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| TO ALL PARENTS/CARERS |  | **EDUCATION & CHILDREN’S SERVICES** |
| Carrie Lindsay 03451 555555 ext. 480218  Our Ref: CL/CG  15 December 2021 |

Dear Parent/Carer

You will be aware that a key aim, at this time, is to ensure that our schools/ELC settings stay open, if possible, to minimise further disruption to education. The risk mitigations that we have in place in our schools/ELC settings, which at times may appear more restrictive than those for us more generally, keep our children, young people and staff as safe as possible. To ensure that we can continue to do this all children, young people, staff and parents/carers are being asked to continue to implement and strictly observe these.

In light of the emergence of the Omicron Covid 19 variant, the number of cases being seen and the speed at which the variant appears to spread, we have received new advice from the Scottish Government regarding isolation periods for anyone with Covid-19, or anyone who is a close contact of someone with Covid-19.

I wanted to take the opportunity to confirm these new procedures with you and would ask that you take the time to read the following information carefully, so that you understand what is required of your child(ren) and young people should they develop symptoms, test positive or be identified as a close contact.

Importantly, the advice from the Scottish Government, on who is classed as a **close contact, has not changed, but** when and how long they are expected to isolate **has** now changed

**When should we isolate?**

If you, your child or anyone else in your home develops any of the following symptoms you or they **must not** come to school. **They and** **all other members of the household should stay at home** as soon as symptoms start, self-isolate, and take a PCR test. Find out more on [**NHS Inform**](https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/test-and-protect/coronavirus-covid-19-testing). 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).

**Please note: Anyone displaying symptoms of Covid-19 should not take an LFD test but must arrange to have a PCR test.**

**If anyone in the family tests positive, all household contacts of all cases, regardless of which variant is suspected, must isolate for 10 days.** This applies to **everyone in the household**, irrespective of age, testing negative or being vaccinated. (There may be some exemptions to this for anyone in the family delivering critical services.)

If you are a low-income worker and Test and Protect tell you to self-isolate you may be able to get a £500 Self Isolation Support Grant. You do not need to pay this grant back. You can find out if this applies to you at <https://www.mygov.scot/self-isolation-grant.>

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

If anyone in a household has symptoms all household members must stay at home until they have booked and had the results from a PCR test. **If anyone in the household tests positive, the whole household must isolate for 10 days** **This applies to everyone in the household, irrespective of age, testing negative or being vaccinated.**

Should your child be required to self-isolate, but they remain well, their school will provide appropriate tasks/activities for them to complete at home.

**Testing**

We are asking all secondary school pupils to continue 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,**](https://www.fife.gov.uk/kb/docs/articles/health-and-social-care2/coronavirus-covid-19/community-groups/asymptomatic-community-testing) for those with **no**symptoms, in several areas in Fife. These tests are free for everyone.

If you or a member of your household has Covid-19 symptoms visit [**NHS Inform**](https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/test-and-protect/coronavirus-covid-19-testing) to arrange a test. Tests can also be arranged by calling 0800 028 2816.

**Remote Learning**

As has been the case throughout this session, should the staffing position in any one school/ELC setting mean that whole classes, year groups or indeed the whole school/ELC setting need to be at home, remote learning will be made available for pupils.

We fully recognise the importance of children being in school but given the extended isolation period now in place for **all positive cases of Covid-19 and their household contacts, it is possible that this might be required in individual settings.** We will continue to do everything we can to avoid this, however, if this is the best way to keep our children, young people and staff safe, while trying to minimise the risk of disruption to families, your school will be in contact with you directly to advise.

Should this be required, remote learning will include a combination of ‘live’ interactions between teacher and learners and learning which takes place away from the direct presence of the class teacher. The balance of ‘live’ interactions and independent tasks will be dependent on the availability of teachers. Learning at home activities will include opportunities to consolidate and extend learning, taking account of and meeting the needs of learners and their families. Tasks and activities may include use of suggested websites, pre-recorded lessons, research, project work, practical opportunities and problem solving. Whilst some of these tasks will require use of a digital device, many will not. Children will be encouraged to engage in learning that keeps them active and allows them to work independently.

**Café Inc**

All families entitled to the Free School Meal Allowance are to receive a payment from the Scottish Government over the holiday period. In addition, Fife Council will be running the popular Café Inc lunch clubs. Packed lunches ‘to go’ will be available in a range of venues over the holidays and these are free to all children and families. There’s no need to book, just drop in and pick up free food. Visit [www.fife.gov.uk/cafeinc](http://www.fife.gov.uk/cafeinc) for more details.

You can find further guidance through the Fife Council Covid Community Helpline at [covid.communityhelpline@fife.gov.uk](mailto:covid.communityhelpline@fife.gov.uk) or by phone on 0800 952 0330.

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 testing regularly and taking up the offer of vaccinations when they are available.

It just leaves me to wish you all a very happy holiday and I look forward to welcoming our children back to school in the new year. Stay safe.

Yours sincerely



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