



**Customer Services: Education**  
Executive Director: Douglas Hendry

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**Executive Head Teacher: Peter Bain MA (Hons), MSc.** **Oban High School /Ard Sgoil an Obain**  
Soroba Road, OBAN, Argyll PA34 4JB  
Tel: (01631) 564231 Fax: 01631 565916  
[enquiriesobanhigh@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:enquiriesobanhigh@argyll-bute.gov.uk)  
[www.obanhigh.argyll-bute.sch.uk](http://www.obanhigh.argyll-bute.sch.uk)

30<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope this letter finds you and your family all safe and well again this week.

What a fabulous start to the new term we have had. As I noted last week, everyone to some degree or other was quite anxious about returning to the school building after so long but the new routines have really met with a huge seal of approval. I have attached Kevin Champion's survey results video for you to hear of the views of our staff and pupils.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDIVsPW1RFQ>

Without the hard work and dedication of our staff, the adaptability and resilience of our pupils and the support of our parents and carers, such a smooth transition to this "new normal" would not have been possible. Well done and thank you!

Just as we were settling into our new routine, another guidance paper was issued by the Scottish Government for schools and Local Authorities to follow. Whilst this 54 page document is similar to the one I issued to you last week, it does have significant amendments, most notably linked to the wearing of face coverings in schools and on school transport. The detailed guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-preparing-start-new-school-term-august-2020-version-2/>

I am also including a copy of the *NHS Frequently Asked Questions and Answers for Schools in the NHS Highland Area* paper as an attachment to this letter. You will find this document very valuable

Additionally, all previous letters and linked Scottish Government papers can be found on the school website for reference:

<http://www.obanhigh.argyll-bute.sch.uk/>

## **New guidance on face coverings in school and transport**

It is important to remember that the use of face coverings is just one of the ways in which we seek to keep our staff, pupils and community safe from the spread of Covid. The persistent use of hand sanitisers; constant cleaning of touch points throughout the day; timetable changes to reduce movement; changes to breaks and lunches to limit bubbles mixing; the creation of year group bubbles; carrying out all parent and school partner meetings by phone/Google Meet; and reminding pupils about the importance of carrying on their good hygiene practices when out in the community are all contributing to our well-being.

The new guidance continues to assert that face coverings should not generally be required in classrooms or other learning and teaching environments. Although, 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 children and young people.

The addition to this existing guidance is that face coverings should also now be worn (except where an adult or child/young person is exempt from wearing a covering). Where adults and pupils are moving about our high school in corridors and in confined communal areas such as toilets and canteen facilities.

For school transport, the adoption of an approach to face coverings applying to children and young people aged 5 and over will be consistent with the current approach on public transport. As we had already made the decision that all our pupils in primary and secondary would wear face coverings in all transport environments, this is not a change for us.

There are some key things to consider for us now:

- 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 (e.g. 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 and young people should be encouraged not to litter and to place their face coverings in the general waste bin.
- Pupils may remove their face covering when in the canteen areas when eating but after they have had their lunch and are using these areas for socialising, face coverings need to be put back on.

The Scottish Government has noted that everyone (including children of high school age) is likely to have a face covering by now given their necessity across society for the last few months. However if anyone does not have a face mask, they will be provided with disposable ones when they arrive at school. We will also provide them with a disposable bag on Monday to start them off with the idea they need to keep them in a bag when not in use to keep them clean.

## **Senior pupils celebrating success and leading online developments**

I would like to take the opportunity to thank my Senior Pupil Leadership Team. Normally they would be leading assemblies to their clans in the Atrium each week, celebrating successes across the school, keeping their peers informed of school news and raising awareness of societal issues relevant to that week. As there are no assemblies permitted, our young leadership team have been tasked by delivering online assemblies each week using Google Meet, the first of which was held across the school on Friday. Additionally, the School Captains and Clan Leaders are making short videos to promote a positive school/clan/family ethos and highlight support available. These will be posted to our YouTube Channel and advertised to parents via the School App and to pupils via our Instagram page. Please watch them and click the like buttons highlighting your appreciation for their efforts.

## **Google Classroom support for all pupils absent**

For the last couple of years many staff were using Google Classroom with senior pupils. During Lockdown, all staff developed our use of this facility for all pupils. We are aware that over the coming months that it is likely we will have a notable number of pupils who will be absent from school as they are forced to self-isolate or be absent from school because they live in a household isolating. To combat the potential loss of learning, all our staff are loading their lessons onto Goggle Classroom on an on-going basis. This will ensure that children will be able to access their school work when stuck at home. Obviously if a child is ill, we do not expect them to work from home. If anyone needs support with accessing any online provision, please let us know.

My thanks to our staff for this exemplary commitment to supporting your youngsters. As always should you have any questions or wish to contact us for any reason please email your child's Guidance Teacher or use the contact us page on the website. Please remember to give us some details as to your request or concern. This allows the pastoral team to be better prepared to help you. Please only call if urgent as our staff are either teaching or supporting our pupils. They will reply to an email as soon as they are free.

I hope the weather stays fine and you all have a lovely week ahead.

Yours sincerely



P A Bain

Executive Head Teacher, Oban High School, Tiree High School & Tiree Primary School