

TO ALL PARENTS/CARERS

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**EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S  
SERVICES**

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Carrie Lindsay  
03451 555555 ext. 480218

Your Ref  
Our Ref: CL/CG

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Dear Parent/Carer

I felt it necessary to write again following my recent letter. It appears there is still a degree of confusion around positive Covid-19 cases, close contacts and who should isolate and when, from the changes in the new National guidance. The guidance is slightly different for children aged under 5 and for those aged between 5 and 18 years of age.

I thought it would be helpful to remind you of the most recent procedures around Covid-19, self-isolation and when individuals can return to school. Please read these carefully. The advice from the Scottish Government has changed since last term and there are new definitions of who is classed as a **close contact** and when and how long they are expected to isolate.

**When should we isolate?**

If you, your child or anyone else in your home develops any of the following symptoms they **must not** come to school. **They and all other members of the household should stay at home** as soon as their symptoms start, self-isolate, and take a PCR test. Find out more on **NHS Inform**. The symptoms of coronavirus (Covid-19) are:

- a new continuous cough and/or
- a high temperature and/or
- a loss of, or change in, taste or smell (anosmia).

**If anyone in the family tests positive, that person must continue to self isolate.** Test and Protect will contact them to provide tailored advice on what to do.

**What if others in the home test negative?**

If someone in your household has symptoms you must all stay at home until you have booked and had the results from a PCR test.

**If your child is aged between 5 and 18 and their PCR test is negative, they can return to school.** (Even if someone else in the household has tested positive and is continuing to self-isolate.) Keep an eye on them, to make sure they don't develop symptoms later. If symptoms develop, they must self-isolate immediately, and you should book them another PCR test.

Anyone over 18 who is fully vaccinated, has no symptoms, and has had a negative PCR test can also return to school or work.

**Children aged under 5** who are in contact with a positive case are exempt from self-isolation unless they develop symptoms. Parents are encouraged to arrange a PCR test but this is not mandatory.

### **Who is likely to be regarded as a close contact?**

Public Health Scotland are no longer asking whole class groups or "bubbles" to isolate, if a member of the class tests positive for Covid-19. Close contacts are now regarded only as anyone from the household, or anyone who has stayed overnight, where there is a confirmed case of Covid-19. This may extend to anyone who has spent a prolonged period in a household setting - sharing meals, bathrooms etc - with a confirmed Covid-19 case.

If you suspect your child may have been in very close contact with a confirmed case of Covid-19 then it is better to isolate until they are tested.

### **Testing**

We are asking all secondary school pupils to test at home twice a week but as a family you can all test regularly. It's really important to do this and to record test results.

Fife Council and NHS Fife are also carrying out **Community Testing** for those with **no** symptoms in a number of areas in Fife. These tests are free for everyone. If you or a member of your household has Covid-19 symptoms visit **NHS Inform** to arrange a test. Tests can also be arranged by calling 0800 028 2816.

### **Residential trips for schools**

Residential trips can now go ahead as they did prior to March 2020.

Risk assessments will be carried out before trips and all residential settings will have all necessary Covid-19 measures in place. Hygiene continues to be a priority.

The benefits to the children, who have already had to deal with 18 months of disruption, are substantial, both mentally and physically. Residential trips are part of a normal school experience. However, parents will always have the choice whether to send their child on a trip or not.

It would be helpful if, prior to heading off on a residential trip, your children could take an LFD test. This is not mandatory, of course, but it helps keep everyone safe and could be part of your family's routine testing.

Finally, pupils, parents and staff are kindly reminded to respect the confidentiality of individual pupils and staff who may or may not have Covid-19.

I hope this helps explain the new guidance a little more and has helped to reassure you that our schools are doing everything they can to keep our children safe and healthy. You can help us do that too by regularly testing and taking up the offer of vaccinations when they are available.

Stay safe.

Carrie Lindsay

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carrie Lindsay".

Carrie Lindsay, Executive Director (Education & Children's Services)