

File no.: 20200505
Reference: Face mask

To: Principals, Educators and school-based staff at public schools

(For information: Governing bodies)
(For information: Independent schools)

Dear Colleagues

FACE MASK MANDATE AT SCHOOLS

On 04 April 2022, President Ramaphosa announced that all regulations and directions made in terms of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act 57 of 2002), following the declaration of the national state of disaster in response to COVID-19 had been repealed except for a few transitional measures, which included the wearing of face masks indoors. This included school facilities.

On 04 May 2022, the Department of Health issued the *Regulations Relating to the Surveillance and the Control of Notifiable Medical Conditions: Amendment, 2022*, published in *Government Gazette* No. 46319 of 04 May 2022. (Please see attached)

These amended Regulations indicate that a person must, when entering and being inside an indoor public place, wear a face mask. Therefore children, like other people, are expected to continue to comply with Regulation 16A on face masks in the classrooms and general indoor gatherings.

There has been some confusion regarding a media statement issued on 4 May 2022 by the National Department of Health indicating that the wearing of a face mask indoors "does not apply to children at school". **This statement has been retracted.** (Please see attached)

Basic education institutions are excluded from Regulation 16B which refers to the regulations on gatherings. Schools **are not excluded** from Regulation 16A which refers to the wearing of face masks.

I hope this clarifies the confusion created. If there are any amendments to this regulation, we will communicate this as soon as possible.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Archie Lewis', with a large, stylized initial 'A'.

ARCHIE LEWIS
ACTING HEAD: EDUCATION
DATE: 05 MAY 2022