

Face Coverings

Updated guidance was given by the Scottish Government on 25th August.

What does this mean at Bucksburn Academy?

From 31st August all young people and adults (except those who are exempt) in the school will be expected to wear a face covering (as identified in the information above) when:

- **On all school and public transport to and from school.**
- **Entering and leaving the school and moving around in the corridors to get to their classes.**
- **Queuing in the dining area at break and lunchtime, but not whilst eating.**
- **In social areas when inside at break and lunchtime due to adverse weather.**

Pupils will be given instructions on how to manage face coverings effectively to maintain hygiene.

Pupils who do not bring a face covering to school will be provided with one and these will be available at entrances to the school.

What is a face covering?

The Scottish Government defines a face covering as

A face covering can be a covering of any type, except a face shield, that covers the mouth and nose. It is recommended that it be made of cloth or other textiles and should be two, and preferably three layers thick, and through which you can breathe. Religious face coverings that cover the mouth and the nose count as face coverings for these purposes. Transparent face coverings which assist communication for those who rely on lip reading and facial expressions can also be worn.

Classrooms

Anyone (whether young person or adult) wishing to wear a face covering in school should be permitted to do so.

Face coverings should not generally be required in classrooms or other learning and teaching environments. However, face coverings should be worn by adults where they cannot keep 2m distance and are interacting face-to-face for a sustained period (about 15 minutes or more) with other adults and/or young people.

Corridors, communal areas and transport

Face coverings should also be worn in the following circumstances (except where an adult or young person is exempt from wearing a covering):

- Where adults and young people in secondary schools (including special schools) are moving about the school in **corridors and confined communal areas** (including toilets) where physical distancing is particularly difficult to maintain; and
- In line with the current arrangements for public transport, where adults and young people aged 5 and over are travelling on dedicated school transport.

Further measures

The guidance goes on to state:

Individual local authorities and secondary schools may wish, following the relevant local authority processes and appropriate risk assessment and consultation with school communities, to consider strengthening the use of face coverings in other areas of the school (e.g. classrooms). If doing so, schools must make appropriate use of Equality Impact Assessments to ensure pupils are not discriminated against.

Supporting the correct wearing of face coverings

It is vital that clear instructions are provided to staff and young people on how to put on, remove, store and dispose of face coverings to avoid inadvertently increasing the risk of transmission. The key points are:

- Face coverings should not be shared with others.
- Hands should be cleaned or sanitised before putting on or removing a face covering.
- Make sure the face covering is the right size and fits over nose, mouth and chin and children should be taught how to wear it properly, including not touching the front and not pulling under the chin or in their mouth.
- When temporarily storing a face covering (i.e. during classes), it should be placed in a washable, sealed bag or container. It should not be placed on surfaces, due to the possibility of contamination.
- Re-usable face coverings should be washed daily at 60 degrees centigrade or in boiling water.
- Disposable face coverings must be disposed of safely and hygienically. Young people should be encouraged not to litter and to place face coverings in general waste as they are not clinical waste.

There should be regular messaging from schools to adults and young people about these instructions.

Equity

Schools must consider how to address any equity issues around costs. The Scottish Government believes it is reasonable to assume that most staff and young people will now have access to re-usable face coverings. However, where anybody is struggling to access a face covering, or they have forgotten one, schools should take steps to have a contingency supply available.

No young person will be excluded from education on the grounds that they are not wearing a face covering.

Exemptions

You may have a reasonable excuse not to wear a face covering if, for example:

- you have a health condition or you are disabled, including hidden disabilities, for example, autism or a learning disability, and a face covering would be inappropriate because it would cause difficulty, pain or severe distress or anxiety to the wearer, or because you cannot apply a covering and wear it in the proper manner safely and consistently
- Individual discretion should be applied in considering the use of face coverings for other children including, for example, children with breathing difficulties and disabled children who would struggle to wear a face covering
- to seek medical assistance
- to avoid injury, illness or escape the risk of harm
- you need to eat or drink
- you are taking medication
- you are communicating with someone else who relies on lip reading and facial expressions to communicate