

Mask/Face Shield Policy



St. Michaels
University School

SMUS Mask/Face Shield Policy Expectations

As per current provincial guidelines, any individual has the choice to wear a mask, or a mask and a face shield, and will be treated respectfully by all members of the SMUS community. Younger students, and individuals who are medically compromised, may be exempt from the following general expectations.

Masks/shields are **expected** when:

- Physical distancing of 2 m (6 ft) **cannot** be maintained between people who are not part of your cohort.
 - This especially applies in a shared, indoor, common space, such as in a library, indoor hallways and common rooms.

Masks/shields are **not mandated** when:

- Physical distancing of 2 m (6 ft) can be maintained, such as:
 - In passing (walking past someone, where there are few people);
 - In a classroom/office with your own cohort;
 - In your office space.

A note regarding face shields:

- Face shields are not a substitute for masks.
 - Any time a face mask is required, if a person is wearing a face shield, they also are required to wear a mask.
 - The primary purposes of the face mask and face shield are different. The shield is intended to protect the wearer, whereas the mask provides a layer of protection for others, as well as the individual.

Possible Scenarios

Teacher Example:

A teacher arrives at school and should be prepared to put on a mask as they approach the buildings. They sanitize their hands and head to the staff room to chat with peers and use the photocopier. They then go to their Period 1 class. The students in their class are all part of the same cohort. The students arrive in class and remove their masks as they sit at their desks. The teacher, who teaches multiple cohorts, keeps their mask on while students arrive. Once the class has started and while at the front of the class and 2 m away from students, the teacher may take off their mask. Midway through the class, students begin working on independent projects. The teacher puts on their mask and then circulates around the class to provide individual instruction at each student's desk. At the end of class, the students and teacher put on their masks and everyone moves to their next class.

Student Example:

A student arrives at school and should put on their mask as they approach the buildings. They sanitize their hands using the pumps located around the campus. Period 1 is a mixed-cohort class and so students keep their mask on throughout the class (unless they can maintain a 2 m separation from others who are not in their cohort). After class, the student goes to the field and takes off their mask while chatting (from 2 m distance) with cohort and non-cohort friends. They then put their mask back on and go to a meeting with their academic advisor/university counsellor, as University Counselling staff are not part of their cohort. The meeting space is relatively small and physical distancing cannot be maintained, so the student and advisor both wear a

mask throughout the meeting. An option might be to move the meeting to a larger space (or outdoors) where physical distancing can be maintained. They can then choose to remove their mask if they wish. After the meeting, they depart. Their next location and cohort grouping will determine whether they put their masks on or not.

Administrative Staff Example:

A staff member arrives at school and should put on their mask as they approach the buildings, as administrative staff are not cohorted with either students or faculty. They sanitize their hands and head to their desk in a shared office. While at their desk during the day, they may take off their mask if they are not within 2 m of other people. If they have a meeting with an equipment supplier, for example, they would put on a mask to meet the supplier at the flagpoles. The supplier called and asked about mask use on campus before arriving. Like all visitors, the supplier is wearing a mask and both people sanitize their hands as they go to the photocopy room to talk about printers. The staff member then has a meeting with their entire department (eight people). They would keep their mask on and head to the department meeting. Once at the meeting, which is in a large classroom, suitable for 20 people and where distancing can be maintained, the group members may choose to take off their masks.

Mask & Face Shield Guidance from the BC Ministry of Health & Education

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/program-management/safe-caring-and-orderly-schools/planning-framework/expectations/stage-2#health>

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):
 - Non-medical masks or face coverings are required for all staff and all middle and secondary school students when they are in high traffic areas (e.g. hallways, common areas, school buses) and anytime they are outside of their classroom or learning group and physical distance cannot be maintained (e.g. specialist teachers or EAs working close to students across learning groups).
 - Exceptions will be made for individuals who cannot wear masks for medical reasons.
 - Students and staff will each be given two re-useable face masks.

Non-medical masks are not recommended for elementary school students due to the increased likelihood they will touch their face and eyes, as well as require assistance to properly put on and take off their mask (requiring increased close personal contact from school staff). No student needs to wear a non-medical mask if they do not tolerate it.

Masks & Face Shield Guidance from Centre for Disease Control:

Non-medical masks are recommended in situations where a person cannot maintain physical distance for extended periods of time and close to a person outside of their regular contacts.

- http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf

Masks are more effective than face shields in prevention, however, in certain situations, such as with younger children, shields may be preferable

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html#feasibility-adaptations>

http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/cloth-face-cover.html>

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