

Colleagues,

As you will be aware, guidance for pupils and staff on the use of face coverings in schools and on school transport has been updated by the Scottish Government.

From Monday 31 August, face coverings should (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

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 two metre distance and are interacting face-to-face for a sustained period (about 15 minutes or more) face coverings should be worn. In addition, staff and students can continue to wear face coverings in any classroom if they wish to.

Scottish Borders Council has carefully planned the return of pupils to our schools using all guidance provided by the Scottish Government. This latest update from the Government is based on the latest scientific and public health advice and we will be putting it in place across our schools.

In a communication to follow this briefing, parents/carers will be asked to make sure their child wears a face covering while moving around the school campus, if they attend a secondary school, and at all times on school transport (if aged five and over) if they travel to and from school on a bus, coach or taxi.

The Scottish Government has also provided guidance on safely removing, disposing and storing face coverings which we would encourage you to share with your staff, pupils and parents/carers.

The guidance includes:

- Face coverings should not be shared with others
- Before putting on or removing the face covering, hands should be cleaned by washing with soap and water or hand sanitiser
- Make sure the face covering is the right size to cover the nose, mouth and chin.
- When temporarily storing a face covering (for example during classes), it should be placed in a washable, sealed bag or container. Avoid placing it on surfaces, due to the possibility of contamination
- Re-usable face coverings should be washed after each day of use in school at 60 degrees centigrade or in boiling water.
- Disposable face coverings must be disposed of safely and hygienically
- Children, young people and staff should be encouraged to place their disposable face coverings in the general waste bin.

If any families wish to make their own simple face covering, a [video is available](#) to show you how.

Should a pupil be unable to access a face covering or forgets to bring theirs to school, each school will have a contingency supply. Additional stocks will be delivered to secondary schools on Friday.

Some individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings. Further information on exemptions can be found in wider [Scottish Government guidance](#).

We will continue to reassure parents/carers that alongside the introduction of face coverings, a range of measures are in place in our schools to ensure the safety of pupils and staff. These arrangements are being monitored extremely closely and will be revised as required.

Further information is available at [www.scotborders.gov.uk/schoolreopening](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/schoolreopening).

Regards

Tracey Logan

Chief Executive

Scottish Borders Council