

Kirsty Williams AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1021
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/06239/20
Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Member of the Senedd
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

2 November 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter dated 28 October regarding the available guidance for schools and settings relating to the wearing of face coverings and masks.

As mentioned in my letter of 5 October, we have not sought to make the use of face coverings mandatory for all learners over the age of 11, however, in line with the latest advice and guidance, we encourage the use of face coverings in communal areas in schools and settings where the ability to social distance is difficult to maintain.

This informative video released on social media sites provides helpful guidance on wearing face coverings: (Welsh:https://youtu.be/_rDqnRYbiCM/ English:<https://youtu.be/b5-QBMGKeKc>). Our regularly updated [Operational Guidance for Schools and Settings](#) also reflects the latest advice on the use of face coverings in schools and their safe storage and disposal, and provides greater clarity around school transport guidance. As it is mandatory for all to wear face coverings on public transport, including school transport, except those under the age of 11 and those who may not be able to manage face coverings as directed or for health reasons, our transport guidance below also refers to face coverings and safety measures: <https://gov.wales/requirement-wear-face-covering-public-transport-wales>

The Welsh Government's Technical Advisory Group has issued this advice for children and young people in education settings having considered an update from the World Health Organisation, link [here](#), and the latest guidance for the public regarding the use of face coverings and masks can be found on the Welsh Government website [here](#).

While I appreciate the wearing of face coverings in secondary schools remains a contentious issue, most schools in Wales have chosen to adopt this as a risk mitigating measure. Also, it remains the responsibility of local authorities and education establishments to implement and manage local arrangements in their schools, settings and

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Kirsty.Williams@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales

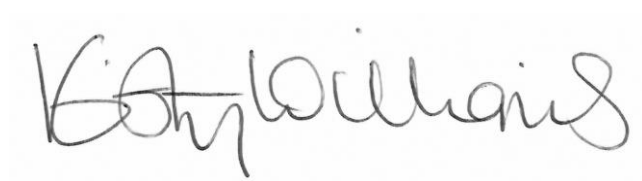
Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

on school transport. However, I also know that, when it is not feasible for learners or staff members to wear face coverings, discussions and advice on the options available, in line with our guidance, are recommended.

I hope you find the information and links provided sufficient for your inquiry, and may I again reassure you that we carefully monitor the medical and scientific evidence and advice and we ensure our advice reflects any changes, including that on face coverings.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kirsty Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K".

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