

About getting to school and physical distancing

Last updated 22 June 2020

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Will children sit at individual desks 2 metres apart? Could class groups be isolated from each other to avoid unnecessary social interaction? Would physical barriers be used in open plan areas to help with this? What is the possibility of the social distancing guidance being reduced to 1m?

The layout of classrooms will take into account physical distancing requirements. There will be a variety of methods used to make sure that groups of children are allocated to specific areas.

On 18 June the Scottish Government said it would review the need for two metre physical distancing. If the rules change, we will adjust the plans accordingly.

Some children can struggle to follow rules for a number of reasons. What is the approach going to be where a child is unable to follow the social distancing rules?

We would expect, based on a full risk assessment, that a school will review each situation on a case by case basis and plan actions with parents, taking into account the individual circumstances. Where physical distancing is not appropriate to the needs of the children in the school, an additional risk mitigation approach will be in

place which may include organising children into small groups with consistent membership, to decrease the number of interactions between different groups. Schools will try to maximise their use of outdoor space.

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How can my child get to and from school safely (including vulnerable children)? How will drop-off/pick-up be managed to maintain physical distancing? How will this work for nursery age children?

There will be staggered drop off and pick up times where needed along with potential alternative entrances. Schools will advise of measures to support physical distancing at these times. We are looking at council transport for children who need this as part of planning for returning on 12 August 2020. We will give you further advice on this as soon as possible.

Will there be support to for Safe Routes to School, to allow children and young people to walk/cycle to school safely? Where you can't pass others safely on paths to school, will the Council put infrastructure in place?

We are encouraging Parent Councils to become involved in reducing the number of cars attempting to come near schools and to develop active travel plans for children.

How will schools give medication to children who need it during the school day while observing physical distancing?

Medication will generally be administered as normal. Schools will follow advice from NHS Lothian regarding some procedures that should not be undertaken in school.

How will physical distancing/small groupings be managed in relation to children with additional support needs?

For some children with additional support needs, it is acknowledged that physical distancing will not be possible, e.g. if they require intimate personal care or if they are unable to understand the need for physical distancing. The risks of not being able to maintain physical distancing will be assessed and discussed with the child's parents.

Where physical distancing is not appropriate to the needs of the children in the school, an additional risk mitigation approach will be in place which may include organising children into small groups with consistent membership, to decrease the number of interactions between different groups.

Will there be physical distancing in ELC settings?

When caring for younger children physical distancing is not desirable or appropriate. Our ELC settings will take other steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff and children; for example, caring for children in small groups and using outdoor space more. Staff and parents/carers will still need to observe physical distancing, and

therefore new arrangements may be put in place for drop off/pick up times to help with this. These measures will be based on public health advice.

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