



Wearing a Type IIR Fluid Resistant Surgical Mask (FRSM) in School

Background

Although the aim continues to be that staff stay at least 2 metres away from pupils, we appreciate that this is not always possible. Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs), for example, may need to work closely with a number of pupils in any given day. Therefore, the local HPT advise that PSAs and other staff in this position wear Type IIR Fluid Resistant Surgical Masks (FRSM) in the circumstances outlined on p.3. Staff should be confident in how to put these on, take them off and dispose of them safely. This document gives you the information you need to be able to do this.

Why a FRSM and not a face covering?

Whilst there is some evidence that face coverings reduce droplet spread, they are not considered as medical Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). If there is a case of COVID-19 in the school, those who have been in close contact would be required to self-isolate regardless of whether they were wearing a face covering. In contrast, a Type IIR Fluid Repellent Surgical Mask (FRSM), when worn appropriately, is regarded as PPE and this would be taken into consideration when assessing close contacts.

When should a FRSM be worn in school?

- *A FRSM should be worn by members of staff when less than 2 metres away from pupils, unless there are underlying health reasons which do not allow them to do so or in specific circumstances where the pupil relies on seeing the staff member's face for purposes of communication.*
- *The same FRSM can be worn for the duration that the PSA or other staff member is working; it is not necessary to change FRSM each time they start working with a different pupil. However, if the FRSM is removed (e.g. during staff breaks) or becomes damaged, dirty or wet it should be disposed of and replaced.*

How to wear a FRSM appropriately

The rest of this document goes through how to wear a FRSM appropriately. It is extremely important that these steps are taken as an additional measure to minimise risk of spread of COVID-19 in your school. If steps are not adhered to and there is a case of COVID-19 in the school, contact tracers will likely discount your mask wearing in their risk assessment. This means that if you are identified as a close contact, you would be required to self-isolate.

Putting on a FRSM (step-by-step)

1. *Wash your hands or use alcohol based hand rub*
2. *Ensure you follow the manufacturer's instructions as this may vary according to the specific make.*
3. *In general, the following applies - place the mask over the mouth and nose; the side with the flexible wire in it is the top.*
4. *Use the ties to secure at the middle of the back of the head and the neck; or for those masks with elastic ear loops, pull these back over the ears.*
5. *Pinch the wire over your nose to provide a comfortable fit. Make sure the mask is close fitting to the face and below the chin. It should fully cover the mouth and nose.*
6. *Remember not to touch the front of the mask when it is being worn.*

Taking off and disposing of a FRSM (step-by step)

1. *Untie the bottom tie first followed by the top one. If the mask is held by elastic bands around the ears, use the elastic to remove the mask.*
2. *Holding on to the ties or elastic only, pull the mask off and away from your face.*
3. *Immediately dispose of in a bin. See Addendum on page 8*
4. *Wash your hands or use alcohol based hand rub.*

HOW TO WEAR A MEDICAL MASK SAFELY

Do's →



Find the top side, where the metal piece or stiff edge is



Ensure the colored-side faces outwards



Place the metal piece or stiff edge over your nose



Cover your mouth, nose, and chin



Adjust the mask to your face without leaving gaps on the sides



Avoid touching the mask



Remove the mask from behind the ears or head



Keep the mask away from you and surfaces while removing it



Discard the mask immediately after use preferably into a closed bin



Wash your hands after discarding the mask

Remember that masks alone protect you from COVID-19. Maintain at least 2 metres distance from others and wash your hands frequently and thoroughly, even while wearing a mask

See addendum on page 8

Youtube video

The following video has not been endorsed by Health Protection Scotland or Public Health England, but may still be helpful: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4xFY3aPF7E4>

Things to avoid (see addendum page 8)

- Do not reuse the mask once it has been taken off.
- Under no circumstances should the same FRSM be used by more than one person.
- Do not remove the mask to cough or sneeze.
- Do not use a mask that is damaged, dirty or wet.
- Only wear the mask so that it covers your nose, mouth and chin - do not leave any of these areas uncovered.
- The front of the mask should not be touched - for example, the mask should not be pulled under the chin or below the nose and then repositioned on to the face later. This may contaminate the mask and would not be regarded as appropriate use by contact tracers.

HOW TO WEAR A MEDICAL MASK SAFELY

Don'ts →



Do not use a ripped or damp mask



Do not wear the mask only over mouth or nose



Do not wear a loose mask



Do not touch the front of the mask



Do not remove the mask to talk to someone or do other things that would require touching the mask



Do not leave your used mask within the reach of others



Do not re-use the mask

Remember that masks alone protect you from COVID-19. Maintain at least 2 metres distance from others and wash your hands frequently and thoroughly, even while wearing a mask

[who.int/epi-win](https://www.who.int/epi-win)



World Health Organization

Further information

Health Protection Scotland Infection Prevention Control Educational Resources

<https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19/workforce-educationalresources/#title-container>

Addendum (page 8)

Where a mask is being used for short bursts at a time, Aberdeenshire HPT advise that you can re-use the mask as long as you do the following:

- *replace the mask daily hang up in between uses (do not put in a pocket, drawer or bag) do not touch the mask itself - just the ear loops*
- *do not re-wear if you have sneezed into it, or it is in any other way contaminated, dirty, damp or torn*