



Balfiron High School

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Dear Parents and Carers

I hope this letter finds you and your family safe and well. While it has been an unusual and challenging start to the term, I am grateful to staff and young people for their collective efforts in making sure we look after ourselves and each other now that we are back on campus. We continue to implement the safety protocols and are getting more used to the systems in place.

I am delighted to report that we have secured funding for additional outdoor furniture. Picnic tables and gazebos have been ordered to help make the increased time outside more pleasant and comfortable.

Face Coverings for Secondary Pupils

You will be aware that, with effect from **Monday 31 August**, the Scottish Government require all pupils in secondary schools to wear a face covering or mask.

This requirement is based on scientific evidence suggesting that face coverings have two main benefits. They:

1. protect those around you if you are symptomatic or pre-symptomatic (in effect you may be spreading the disease without actually knowing it);
2. might also reduce your chance of getting infection from other people from 'aerosol generation' (airborne spread of COVID-19).

We hope that us all wearing a face covering will reduce transmission of COVID-19 in schools (thereby reducing the potential transmission to your family) and, importantly, will keep our school open. It is important to note that this is an additional measure of protection and will not replace the other protocols that are already have in place. We will continue to operate our procedures around regular hand sanitisation, enhanced cleaning regimes, keep left movement, staggered intervals/lunches and so on.

In line with the new guidance pupils, who are not exempt, should wear a face covering:

- on school transport (including buses and taxis)
- when arriving into and leaving the school grounds
- in corridors and stairwells at all times

- indoor social areas (such as the theatre, and the atrium)
- in toilets
- when socialising in small groups at breaks

Face coverings are not generally required to be worn in class unless for a risk assessed activity. For example, our pupils and staff are currently wearing them in the workshop.

A very small number of young people will be exempt from wearing a face covering. Further details on that can be found through this link <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-3-staying-safe-and-protecting-others/pages/face-coverings/>. If you think that your child is exempt or would like to discuss that, please get in touch with the Depute in charge of their house. The pastoral team will provide the appropriate support.

All of our young people have had a lesson today outlining the reasons for the decision to wear face coverings and detail around what that means for us at Balfron. I have attached that for your information.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask you to remind your child to ensure that they wear a face covering if they are local shops. They should also continue to afford a social distance from members of the public. It is important that we continue to be good neighbours particularly as we have in effect doubled the time that young people can be in the village.

We absolutely appreciate that much of this is challenging, however, we are relying on one another taking responsibility so that together, we can help control the spread of COVID-19 and keep our school open.

Many thanks for your support.

Yours sincerely



Elaine Bannatyne