

Wearing a mask: information for young people in secondary schools and colleges in Wales

Your school or college has been working hard all summer to make it safe for you to return for the new term. Lots of things will be in place to stop the spread of Covid-19. This includes places to wash your hands regularly, hand sanitiser and new rules to stop people getting too close together or mixing in big crowds.

Because of new advice, some secondary schools will be asking pupils to wear masks some of the time. This might be on the school bus and in corridors. Your school should get in touch with everything you need to know about this.

Information about Covid-19 is changing every day, and the latest scientific advice was updated just before the school terms restarts. Some schools and colleges will want to talk to teachers, parents and, most importantly, pupils next week about the best rules for their learners. This means that things could change when you go back to school or college. Your school or college should be involving you in these decisions and making sure you have the right information.

All colleges have agreed the [same rules](#). Your college will let you know what they are, but most students will need a mask for college.

1. What are masks?

Masks are face-coverings. They can be bought or you can [make your own](#). They can be disposable (use only once) or washable.

Masks can help prevent the spread of coronavirus when people need to be close together. They only work when used properly. You will need to:

- Wash your hands before putting it on
- Cover your mouth and nose with the mask
- Put it away in a clean place when not wearing it, like a plastic bag.
- If you use a washable mask, you will need to wash your mask often.
- If you use a disposable mask, place your mask in a litter bin after using it. Do not litter as it can damage the environment.

2. What if I can't afford one?

Some schools and colleges will be providing masks for free. If you're worried about costs, contact your school or college.



3. Do I have to wear a mask in my school or college or on the bus?

Your school or college will let you know what their rules are before you start back.

4. What if I can't wear a mask?

- You may not be able to wear a mask because of your health or disability, or because of how you communicate with others.
- Tell your college or school, or ask your parent or carer to do this. They should let you know this is ok and make sure you don't get into trouble for not wearing one.
- You don't need to tell other young people why you don't have to wear one if you don't want to.
- Remember to stick to other rules like handwashing and keeping your distance when asked.

5. What do I do if I see someone not wearing a mask?

They may have a medical condition or disability that means they don't have to wear one. They have a right to privacy. Don't ask them why they don't have to wear one.

6. What if I'm still worried?

If you're feeling worried, you can:

Contact [Meic](#) if you need advice and support. You can call **080880 23456** for free or use their webchat.

Contact [Childline](#) if you're worried or upset. You can call **0800 1111** for free or speak to a counsellor online.

If you think you've been treated unfairly, you can contact our [Investigation and Advice Service](#) by calling 0808 801 1000 or send us an [email](#).

7. What if the rules aren't working well in my school or college?

You have the right to **have a say** in decisions that affect you. After the start of term, your school or college should give you the chance to have your say to make sure rules are fair and help keep everyone safe.

8. What rights are involved here?

Under the UNCRC you have the rights to **health and to survival**. That's why your school or college is working on ways to keep everyone safe from the spread of infection.

You also have the right to be **treated fairly and supported** if you have a disability. That's why you cannot be made to wear a mask if your health or disability means you can't.

You have a right to **privacy**. You don't have to tell other people in school why you're not wearing a mask once you've agreed this with your school or college.

You have the right to be **safe**. As well as keeping safe from the virus, you also should be safe from people teasing or bullying you for not wearing a mask. Please let someone know if this happens so they can protect you.

