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Dear Parent/Carer

I hope you and your family are safe and well.

As you will be aware, the First Minister's announcement on Wednesday 5 January 2022 confirmed a number of changes to the self-isolation rules. Information on these changes and when the rules apply can be found on the NHS Inform website (<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/test-and-protect/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-individuals-with-possible-coronavirus-infection>). In summary:

Regular testing

One of the main mitigations that we have in place is for staff and young people to continue to take at least two lateral flow device (LFD) tests a week and to record their results on the UK government's website (<https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>). LFD test kits were issued to young people prior to the festive break and schools have additional supplies to give out when required.

Positive cases (regardless of vaccination status)

Anyone who tests positive are advised to self-isolate for 10 days. This is the same for everyone, regardless of whether the individual has received three doses of the vaccine or if they have not.

However, it is possible to end self-isolation earlier if the individual returns a negative result on two consecutive lateral flow device (LFD) tests and:

- the first test is taken no earlier than day six
- the second test is taken 24 hours after the first test
- they have no fever.

See Coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance for individuals with possible coronavirus infection on the NHS Inform website (<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/test-and-protect/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-infection>).

Close contacts (with no symptoms or have tested negative)

Anyone who is a close contact can take a daily lateral flow device (LFD) test for seven days instead of self-isolating as long as they are:

- fully vaccinated and have received **three** doses of a COVID-19 vaccine (plus it has been 14 days since the last dose was administered), or
- aged **under** 18 years and 4 months

The results of the daily LFD tests must be negative and the individual must remain without symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). All LFD test results, whether negative, positive, or void, must be recorded online on the UK government website (<https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>).

If someone in your household has symptoms of COVID-19, even if they are waiting on results of a PCR test, others in the household do not need to self-isolate if they meet the above criteria and take a LFD test daily.

If any of the test results are positive or the person develops symptoms, they must immediately self-isolate. See the guidance for positive cases in the section above.

Anyone who has not received three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine will need to book a PCR test and self-isolate (<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>). Even if they get a negative result from that test, they must self-isolate for 10 days.

Children under the age of 5 are encouraged to take a test but are not required to do so.

Advice on confirmatory PCR tests

Where people test positive on a lateral flow device (LFD) test without symptoms, they are now advised that they do not need to get a PCR test to confirm the infection but must follow the current self-isolation advice.

You should report all lateral flow device (LFD) test results, whether positive, negative, or void, on the online portal (<https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>).

These new self-isolation rules only apply to those who test positive after midnight (12:00am) on Thursday 6 January 2022. Any child or young person who tested positive prior to midnight of 6 January 2022 must follow the isolation advice previous provided to them.

Please keep the school informed of your child's absence at all times.

Bubbles in primary

We have re-introduced groupings, also known as bubbles, for primary school children when they are indoors and where it is practical to do so. This is in line with the updated coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance for schools that was announced by the First Minister on 17 December 2021 (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-reducing-the-risks-in-schools/pages/overview/>).

The number of children in a group may vary from school to school based on the unique layout of each building and to minimise disruption to children's learning. In some cases, this may mean whole classes count as one group.

Drop offs and pick ups

The existing drop-off and pick-up arrangements for schools and nurseries remain in place. If there are any specific changes to your school's arrangements, the school will always let you know.

Your continued support with this is greatly appreciated. Please wear a face covering, keep your distance from other people and minimise the time you spend waiting at the school gates where possible. This will also support the messages that we are giving our children about everyone's safety and wellbeing.

If you can walk to school with your child, or even park further away from the school to prevent congestion, please do so. Your support in ensuring our school gates are safe places is greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding at this time when the situation and guidance change so quickly.

Yours sincerely



Steven Quinn
Director of Children's Services