

Our Ref: DB/CF
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Dear parent/carer,

Clarification for August arrangements

You will be aware that the First Minister recently announced updated guidance for the return of our schools and centres, and I wanted to outline the main points in advance of pupils returning. The safety and wellbeing of our pupils and staff is paramount and I know you will continue to support all mitigating actions to ensure our schools and centres are as safe as they can be.

Frequently asked questions are noted below, which hopefully answer any queries you may have about the new school term.

Does my child need to wear a face covering?

Anyone wishing to wear a face covering can do so, however secondary aged pupils (unless medically exempt) must wear a face covering:

- During lessons and when moving around buildings and in communal areas
- On school transport

Please note that the new guidance states that only secondary aged pupils now need to wear face coverings on dedicated school transport.

Does my child need to do twice-weekly, at-home testing?

All secondary aged pupils are asked to commence twice-weekly, at-home testing prior to returning to school on Monday 16th August, and to record their results on the portal.

Does my child need to be vaccinated?

Young people aged 16 and 17 years old are encouraged to take up their offer of vaccination via NHS (this is not taking place in schools). The following young people are also encouraged to seek vaccination:

- 12-15 year olds with specific health conditions or learning disabilities
- Young people aged 12 and over who are household members of someone who is immunosuppressed.

Full details on booking an appointment can be found [here](#).

Will physical distancing continue?

Physical distancing will remain between staff, and between staff and children, where possible.

Will 'bubbles' continue?

Although there is no longer a requirement for bubbles to continue, schools and nurseries will not bring large groups of children together for assemblies, etc.

Will the school day go back to fixed times for start/end and breaks?

Schools will continue to stagger start and end times and breaks and lunches. Individual schools and nurseries will be in touch with parents with any bespoke arrangements in place and if you have any questions please get in touch with your child's Head Teacher/ Head of Centre.

Will I be able to visit my child's school?

Parents should continue to make telephone or digital contact with schools to discuss any concerns or queries they have. Parents should continue to physically distance from each other and wear face coverings when dropping or collecting pupils, even when outside the school perimeter.

What are the new rules on close contacts and self-isolation?

Test and Protect contact tracing will now focus on 'very close contacts' such as home and social interactions, including sleepovers. As such, isolation of bubbles in schools or nurseries will not normally be required. However, if Public Health are concerned about potential clusters, outbreaks or higher community transmission then further measures may be implemented, including longer isolation periods.

What happens if there is a positive case in my child's school/nursery?

Over the last year many parents/carers have received letters from NHS Lanarkshire if their child has been identified as a close contact. The previous blanket requirement for close contacts aged 0-17 years old to self-isolate for 10 days has now been removed and these letters will now not be circulating as regularly. Instead, NHS Lanarkshire's Test & Protect team will directly contact positive cases and any close contacts with public health advice. Following Scottish Government advice, Test & Protect will only identify and directly contact close contacts aged 5-18 who are at the highest risk of being exposed to infection, and they will be asked to self-isolate until they have received a negative PCR test.

Schools will continue to monitor any cases within schools and centres and work closely with NHS Lanarkshire's Public Health team if public health advice is required.

North Lanarkshire will continue to take a cautious, council-wide approach to ensure all measures are being taken to keep our pupils and staff safe. I would like to personally thank you for your ongoing support during these unprecedented times.

Regards,



Derek Brown
Executive Director
Education and Families