

Education, Communities & Organisational Development

Moray Council
Elgin Moray IV30 1BX

email: Education@moray.gov.uk
Website: www.moray.gov.uk

11 August 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope you have all had a chance to relax over the school holiday period and enjoyed the opportunity to reconnect with friends and family. I write with a few updates in relation to Covid-19 in advance of the new school year which I hope will be helpful to you.

[National Guidance on reducing the risks in schools.](#)

Updated guidance on reducing the risk of COVID-19 in schools has been published. The guidance introduces an important change to self-isolation arrangements. From the start of term:

- Whole classes and large groups will no longer be required to self-isolate for 10 days if a member of the class/group tests positive
- Only the children and young people who Public Health believe are at the highest risk of being exposed to infection will be asked to self-isolate and take a PCR test
- A negative PCR test result will enable an asymptomatic learner to return to school and end their period of self-isolation.
- Only those returning a positive PCR result or displaying symptoms will be asked to complete their 10-day isolation.

Families will still be advised of positive cases in their child's class and we ask that you remain vigilant to the symptoms of COVID-19 in order to limit any risk to our children and young people.

The vast majority of control measures in place in June 2021 will remain in place until at least the end of September. This includes the need for secondary pupils to wear face coverings on school transport and in schools. Primary children are no longer required to wear face coverings on school transport. One-way systems, physical distancing and staggered lunch and breaks may remain in place as well as enhanced cleaning arrangements. All hygiene measures will continue including enhanced cleaning and sanitization. The change in contact tracing arrangements will allow schools to relax some arrangements put in place regarding 'bubbles/groupings' and schools will consider what this means when they return for the new term.

You should note that a precautionary approach has been advised in the initial period of return. Updated risk assessments will either be published on school websites or shared using other means when reviewed and agreed. Unfortunately this includes continuing to limit the number of visitors to those essential to support children. If you have particular concerns regarding your child starting nursery for the first time or at a new school, in P1 or S1, please do not hesitate to discuss this with the Head Teacher or Manager from Monday 16 August.

Moray Council will review local arrangements following the publication of updated national guidance anticipated at the end of September. We will keep you up to date with any resultant changes.

Testing arrangements

All school staff and secondary pupils who engage in the LFD testing programme are encouraged to restart twice weekly, at home LFD testing in the week prior to the return to school. Ideally, tests would be taken on a Tuesday evening or Wednesday morning before going to school and on Sunday evening. For the first week we would ask that secondary pupils test on Monday evening prior to returning. All secondary schools provided test kits to staff and pupils prior to the summer break which can be used for this purpose. If your child did not receive test kits or if you require more, you can access them in a range of different ways, including [ordering online](#) for home delivery, or collecting kits from the nearest location. You can also take a test at a [local test site](#), which may be better for those who need assistance with

testing. Further information is available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested/>

If involved in the programme please make sure that you record your results online, whether positive, negative or void. This helps public health understand what the levels of COVID-19 are and can inform policy on things like mitigations in schools. www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result. Thanks to those of you who continue to support the testing arrangements where Moray had a particularly high uptake.

Eligibility for Vaccine

Some young people aged 12-15 with severe neuro-disabilities, Down's Syndrome, underlying conditions resulting in immunosuppression, and those with profound and multiple learning disabilities may be eligible to receive a COVID vaccination very soon.

Neuro-disability is an umbrella term for conditions associated with impairment involving the nervous system. Conditions such as these broader groupings are:

- All forms of Paralysis, hemiplegias, paraplegias etc.
- Neurological Cancers
- Neurological infections (including encephalitis, polio)
- Congenital disorders likely to affect nervous system
- Neuro-degenerative conditions
- Ataxias
- Motor Neurone Disease
- Demyelinating diseases including MS
- Cerebral Palsy
- SupraNuclear Palsy
- Neuropathies
- Myaesthesia disorders
- Myotonic Disorders
- Musculodystrophies
- Vascular disorders - Intracranial haemorrhages, aneurysms, Strokes, Thrombosis, Arteritis, Dissections
- Spina Bifida, Hydrocephalus
- Neuro Developmental Disorders
- Congenital disorders
- Chromosomal Abnormalities (although Downs syndrome a separate JCVI group for this vaccination group)

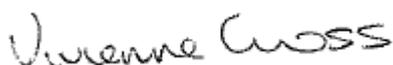
GP records have been used to identify young people who have any of the conditions listed above. GP records have also been used to identify those with underlying conditions resulting in immunosuppression. It should be noted that epilepsy on its own is not included in this list although some children with epilepsy will be included if they have an additional neurological condition noted in medical records.

Young people with learning/Intellectual Disabilities will also be invited to attend for a vaccination. Please note that this group does not include all children with additional support needs, only those with profound and multiple needs.

All young people identified as eligible will have been contacted with arrangements to be vaccinated either at their GP surgery, the Fiona Elcock Centre or other arrangements including at home prior to returning to school.

We look forward to working with you and your children in the new session ahead and schools will communicate changes with you directly once they have welcomed all children and young people in to school and nursery settings. Thank you for your continued support as we continue to recover and learn to live with Covid-19 in our communities.

Yours sincerely



Vivienne Cross
Head of Education (Chief Education Officer)