



Director of Children's Services: Helen Budge

All Parents and Carers

**Children's Services**

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Your Ref:

Dear Parent and Carer

## **Face coverings in secondary schools and on school buses for all children aged five and over from Monday 31 August 2020**

### **1. Introduction – key information about the use of face coverings in school and on school transport:**

Following the Scottish Government announcement on Tuesday 25 August, I write to confirm that nearly all **secondary pupils** will be expected to wear a face covering when arriving in their school each morning, moving between classes, when in central spaces in their school, and when using Shetland Recreational Trust Facilities from Monday onwards.

Further information will follow shortly clarifying the position for children and young people residing in the Halls of Residence.

While staff and secondary pupils can continue to wear face coverings if they wish to do so in classrooms, face coverings will not generally be necessary as there is greater scope for physical distancing in learning and teaching environments.

In **primary schools**, the advice remains that anyone (child or member of staff) wishing to wear a face covering should be able to do so, but there is no formal requirement to do so.

**All pupils aged 5 and over** travelling on **school transport** will now be expected to wear face coverings for their journeys to and from school in line with current arrangements for public transport.

### **2. Exemptions:**

- People with health conditions who cannot put on, wear, or remove a face covering because of any illness, impairment or disability.
- People who cannot wear face coverings without severe distress.

Parents should contact their child's school and/or SIC transport on 01595 744886 with any concerns around the wearing of face coverings. Schools will also contact families of pupils who may be exempt to discuss any concerns. Families may have had experiences of using face coverings in public buildings and transport already and will know how their child/young person has responded to this. Some children may already carry or wear Autism Alert Cards, Sunflower lanyards or Exemption Cards displayed on their phones to indicate they do not need to wear face coverings.

Pupils do not have to prove they are exempt but some may find this useful.

**Good communication, tolerance and kindness will be key to being sensitive to the needs of all pupils, as schools and pupils adapt to changing circumstances.**

Please see following useful links:

<https://disabilityequality.scot/news/face-covering/> downloadable exemption posters and cards – pupils or parents can download exemption cards on to phones for showing if asked.

[https://www.scottishautism.org/sites/default/files/autism\\_alert\\_card.pdf](https://www.scottishautism.org/sites/default/files/autism_alert_card.pdf) Autism Alert Card.

<https://hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/> - Sunflower lanyards, cards and snoods available to buy.

<https://www.tesco.com/help/invisibledisability/> Sunflower lanyards for hidden disabilities.

### **Provision of face coverings:**

Please provide your child with a face covering and a small washable sealed bag/container for storing it. The school will ensure that any pupil who does not have a face covering on arrival can collect a disposable face covering from the School Office. However, parents and carers are responsible for providing their child with a face covering each day.

Children's Services will be writing to all parents and carers in receipt of free school meals and clothing grants with a supply of face coverings to provide additional support.

### **Routines for face coverings in Secondary Schools:**

Secondary aged pupils will wear their face coverings on arrival to school. Face coverings will be in place until their Period 1 classes. At the end of each period, pupils will don their face covering before moving into the corridor. On arrival in the next class, pupils will remove their face coverings and then hand sanitise, ready to work.

At intervals and lunchtimes, face coverings can only be removed when seated and eating. Once snacks/lunch have been consumed, face coverings need to be placed back on.

At the end of the day, face coverings should be in place before leaving Period 7 lessons.

### **Advice for handling face coverings:**

Pupils should try not to touch the outside surface. Take it off around the ears and store it away. When putting the covering back on, pupils make sure they do not touch the front. If they use a reusable face covering, these need to be washed at night in hot water and soap, and hung up to dry.

## **Face Coverings on School Transport:**

As with face coverings in school, it will be the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure that their child is wearing their face covering before going on the school bus in the morning and become familiar with how to apply their face covering at the end of the school day before going on school transport. Drivers of school transport will not be expected to enforce the use of face coverings.

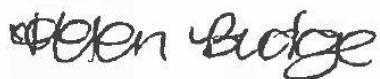
## **Additional Information for Children and Young People:**

The Young Scot website contains really useful information about COVID-19, including the use of face coverings that you can refer to discuss further with your children.

[https://young.scot/get-informed/national/facts-at-secondary-school?dm\\_i=LQE,70H46,3LDJIX,S9PH4,1](https://young.scot/get-informed/national/facts-at-secondary-school?dm_i=LQE,70H46,3LDJIX,S9PH4,1)

Thank you for your support for the use of face coverings in secondary schools and on school transport. If you have any questions or concerns, please discuss with your child's school in the first instance.

Yours sincerely



Helen Budge  
Director of Children's Services