



Director of Children's Services: Helen Budge

Children's Services

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All Parents and Carers

If calling please ask for
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Our Ref: HB/RC/af/H30/C-19/Cor/026

Date: 05 January 2022

Your Ref:

Dear Parents and Carers

**Arrangements for the start of term three, January 2022:
Update to all parents and carers on COVID-19 mitigations and measures in schools
and early learning and childcare settings**

I am looking forward to all children and young people returning to their school or early learning and childcare setting on Thursday 06 January 2022 for the start of term three of session 2021/22.

Ahead of Thursday's return, I write to confirm that, in line with Scottish Government guidance, existing COVID-19 mitigations and measures will continue to be in place in all schools in Shetland Islands Council at the start of the new term.

The mitigations and measures are as follows:

- Updated and regularly reviewed school risk assessments;
- The two metre physical distancing requirements for all staff in settings;
- The use of face coverings for school staff and secondary pupils in their settings;
- The use of hand sanitisers throughout the school day;
- Daily hand sanitisation for all children and young people on arrival at school;
- One way systems throughout schools;
- Enhanced daily cleaning during the school day and further cleaning undertaken daily at the end of each day;
- Parents/carers continuing to be advised to avoid contact with other parents, children and young people at the school entrance, on the way to school, and after school as well as wearing face coverings;
- Careful monitoring to ensure the appropriate level of ventilation and adequate air flow throughout the building with CO2 monitors deployed, monitoring the level of CO2, and temperature in classrooms; and
- Access to asymptomatic, lateral flow, testing kits for all school and early learning and childcare staff and secondary aged learners.

Further to this, up until **Friday 14 January 2022**, the service has decided to:

- Re-introduce the one setting per day principle for all school and early learning and childcare staff;
- Suspend face-to-face parents' evenings that were planned up until the 14 January 2022; and
- Revert to essential visitors to all schools and early learning and childcare settings.

All of these mitigations are designed to limit the potential spread of COVID-19, particularly with the current prevalence of the more contagious Omicron variant.

Moreover, all secondary pupils are strongly advised to take a Lateral Flow Test this evening or tomorrow morning, before their return to school, and then continue to test regularly, at least twice weekly.

Schools have previously provided lateral flow test kits to secondary aged children and young people, which can be used for these purposes. If you do not have test kits, you can access them in a range of different ways, including ordering online for home delivery, or collecting kits from your nearest test site or pharmacy. Further information is available at: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): getting tested in Scotland - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/topics/health/coronavirus/covid-19/getting-tested-in-scotland)

This approach to lateral flow testing is designed to reduce the risk of COVID-19 outbreaks when settings re-open.

As we start the new school term, please continue to be vigilant to the symptoms of COVID-19 within your family household:

- A high temperature or fever;
- A new continuous cough;
- A loss of, or change in sense of smell or taste.

If anyone in your family household develops any **symptoms** of COVID-19, they must not come in to school – they should request a PCR test as soon as possible, and your whole family household should stay at home until the test result comes back.

PCR tests can be ordered using the online form available via the NHS Shetland website homepage: www.shb.scot.nhs.uk

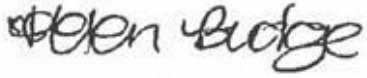
This form is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, and will be picked up by the testing team as soon as possible. If you are unable to access the online form, you can contact a dedicated phone line 01595 532 030 between 9 -12.30 and 2–5pm Monday to Friday.

In the event of a confirmed case(s) of COVID-19 connected to a school or early learning and childcare setting, officers in Children's Services, the school's Head Teacher and colleagues in Public Health will continue to work closely to assess the situation and clarify next-steps, communicating regularly with all the setting's parents and carers.

Thank you for your ongoing support over the last 22 months with the challenging COVID-19 context all of our schools and early learning and childcare settings have been working in, and I wish everyone all the very best with the new term and the year ahead.

If you have any questions about any aspect of this letter, please contact your school's Head Teacher in the first instance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen Budge". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small circular mark at the beginning.

Helen Budge
Director of Children's Services