

School Return Frequently Asked Questions PARENTS



DUE TO THE NATURE OF THE CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES THIS INFORMATION/GUIDANCE MAY CHANGE

TRANSPORT

Will bus transport be available and if so how can social distancing be guaranteed?

Arrangements for this are being considered. Where possible parents/carers may wish to transport their own child. It is possible that journeys will be staggered with a limited number on board to support social distancing. Where possible children and young people should be encouraged to walk/cycle to school in keeping with active travel.

Will privilege transport be available for children in September 2020 ?

Due to social distancing requirements on school transport, the Service will not be able to offer privilege transport for any pupils in September 2020.

TRANSITION

What transition arrangements will be available for children starting school and those moving to secondary school?

Many schools have already started their transition programmes virtually through videos etc. From the week beginning 15th June there may be an opportunity for schools visits. Individual school staff will be in contact with parents/carers to make arrangements for their setting. Visits will likely be very different for every establishment due to health, safety, numbers and physical distancing.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

How will social distancing be ensured in class/school buildings?

Classroom seating arrangements will be set up to allow for a 2m distance between children and adults. Children and young people where possible will be limited to certain areas with movement throughout school buildings kept to a minimum. Signage and one way systems or alternative measures will also be in place by August to limit passing.

What about breaks and lunches – will there be social distancing?

Yes social distancing will be in place with staggered break times. Lunches may be eaten in classrooms and children/young people will be limited to identified areas in the yard that takes into account social distancing. Groups of children/young people will also have designated entrances/exits to limit contact.

If there are currently multiple Primary 1 classes in a school, how can space be provided to teach all these children when class numbers have to be reduced to maintain social distancing?

Children will attend school on a part time basis with work being carried out at home when they are not at school. This is known as blended learning. Schools will be organised so that classes adhere to social distancing so not all year groups may attend at the same time. Individual school arrangements will be communicated to parents when these have been finalised.

Will classes be working as a bubble?

Children and young people will be kept where possible in the same group and limited to an identified area. This may be more difficult in secondary schools depending on subject choices. Where possible teachers will come to young people to limit movement.

LUNCHES/BREAKFAST CLUBS

Will Breakfast Clubs operate, and will school dinners be available as normal?

Planning for Breakfast Clubs is still under consideration. A mixture of hot meals and packed lunches will be available in schools from August 2020.

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LEARNING/CURRICULUM

When will parents be told about their children/young people returning e.g. days in school – can these be consistent to support working parents?

An agreed model will operate across all NLC with some local arrangements where needed due to the differences in schools. Where possible, school staff will make consistent arrangements to support parents/carers. When finalised, these will be communicated to parents/carers. An outline of the model will be communicated to parents/carers on Monday 22nd June.

Will families be kept together?

We will work towards trying to keep the majority of early years and primary level families together. This may not always be possible in secondary schools due to planning for different year groups.

In the meantime how can children/young people access jotters if they need them?

With regards jotters parents/carers should contact school staff if they require these. Some schools have arrangements in place at local shops.

Will the children of key workers attend school full time?

Discussions are ongoing about how the children of key workers can be supported.

Is NLC looking to develop home learning content centrally rather than each individual teacher having to do this?

Resources have been developed by NLC's Scottish Attainment Challenge Team which all schools can access. National resources are also being developed by Education Scotland staff. In addition NLC is setting up a virtual Digital School which will support learning across the authority. However, your child's own teacher knows them best and will be best placed to make decisions on how to use the resources available and develop their own.

Are there plans to ensure all children/young people have the same access/use of GLOW and TEAMS to support their learning? (e.g. access to teachers online/school videos).

Moving forward further opportunities for professional learning will be available to staff involving our Digital School. Individual schools will be best placed on how to make decisions regarding content and platforms based on guidance from Education Scotland regarding use of Glow. Delivery of learning digitally is being further discussed nationally and through unions.

Will there be a balance between digital and non-digital learning when children/young people are at home?

Individual school staff will make decisions on what learning will be planned based on the needs of the child/young person. This could involve a mix of both digital and non-digital learning.

Will there be support with the teaching element of home schooling to ensure the correct method of teaching/learning is applied to avoid confusion for children?

As children/young people will spend part of their time in school learning methods will be taught by teachers.

What about young people in the Senior Phase, how will they be supported? How will parents/carers know what young people should be doing?

A working group has been set up to support school staff on curriculum models and planning. Once details have been finalised individual schools will communicate arrangements and how it affects their child to parents/carers.

Will there be national exams next year? If not how will young people be assessed?

This will be a decision for the Scottish Qualifications Authority in consultation with the government. School staff will keep parents up to date when any decisions have been made.

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What support will be given to children/young people with ASN in mainstream schools?

As usual children/young people with ASN in mainstream schools will be supported by their own school staff in collaboration with other partners/agencies if appropriate, and in line with individual planning.

Will consideration be given to Health and Wellbeing of children/young people, especially mental health?

Both safety, health and wellbeing will be given priority as children and young people return. Resources have been prepared to support schools by central staff including the educational psychology team. Schools may also prepare their own to support this area.

What support will be given for children/young people who are non-engaging?

School staff will engage with parents/carers to support individuals. With the return to school in August this should be easier due to more regular face to face engagement.

What support will be provided for children/young people who are not able to return to school?

School staff will work with parents/carers to support individual circumstances.

What about children/young people who don't have access to ICT?

Arrangements are in place for schools to lend ICT equipment and arrange access where need is identified.

Is schools' current technology fit for purpose?

Yes. This will also be supplemented by additional government funding/resources for this purpose.

Will support be given to teachers to improve skills in this area? (ICT)

There are already opportunities being provided by both NLC and Education Scotland to support teacher professional development. A digital champion will be identified in all schools to support this.

Will there still be PE/Assemblies?

Physical exercise may be offered if it adheres to guidance regarding social distancing and non-contact. It is unlikely that assemblies will happen in the near future due to space and social distancing, although we will be guided by the latest advice from the Scottish Government.

Will children have their own resources to avoid sharing?

At present schools have been asked to consider their classroom organisation, through individual resource packs for pupils, removal or soft toys and furnishing and minimal furniture. This is continually updated as new guidance becomes available.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS

What will schools look like when children/young people return?

Schools will be very different to allow for space for social distancing. There will be limited resources /furniture so as to support hygiene and limit transfer of germs. Signage on physical distancing and one way systems or alternative measures will also be in place with identified entrances/exits for different classes/year groups. There will also be sanitisation stations for enhanced hand hygiene. More information is given in the videos on the NLC website.

Some of our schools are already overcrowded, has thought been given to use of other buildings?

Yes, if required space in other local authority/community buildings may be used as classrooms. These will be set up to ensure social distancing.

What about outstanding maintenance will this be completed before schools return?

All but essential maintenance has been put on hold. This will restart in line with government guidance therefore it is unlikely that all work outstanding will be completed before schools return in August.



GENERAL

What will happen to the HUBs?

Discussions are in place to allow the HUBs to continue for vulnerable children and those of key workers. Further details regarding these arrangements will be issued when finalised.

How will confirmed cases of Covid 19 be communicated to parents and will contact tracing take place?

Procedures for managing and reporting suspected and/or confirmed outbreaks of Covid 19 will be in line with government and NHS guidance.

Will children be expected to wear school uniform?

Arrangements for uniforms will be communicated to parents/carers by school staff.

Is there an option to have children home 100%? If so, would they have more work sent home in order to keep up with their class? If parents opt to fully home school for say 6 months, would they need to deregister?

There will be an expectation that children/young people attend school if they are able to do so.

Are all families able to have one to one touch in/phone calls?

We are aware that there have been differences across schools regarding this. The guidance was that school staff should prioritise vulnerable families.

What support is being given to vulnerable families?

Vulnerable families have been supported by regular contact from school staff and other relevant agencies where possible. Many families in NLC have also been supported by a range of services including free school meal vouchers and access to ICT support as well as other supports from CLD, educational psychology, Barnardos and other support services.

What can Parent Councils do to support vulnerable families?

Parent Councils should liaise with head teachers about any possible role to support vulnerable families.

Will normal vaccine/flu spray be administered at school as normal?

This will be a decision for the NHS.

Sharing of good practice – can this be promoted?

This is already promoted and celebrated through our own internal communications.

Will parents be invited into school before return to see how the new system will work and see what safety measures will be in place?

Although parents may not be able to visit schools before they return as this would increase the risk of infection, we are exploring alternative options such as a video, so they will know what to expect.

What happens with free school meal vouchers when pupils return for part or alternate weeks?

There is ongoing discussion with regards this and details will be communicated to parents/carers when plans have been finalised.

Will pupils have to wear face masks and will staff be wearing them?

Children will not have to wear face masks. Staff may wear them if in line with Health Protection Scotland guidance.

Will child-minders be allowed to collect the children from school? Will there be after school provision?

Arrangements regarding this will be in line with government guidance at the time and may change as updates are issued.



SPECIFIC TO ASN

What support will be given to children/young people who cannot return due to shielding?

School staff will work closely with parents/carers to create a bespoke learning programme to meet individual needs.

What about families who have a child/young person who is shielding? Will siblings have to attend school?

Families at all times should be guided by the latest NHS guidance. School staff will work with parents/carers to support individual circumstances.

What about adult/child ratios will this be taken into consideration when thinking about social distancing?

Social distancing will be a priority at all times. Personal Protection Equipment will be used where Health Protection Scotland guidance dictates its requirement.

What will classrooms look like?

Classrooms will be very different to allow for space for social distancing and to minimise movement around the buildings. Furniture and materials have been limited to support good hygiene and limit transfer of germs. More information is given in the videos on the NLC website.

How will children/young people's individual needs be supported? My child has already lost out on so much how will they catch up?

We completely understand concerns by parents/carers as many of the children have missed some element of learning. On return teachers will assess the gaps and support accordingly. Individual risk assessments will be carried out to support all children. Individualised planning will also assist children/young people to support learning gaps.

My child usually receives specialist support will he / she still receive it?

Discussions are ongoing with other agencies/partners what format their specialist support will take e.g. speech and language.

We do not have a reliable device / internet will this stop my child for accessing learning at home?

Arrangements are in place for schools to lend ICT equipment and arrange access where need is identified.

What will transport arrangements look like for children who attend specialist provisions?

Arrangements for this are being considered. Where possible parents/carers may wish to transport their own child. It is possible that journeys will be staggered with a limited number on board to support social distancing.

What support will be given to re-engage children/young people in learning including social skills?

Individual planning will support children and young people's return to school. This will be in consultation with parents/carers. There may be a possibility of access to some sort of HUB during the summer to help support this.

What days and times will my child be in school?

Schools are currently planning what model of learning they will be able to offer in line with government advice. This will be a mix of at home and at school learning (blended learning). When these plans are finalised contact will be made with families to explain how it affects them and when their child/young person should attend.

How many children will be in the class?

This will depend on individual schools in accordance with guidance on social distancing. There are likely to be less children/young people in class than at present.

Will my child have their usual teacher?

Your child may not have their usual teacher due to staff shielding. Your child's own school will be able to let you know this when arrangements have been finalised.



Will my child be in their usual classroom?

This may not be possible for all children due to following guidance on social distancing and availability of space.

What will my child be learning?

Learning will be planned to suit the needs of your child taking into account the time not at school.

What does blended learning mean?

Blended learning is a mixture of learning in school and at home. This is how all schools in Scotland will operate in accordance with government guidance to control the spread of COVID-19.

My child requires intimate care, how will he / she be kept safe?

Personal Protection Equipment will be used where Health Protection Scotland dictates its requirement.

What are the hygiene arrangements?

Schools will follow enhanced hygiene practices including sanitisation stations at all entrances, regular hand washing, regular cleaning and deep cleaning, one way systems or alternative measures and making use of identified zones for children and young people to be stationed to assist in the prevention of infection.

How will social distancing work?

Physical distancing will be implemented wherever practical. It is recognised that this may not be possible or appropriate for some children and young people with additional support needs. Where this is the case bespoke approaches with appropriate PPE should be determined based on individual risk assessment. In general, classroom seating arrangements will be set up to allow for a 2m distance between children and adults. Children and young people where possible will be limited to certain areas with movement throughout school buildings kept to a minimum. One way sign posting or alternative measures will also be in place to limit passing. Social distancing will be in place with break times staggered. Lunches may be eaten in

classrooms and children/young people will be limited to identified areas in the yard. Children/young people will also have designated entrances/exits to limit contact.

If I cannot go into the school how will school communicate with me?

School staff will use a variety of methods to communicate with parents as per current arrangements e.g. phone, groupcall, newsletters, Twitter. Communications from North Lanarkshire Council will also be shared through our corporate communication digital channels.

What are the lunchtime arrangements? What are the playtime arrangements?

These may differ in individual schools however arrangements will be guided by social distancing. Lunches may be eaten in classrooms and children/young people will be limited to identified areas in the yard.

How will school staff orientate my child into the new arrangements?

School staff know your child/young person well and will support them with the new arrangements. This may involve a visit to the school prior to starting back. Although schools will start back in August, not all children will start back at the same time.

What are the transition arrangements?

Many schools have already started their transition programmes virtually through videos etc. From the week beginning 15th June there may be an opportunity for schools visits. Individual school staff will be in contact with parents/carers to make arrangements for their setting.



SPECIFIC TO EARLY YEARS ALLOCATION OF PLACES

What sessions will be allocated to my child?

You will receive a letter from your child's nursery firstly to confirm their place and shortly after another letter to confirm sessions and times allocated to your child. It is likely that this will be a part week placement and we will try to allocate nursery class children the same sessions as siblings who may attend the school.

TRANSITION

What transition arrangements will be available for children starting nursery?

We acknowledge that starting or returning to nursery after the Covid-19 lockdown may be a difficult for adults and children. Your child's nursery will be in touch to make arrangements for your child to start nursery. This will be a different transition than normal due to health, safety, numbers and physical distancing but nursery staff will discuss this with you and consider each individual child's needs.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

How will social distancing be ensured in a nursery setting?

The national advice states that it is not appropriate for young children to maintain the models of physical distancing; both to do to practical issue and in terms of child development. Your nursery will be following the advice that children will stay in smaller groups throughout the nursery session where key staff members will encourage safe play and limit contact with other groups. The ratios have been reduced to support this and children will spend part of their time outdoors. Nursery staff will continue to comfort and assist your child in response to need.

How can you ensure physical distancing at drop-off and pick-up times?

We will stagger the arrival and collection of children to limit contact with others. Once your child is settled, you will be asked to leave your child at the nursery door and a staff member will welcome and register him/her and help to settle them into the nursery.

PLAY AND LEARNING

What will my child be doing in nursery?

On return or starting nursery, your child's safety, health and wellbeing will be a priority and there will be lots of health and wellbeing experiences for your child to participate in. Individual nurseries will plan fun learning experiences for your child based on their interests and needs. Some shared resources will not be available at the moment to prevent transmission of germs and all resources used with the children will be regularly cleaned in line with national guidance.

What will the nursery look like?

The nursery environment will be welcoming and stimulating however it may look a little different to normal. Soft furnishings and toys have been removed to limit transfer of germs and there will be less furniture to support good hygiene. All nursery children will participate in outdoor play on a daily basis.

Will my child receive a snack or lunch during their time at nursery?

Children will continue to be offered snack during their session at nursery, however arrangement regarding lunch still require to be confirmed. There will be a strong focus on hand hygiene and the number of children at a table will be limited. Food hygiene and good food safety practices will be strictly observed to prevent transmission through food.

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