states that, on 1 September, Liverpool recorded 94 cases in the previous week. That increased to 283 the following week and 530 in the last 7 days, a five-fold increase in 2 weeks. Liverpool has been placed on the government watch list because cases have risen above 75 per 100,000 of population, but it has now risen above 100 to 106.4 cases per 100,000 population. This is the trigger for additional measures in the city to reduce incidence of COVID-19. As such, we are writing to parents and carers to advise that **school requires all students, staff and visitors to wear face coverings, from entering the school building, along corridors and in communal areas.** This is to reduce the risk of spreading the virus and reduce the risk of cross contaminating bubbles.

Since school opened fully on 1 September 2020 we have recommended the use of face coverings. This is so that staff, students and visitors acknowledge and demonstrate their collective responsibility to protect themselves and others. Regardless of an individual's beliefs about the use of face coverings, schools must follow government guidance, which is highlighted in the extracts below this letter. School is tasked with a duty to keep children, staff and visitors as safe as possible.

What we ask of you now is that you speak with your daughters and sons and ensure they understand that face coverings must be worn as described in school, as well as in the wider community such as in shops and on public transport, as part of their collective responsibility. Nobody wishes to see further illness, suffering and the loss of family members and loved ones. We have seen enough and we can all play our part in preventing further misery in our communities.

Please be assured that we will continue to follow the school risk assessment for COVID-19, which can be viewed on the parent section of the school website. School is thoroughly cleaned before, throughout and at the end of the day by a team of premises staff, with an extra focus on frequently touched surfaces. Automatic hand sanitiser stations are located on all corridors around school, 30 in total, as well as stations in classrooms and toilets. Year group bubbles are working well and students are remaining in their zones for the vast majority of time. Extra lunch slots, assembly points and designated routes have helped social distancing. If you have any questions you can post them via the feedback form on the website.

Thank you for all your support and positive messages since the start of term and best wishes for the term ahead.

Mr T Alderman  
Head teacher



## **The reason for using face coverings**

Coronavirus (COVID-19) usually spreads by droplets from coughs, sneezes and speaking. These droplets can also be picked up from surfaces, if you touch a surface and then your face without washing your hands first. This is why social distancing, regular hand hygiene, and covering coughs and sneezes is so important in controlling the spread of the virus. The best available scientific evidence is that, when used correctly, wearing a face covering may reduce the spread of coronavirus droplets in certain circumstances, helping to protect others. Because face coverings are mainly intended to protect others, not the wearer, from coronavirus (COVID-19) they are not a replacement for social distancing and regular hand washing.

The government is not recommending universal use of face coverings in all schools. Schools that teach children in years 7 and above and which are not under specific local restriction measures will have the discretion to require face coverings for pupils, staff and visitors in areas outside the classroom where social distancing cannot easily be maintained, such as corridors and communal areas and it has been deemed appropriate in those circumstances. In particular, schools that teach years 7 and above may decide to recommend the wearing of face coverings for pupils, staff or visitors in communal areas outside the classroom where the layout of the schools makes it difficult to maintain social distancing when staff and pupils are moving around the premises, for example, corridors.

**St Julie's Catholic High School requires all students, staff and visitors to wear face coverings in corridors and communal areas.**

## **Where local restrictions apply**

In areas where local lockdowns or restrictions are in place, face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils (in years 7 and above) in areas outside classrooms when moving around communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain such as corridors. In the event of new local restrictions being imposed, schools will need to communicate quickly and clearly to staff, parents, pupils that the new arrangements require the use of face coverings in certain circumstances.

## **Access to face coverings**

**It is reasonable to assume that staff and young people will now have access to face coverings** due to their increasing use in wider society, and Public Health England has made available resources on how to make a simple face covering. **Face coverings are compulsory on public transport.**

Safe wearing of face coverings requires cleaning of hands before and after touching – including to remove or put them on – and the safe storage of them in individual, sealable plastic bags between use. Where a face covering becomes damp, it should not be worn and the face covering should be replaced carefully.

Pupils must be instructed not to touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing it and they must dispose of temporary face coverings in a 'black bag' waste bin (not recycling bin) or place reusable face coverings in a plastic bag they can take home with them, and then wash their hands again before heading to their classroom.

## **How to wear a face covering**

### **A face covering should:**

- cover your nose and mouth while allowing you to breathe comfortably
- fit comfortably but securely against the side of the face
- be secured to the head with ties or ear loops
- be made of a material that you find to be comfortable and breathable, such as cotton
- ideally include at least two layers of fabric (the World Health Organisation recommends three depending on the fabric used)

- unless disposable, it should be able to be washed with other items of laundry according to fabric washing instructions and dried without causing the face covering to be damaged

**When wearing a face covering you should:**

- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on
- avoid wearing on your neck or forehead
- avoid touching the part of the face covering in contact with your mouth and nose, as it could be contaminated with the virus
- change the face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it
- avoid taking it off and putting it back on a lot in quick succession (for example, when leaving and entering shops on a high street)

**When removing a face covering:**

- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before removing
- only handle the straps, ties or clips
- do not give it to someone else to use
- if single-use, dispose of it carefully in a residual waste bin and do not recycle
- if reusable, wash it in line with manufacturer's instructions at the highest temperature appropriate for the fabric
- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser once removed

**This information has been sourced from two documents:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>