



September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

We are looking forward to welcoming your son/daughter to Washington Academy for the new academic year.

The safety of our entire school and wider community is at the centre of everything we do. Over the recent week, there have been a number of changes to the government's information and guidance to schools regarding face coverings. We anticipate that in the coming months, we may receive more information at short notice, which will of course respond to, and communicate with you.

Government guidance now requires the use of face masks/coverings in schools in a local lockdown area. At this point in time, this does not apply to us. However, the scientific benefits of wearing a face mask, when social distancing cannot easily be maintained are clear – they help to cut transmission rates. Our Trust has made the decision, across all its eight schools to request that students and staff wear face coverings when in corridors or communal areas. If there is a specific medical reason why this cannot apply to your child, we ask that you contact their Year Leader to discuss the matter.

Students will not be asked to wear a face coverings in classrooms, unless there were a specified medical reason. Should this apply to your child, please contact their Year Leader.

Students will be allowed to wear their own face masks, but they should be plain in colour. School will provide reusable masks for those students that do not have their own. They will then be responsible for ensuring that their mask is washed and brought into school.

In school, we will be showing students how to safely wear their face mask, we will also be show them a [video](#) from the World Health Organisation on how to wear a face mask. You may wish to watch this with them yourself.

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 the mask in an individual, sealable plastic bags between uses. Where a face covering becomes damp, it should not be worn and the face covering should be replaced carefully. Students must not touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing it and they must dispose of temporary face coverings in a 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.

We understand that this change in procedure and protocol has come at short notice, but we feel that it is prudent to respond to guidance quickly. Should you have any further questions, please can you contact your child's Year Leader.

Many thanks for your continued support

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Hamilton
Headteacher