

Dear Parent/Carer,

New guidance for face coverings in schools

Yesterday (25 August) the Scottish Government updated their guidance on wearing face coverings in schools. The guidance, which comes into effect for all schools on 31 August, now states:

“In light of the latest scientific and public health advice, including World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines, face coverings should now (unless exemptions apply) be worn:

- in secondary schools, by adults and all pupils moving around the school, such as in corridors and communal areas where physical distancing is difficult to maintain
- on dedicated school transport by all children aged five and over, bringing it into line with guidance for public transport

While staff and students can continue to wear face coverings if they wish to, face coverings will not generally be necessary in the classroom as there is greater scope for physical distancing and face coverings can have an impact on learning and teaching. However, it remains the case that where adults cannot keep 2m distance and are interacting face-to-face for a sustained period (about 15 minutes or more), face coverings should be worn”.

Please discuss this with your child and ensure that your child is provided with a reusable face covering to use on bus transport and at school as required in the guidance which comes into effect from Monday 31 August. Pupils should not be sent home for not wearing a face covering and there are some [exemptions to the wearing of face coverings](#). If you have any concerns, please discuss these with your child’s class teacher/Head Teacher.

The safety and wellbeing of all staff and pupils remains a priority. Covid-19 is still with us, although there is currently no evidence of widespread transmission in Highland. We continue to ensure our settings are as safe as possible, all schools take account of their local circumstances and reflect this in detailed risk assessments. Additionally, local project boards continue to run on a weekly basis with a focus on individual school and community issues relating to transport, catering, property & facilities management and digital issues.

The Council is continuing to work closely with Public Health in relation to all health matters and be directed by national guidance. You can view the [updated guidance](#) and the Government's [press release on face coverings](#) for further information. Our webpage www.highland.gov.uk/backtoschool is continually being updated.

Finally, the Scottish Government has released a helpful video on [how to make a face covering](#).