

SHETLAND ISLANDS COUNCIL

Children's Services Department Education Service



BALTASOUND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Unst, Shetland, ZE2 9DY

Head Teacher: Mr Paul Thomson

Tel: (01595) 807020

Peerie School, Big Dreams

Dear Parents and Carers

As communicated previously, this first week of term will be a 'soft-start', with different year groups attending school on different days. As each group comes into school, we will discuss the following procedures that we will have in place to ensure we are all as safe as possible. This letter sets out what these will be and allows the opportunity for parents to have a similar discussion at home.

School Transport

Attached to this letter, is the Local Authority guidance with regards transport to school – **please could all parents read over this**. For us in BJHS, this will require all students from Norwick, Haroldswick and Baltasound to wear a face covering on the school bus. This is because this bus is also a service bus, which in theory can accept fee paying members of the public. The bus will be marked with a school zone therefore there is no need to physically distance from each other, but they should keep 1m from members of the public. If you have difficulty in sourcing a face covering for your child, please contact the school as soon as possible. The Uyeasound bus is dedicated school transport and therefore students using this bus need not wear a face covering or physically distance.

When getting on the school bus, students should fill up the bus from the back. The last person on the bus should be the first person off. This should minimise the contact students have with each other. If any student would feel more comfortable wearing a face covering, they are encouraged to do so. All students must stay in their seats with the seat belts fastened throughout the journey.

As students exit the bus onto the path, they should maintain a distance between each other as they enter the building. This is shown on the pavement with the blue dots painted on the ground 2m apart. There are floor stickers in the corridors to show the distance we should be keeping apart as we are moving through the school.

Entrance / Exit

At the main school entrance, there is a foot operated hand sanitiser unit. Students are asked to step on the pedal which will then release hand sanitiser for them to use on their hands. The doors will be propped open and Primary students will be able to walk down to the Primary end and enter their classroom without touching any surface or door handles. Secondary students will make their way to their first class – there will be no central registration for Secondary students this term.

Early Years students will enter through the Early Years entrance, from the playground (walking round the Secondary football pitch). As we are restricting entry to the building for non-staff members, Early Years staff will try to ensure there are outdoor activities setup in order to allow parents to stay and play outdoors for as long as is necessary at drop off time.

Once in school, Primary students will keep to the Primary area and Secondary students to the Secondary area throughout the school day.

Social Distancing & Hygiene

All students will be required to wash their hands (with warm soapy water for 20 seconds) or use hand sanitiser on arrival in school, on entering a new classroom and before eating/drinking. Students in Early Years or Primary are not required to keep a distance apart during the day but will stay within their class group at break and lunch time.

The Primary playground area will be divided into 2 areas, one for Upper Primary and one for Lower Primary. These will alternate each week to allow all students to access the football pitch every other week.

There will be no Tuck Shop for the first 2 weeks of term, as we judge the safest way to be able to provide cheap fresh fruit and healthy snacks to students. Parents are asked to provide any snacks that they will require for each break time.

Students in Secondary are asked to keep to their desks in each classroom and maintain a distance between themselves and others at break and lunch times. As we have 29 students in Secondary 1 to 5 this year, this will be less than other schools have in a single class, therefore we will not be segregating each Secondary year group at break/lunch – but we will ask them to use all the space available (indoor and outdoor) to ensure they are keeping apart from each other as much as possible, avoiding physical contact and not crowding each other.

With some exceptions, staff members are asked to maintain 2m distancing between other staff members and students. Clearly, this will be easier with older students and less so with younger students. If staff members are interacting face-to-face with children for a sustained period (15 minutes or more), the staff member should wear a face covering. Secondary students should make every attempt to maintain 2m distance from staff members where possible.

The school has also employed a cleaner who will be in school throughout the day, following a regular cleaning schedule with particular emphasis on toilets, light switches, door handles etc.

Dining Arrangements

The Local Authority has made the decision (based on guidance from the Scottish Government) to hold off on hot school meals for the time being. This is because we are asked not to have large groups gather together at the same time. Therefore all students will have packed lunches either provided by the school or provided by home. Lower Primary will eat them at their desks, Upper Primary in the break-out area outside their classroom and Secondary will eat theirs in the main hall. If the weather allows, all students would be able to eat their packed lunches outside.

An example packed lunch menu is provided to this email, to allow parents to make an informed choice with regards to meals.

Classrooms, Resources & Equipment

Lower Primary and Upper Primary will have all their lessons within their own classroom, with the exception of P.E. (which may include use of the Unst Leisure Centre or outdoors). Music and Art lessons will be delivered to Primary in their own classrooms for the time being.

Secondary students will be able to go from classroom to classroom, for their subjects, although there will be a requirement for students to wipe down any equipment used after each period; ensuring it is clean for the next student. When moving between classrooms, students should maintain distance between each other and only ascend the stairs after others have come down – the stairs fire exit area can also act as a passing place for students.

All students should be using their own equipment (pens, pencils, rulers, rubbers etc) and students should not share resources where possible. If this is not realistic, the item must be cleaned or wiped down with anti-bacterial spray between users. Soft furnishings or items that cannot be cleaned/wiped down between students have been removed from classrooms. The school has a supply of pencils, pens etc and we will provide them to any students who require them.

Students are asked not to bring in any toys from home. Textbooks, jotters, worksheets etc are allowed to go between home and school, although these should be restricted to items that are directly linked to education. Library books must be quarantined for 72 hours upon return to the school library.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The school has a supply of PPE (eye protection, gloves, visors and aprons) that are only to be used by staff members if a student (or another staff member) is showing symptoms of COVID-19 or the student requires intimate care and staff are unable to maintain 2m distance. No PPE is required when undertaking routine educational activities, other than to show and discuss with students so as not to cause alarm if it is used.

Questions Students May Have

1.	What should I take to school?	You should bring the minimum of personal possessions to school. As far as possible, keep your possessions in your school bag – Secondary students can still use their pigeon holes, although access to this will be limited as you need to keep a distance between yourself and others. You will need your school bag, interval snack, and a packed lunch if you wish. You should not share your personal possessions with other pupils. You can bring your own hand sanitiser and tissues.
2.	Do I need a face covering or mask?	A face covering needs to be worn on the Norwick/Haroldswick/Baltasound bus only. Although if anyone would prefer to wear one on the bus or in school, they are allowed to do so.
3.	Where do I put my jacket?	All students have their own coat hook.
4.	What happens in class?	Each class teacher will explain the procedures. You will need to use the hand sanitiser on arrival and at the end of the lesson, wipe down any equipment used.
5.	What happens at break/lunch?	Primary students will have staggered break times to avoid a large congregation at the door. The playground will be separated for Lower and Upper Primary and the groups are not allowed to mix. Secondary students will make full use of the seating areas indoor, the pitch, the multicourt and playground. Packed lunches will be delivered to Lower and Upper Primary. Secondary will eat theirs in the main hall or outside.
6.	What happens at the end of the day?	Pupils will be released from class on a staggered basis. Secondary will get on the bus first, followed by Upper Primary and then Lower Primary. Please do not leave any possessions in the school at the end of each day. Take all your jackets home.
7.	What about P.E.?	At the moment, all P.E. must take place outdoors . Students should wear appropriate clothing and footwear to school that will allow them to move around and feel comfortable. At the moment, changing rooms are not available.
8.	What if I am feeling worried about coming back to school?	Lots of people will be feeling a bit anxious about coming into school. The staff at BJHS are working hard to support you. All your subject/class teachers will be able to give you advice. Pupil Support, Depute Head and Head Teacher are also there for you and will listen to how things are going and make any necessary changes. Our team of Learning Support Workers and Learning Support Assistants will be spending time with you if you have additional support needs.
9.	How do I find out about COVID-19 testing?	NHS Shetland has a Testing Scheme in place. Your family can find out more about this at https://www.healthshetland.com/health-topics/news/uk-government-testing-scheme-up-and-running-in-shetland

Signs & Symptoms of COVID-19

The symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- **high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If any staff member, student or a member of your household has any of the symptoms described above, they must not attend school. They should then follow the latest advice which can be found here:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/self-help-guides/self-help-guide-coronavirus-covid-19>.

I appreciate there is a lot of information contained within this letter and you may have further questions or concerns. If so, please do not hesitate to contact me using the email address or phone number below.

Yours sincerely

P. Thomson

Paul Thomson

Head Teacher

paulthomson@shetland.gov.uk / 01595 807025