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Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope this letter finds you all safe and well.

Well, the first day of the holiday began unexpectedly as I received word from the NHS Health Protection Team (HPT) later in the afternoon that one of our pupils had tested positive for Covid-19. Whilst this is the first case we have witnessed, such an incident is sadly quite common for the very professional and efficient HPT and so they were exceptionally helpful and supportive as they guided me through the Track and Trace protocol throughout the day and night. One of those actions was of course agreeing the letter you received yesterday with all the necessary NHS guidance. We worked on two letters: one specifically for parents of any pupil who was in contact with the confirmed case; the other as general advice issued to all schools, where a case has been identified.

I would like to begin by reassuring everyone that the youngster in question is recovering from their symptoms and we wish them all the best for a speedy and full recovery. As the letter from the NHS noted, the youngster has not been in school since last Monday as quite sensibly they followed the national guidance on what to do if one has symptoms.

Working between the family and the school, the HPT were able to use the Track and Trace protocols swiftly and efficiently. I returned to school and contacted staff necessary to confirm exactly which teachers and which pupils the youngster had been in close contact with, as per the guidance from the HPT. My thanks to my staff who returned to school to support this research. I can confirm that all the families that need to be made aware of the need to self-isolate have been contacted. Indeed, not only were letters issued to all with detailed guidance, I called all the families myself to ask how the children were keeping and to offer support if required. However, I'm not a medical expert and the HPT will also call all the families today to offer their professional support.

I am pleased to have found, although obviously concerned to learn of this news, all seemed physically well at the moment. I am also pleased that all the staff are well and that no teachers are required to self-isolate. Great news and my best wishes to them all.

I would like to take the opportunity to remind our community that this single confirmed case in our school is a reminder that schools are still places that are relatively safe places to work and learn, though of course we cannot be complacent and we must continue in our efforts to reduce the risk of spreading Covid-19.

The very sensible actions of the family following the national guidance is a great example how our community were further protected. The parents who follow the advice and drop their children off away from the school and let them walk to school, distancing themselves as they do so is also very helpful; as are the actions of the kids themselves who don't gather together in large numbers.

For those travelling on school transport and who wear their face coverings, that helps protect us too. I spoke to the Manager of West Coast Motors on Thursday and the Manager of ScotRail sent me an email on Friday. Both complimenting our children on their high adherence to the rules.

The new school rules have also helped restrict any potential spread of the virus. Every child is met by at least four staff every morning who ensure that everyone who enters the school has a face covering on and that they all use hand sanitiser as they enter the building. They all go straight to their classes and are not allowed to socialise in corridors. All the classes are in year group bubbles, all the bubbles are kept separate from each other. They eat in separate areas; pupils are not allowed out of class for the 15 minute breaks; are only allowed out of classes as individuals during class time; and they depart school at different times. All these measures help reduce the risk.

Further, the Local Authority are providing an excellent cleaning service and the school is thoroughly cleaned every day. Throughout the day, two Day Cleaners are constantly wiping down all the touch points. I see the cleaner in my office about once every hour as she does the rounds. This is an amazing service given the size of the building. The teachers and pupils play their part too and every seat and desk is sanitised at each class changeover and equipment is sprayed and cleaned when used ready for the next person.

And of course the change to the school day is helping massively. Only having two classes per day for the S5/6 pupils means the number of those who have to self-isolate because they were sitting close to a confirmed case is very, very small. Not much more for the S1-S4s who only move three times on average. If we still had an eight period day, this would increase the risk significantly.

Ordering lunches and having them individually delivered to pupils who then have to eat in a designated area, all facing in one direction, all wearing masks when not eating helps too.

All these factors ensured that when we did get our first case, we were able to count on our fingers the numbers in close proximity to our confirmed case within school. I write this long and detailed letter to you to evidence that all our efforts both by our families and our school are working, are limiting the potential spread of the virus and increasing the likelihood that we all remain safe and well.

I know this is a concerning piece of news but please feel reassured as best you can and have a lovely holiday.

My best wishes to you all.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P A Bain', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

**P A Bain**  
**Executive Head Teacher**  
**Oban High School, Tiree High School & Tiree Primary School**