

Face coverings at St Catharine's College

March 2022

In the interest of minimising the risk of local transmission, and out of consideration for others, the College encourages students, staff, Fellows and all visitors to continue wearing face coverings when using crowded and enclosed spaces across our properties. We also encourage tolerance and understanding such that face coverings are worn in small group teaching settings and meetings if someone in attendance prefers face coverings to be worn.

The College continues to engage with and support members of our community at higher risk of becoming severely unwell if they are infected with COVID-19. When preparing for gatherings at our properties, we would encourage organisers to raise awareness of this document and engage in dialogue with attendees to understand how face coverings or lack thereof might impact attendees' health, wellbeing and inclusion in the group.

About this document

- Previous iterations of this document helped the St Catharine's community understand the latest legal obligations and public health advice on the use of face coverings.
- From February 2022, face coverings are no longer required by law in England or advised for teaching settings or communal areas in higher education institutions.
- Official advice still suggests that we continue to wear face coverings in crowded and enclosed spaces where we may come into contact with other people we do not normally meet.
- The College recognises that it may still be helpful to distil the current public health advice so that anyone choosing to wear a face covering to minimise the spread of COVID-19 feels welcome and supported at St Catharine's.
- The College hopes to retire this document once official advice becomes more firmly established in our community, ideally in the summer vacation if public health conditions allow.
- The College is required by the Department for Education to have contingency plans in the event of an outbreak and these are likely to involve face coverings, although this would be for the shortest time possible and with the agreement of local public health officials.

About face coverings

What is a face covering?

Face coverings help protect the wearer and others against the spread of infection because they cover the nose and mouth, which are the main confirmed sources of COVID-19 transmission.

It can be a reusable cloth or a single-use disposable covering that must cover the nose, chin and side of the face, with no gaps. While reusable options are more environmentally responsible, single-use disposable coverings continue to be available free of charge from the Island site (Porters' Lodge, MCR, Shakeshaft Library, Catzebo and entrance to the Bar), St Chad's (Porters' Lodge), Russell Street (main entrance) and Sports Ground (Squash Court).

How to wear a face covering

A face covering should securely cover both the nose and mouth. The St Catharine's community is encouraged to follow the [latest government advice](#) on safely wearing face coverings.