

Extracts from the Scottish Government Guidelines in Relation to Pupils with Hearing Losses

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance on reducing the risks from COVID-19 in schools

Non-statutory guidance to ensure a safe and supportive environment for learning and teaching.

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This document is uncontrolled when printed.

94. Movement between schools (e.g. of temporary/supply/peripatetic staff etc) should be kept to a minimum. Those providing essential services key to the delivery of children's care or educational plans, for example visiting teachers, psychologists, nurses, social workers, youth workers and those providing therapeutic support, should be able to visit schools; however, appropriate mitigations to prevent transmission of the virus in and between settings should be undertaken. Mitigations should be determined via a risk assessment carried out by the school in co-operation with the service provider.

124. Local Incident Management Teams, led by Health Protection Teams, may recommend a further strengthening of the use of face coverings in all classrooms (particularly in secondary schools) when dealing with local outbreaks (see Outbreak Management)

125. Where local decisions on the strengthened use of face coverings are made, it will remain vitally important to consider the potential impact on children and young people, including via the appropriate use of Equality Impact Assessments.

126. The impact of wearing a face covering for very young learners and/or learners with additional support needs, including any level of hearing loss, should be carefully considered. Communication for many of these learners (including hearing impaired young people) relies in part on being able to see someone's face clearly. This is also important for children and young people who are acquiring English and who rely on visual cues to enable them to be included in learning. Individuals who may not be able to handle and wear face coverings as directed (e.g. young learners, or those with additional support needs or disabilities) should not wear them as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission. Scottish Government guidance on "**Helping Others**" (see **Appendix 1**) sets out supportive approaches when interacting with hearing impaired people. The **National Deaf Children's Society (see Appendix 2)** has also suggested some ways in which communication with hearing impaired learners can be supported, in circumstances where face coverings are a barrier to communication.

127. In classes where any such impacts are anticipated and no alternative mitigations are reasonable, schools should consider the use of transparent / see-through face coverings which are increasingly available. Some children and young people may need additional support/reassurance about the reasons for adults wearing face coverings. However, as face coverings become more prevalent in wider society, this may be less of a concern.

Find the full document pdf of government guidance on the [EIS website](#).

Appendix 1. Helping Others

The following extracts are taken from the Scottish Government guidance found at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-3-staying-safe-and-protecting-others/pages/face-coverings/#helpingothers> on 31.10.20

Face covering exemptions

Some people are not required to wear a face covering.

These include:

- a person who is communicating with someone else who relies on lip reading and facial expressions to communicate; such people should remove the face covering only temporarily whilst communicating and replace it immediately afterwards

Helping others

Some people will struggle to hear or understand people wearing a face covering because they can't see their mouth or facial expression, such as, people who rely on lip reading or who use British Sign Language. Others will be unable to wear a face covering or to do so safely due to a disability or a medical condition

You can help by being patient and by:

1. Being aware that if someone is deaf they cannot hear you and may not know you are talking to them so –
 - making sure you have their attention by waving, and using gestures and pointing
 - trying to reduce any background noise (where possible)
 - speaking slowly, asking if the person can hear you, and using signs and body language to emphasise what you are saying
 - taking off your own face covering where necessary - if you are communicating with someone who needs to see your face or has difficulty understanding you. (Please remember to stay at least 2 metres apart when removing your face covering and replace your face covering once you've finished speaking)
2. Being aware that there are many good reasons why someone might not be wearing a face covering. Please be kind and understanding. Some people may be wearing a lanyard or badge to show they are exempt or carry an exemption card, but some may not.
3. Being aware that some people may need more time at the counter, as they may need to write down their enquiries or use other communication aids.
4. Being aware and considerate of others and remain 2 metres apart.

Appendix 2. National Deaf Children's Society

The NDCS's recommendations can be found at <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/blog/face-masks-and-communication-coronavirus-info-for-families-of-deaf-children/>