

Advice to schools on new mask-wearing arrangements

With mask mandate in place for so long, it is normal for students to feel uncomfortable or even anxious when they are told to take off their masks soon. Teachers can help them adapt bit by bit. Here are some advice:

Let students know in advance

Give clear instructions

- Teachers should tell students clearly about the school's latest mask-wearing arrangements as soon as possible



Mutual respect

Encourage empathy and respect other people

- Teachers may help students express their views through various kinds of activities. For example, they may ask students to pen their thoughts or concerns in a note or journal
- Teachers may share different perspectives in class to encourage students' respect for other people's circumstances and foster mutual acceptance and respect among them
- Teachers should have regard for students' individual circumstances and give them time to adapt to the change



Watch out for students' emotions

Watch out for students' mood swings and provide timely support

- Students may feel stressed or disturbed about the change, teachers should watch out for their emotions and see if they are adapting well
- Teachers should seek timely help from student guidance personnel if their students are having persistent emotional distress, such as feeling extremely stressed, having severe social anxiety or obsessively worrying about their health.



Why do some students feel awkward or anxious?

- It is because they have got used to wearing a mask and that makes them feel secure and protected. Without a mask, they may be worried about being infected or feel nervous about showing their face.
- Some students may also feel anxious because they hold different views from their peers about mask-wearing.
- Students with ASD may have negative feelings as it is more difficult for them to adapt to changes. Teachers may use Social Story to help students with ASD adjust to changes better. Teachers may scan the QR code for more information:

