



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

John Swinney MSP  
Cabinet Secretary for Education  
Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh, EH99 1SP

**29 June 2020**

Dear John,

**Measures to protect pupils and staff in schools**

I am writing following your statement to Parliament on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup>, announcing the Government's intention that schools return full time and without social distancing on 11<sup>th</sup> August. As I am sure you appreciate, it is vital that the appropriate measures are in place to ensure the health and safety of pupils, staff and the wider community.

I would therefore appreciate if you could address the following questions, a number of which have been raised by pupils, parents and staff in recent days:

**School transport**

If social distancing is not to apply in schools, will this include school transport?

Will face coverings be required on school transport?

**Social distancing and other mitigation measures**

Does the Scottish Government recommend the wearing of face coverings, particularly by staff and older pupils?

Does the suspension of social distancing apply only to pupil's interactions with each other or does it apply to staff as well, including both their interactions with pupils and with each other?

What considerations has the Scottish Government made of the risk to school staff of a return without social distancing

Will the Scottish Government recommend mitigation measures such as protective screens for staff?

## **Infections & school closures**

If a pupil or member of staff tests positive, will all staff and families in the school community be informed immediately?

How will the Test & Protect system function if this is the case? Given that pupils and staff will mix with others outside their class during breaks, will all school users be required to isolate after a positive case has been found?

Who will decide when and if a school must close as a result of a local outbreak, either within the school or in the wider local community?

Similarly, who will decide whether other schools in a community/local authority should close following an outbreak at one or more schools?

If decisions in regards to school closures are to be made by councils or health boards, will national guidance be produced?

## **Vulnerable pupils, staff & families**

Will parents & carers be permitted to opt-out of in-school teaching if concerned about their child's vulnerability to the virus?

Will immuno-compromised children currently in the shielding group be expected to attend?

Will immuno-compromised staff currently in the shielding group be expected to attend?

Will children and staff with immuno-compromised family members currently in the shielding group be expected to attend?

Following the Scottish Government's recommendation that Health Boards conduct risk assessments for BAME staff, will they advise councils to do the same for BAME pupils and staff?

## **Testing**

Can you confirm, following your supportive comments in Parliament, that all school staff will be offered regular testing from 11<sup>th</sup> August?

If regular testing is to be offered to staff, will this offer be extended to senior pupils?

**Ross Greer MSP for the West of Scotland**  
**Scottish Green Party**

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I look forward to your response.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ross Greer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ross Greer MSP

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