About cleaning, and protective and infection measures

Last updated 22 June 2020

This section is about safety, cleaning and other measure to help prevent spread of the virus.

Is it safe for my child to go back to school? What assurance can the Council give parents?

All our schools are putting measures into place to make sure pupils and staff are safe and that all relevant guidance is in place and being followed. The decision to

reopen schools is based on evidence that the virus is sufficiently under control. By putting measures in place to keep children and staff at a safe distance from each other and making sure everything is kept clean and hygienic, children can return safely.

How will cleaning be managed? Will this be done outside school hours to optimise pupil attendance?

Cleaning will be completed in line with the current Scottish Government and health guidance, including an enhanced cleaning regime between different groups. The main cleaning activities will take place outside school hours, but some cleaning of communal spaces and toilets will take place during the school day.

Will there be additional cleaning/janitorial staff brought in to manage the extra cleaning requirements?

Our Facilities Management providers are reviewing their resources and refocusing these as necessary so that cleaning is in line with the national guidance, particularly in relation to infection control.

Will staff be wearing personal protective equipment (PPE)?

Staff in our schools will not need to use PPE unless they would normally need to (for example, in a chemistry lesson). PPE is only needed in a very small set of circumstances. This might include where the care of children already involves the use of PPE, in which case schools will continue to make this available to staff.

For children whose care needs mean that additional PPE may be required for the staff working with them to keep everyone safe, individual risk assessments and plans will be drawn up in collaboration with parents and the relevant professionals working with the child. These plans will be in line with advice from NHS Lothian and Health Protection Scotland.

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Will children be required to wear face masks/coverings or not? What happens if masks are compulsory and a child turns up without one?

The current Scottish Government guidance does not require anyone to wear a face mask in school, unless this has been identified through risk assessment, and for a particular task. Staff are provided with appropriate PPE.

If the government guidance around face masks changes this will be reviewed.

What will the expectations for children and young people be in terms of hand washing, use of hand sanitisers and supporting infection control?

Handwashing will be encouraged before and after any activity, such as mealtimes, break times and sporting activities. If children or young people have trouble washing their hands properly, help will be available. Where handwashing facilities are not immediately accessible, then hand sanitisers will be available. Schools will follow Scottish Government guidance.

Someone in our house has coronavirus symptoms - should my child come into school?

No. If you or anyone else in your household develops symptoms of coronavirus such as a high temperature, a new and continuous cough or a loss of/change in smell or taste, **that person must stay at home for seven days.** In addition, **everyone else in the household must stay at home for 14 days**. You can find all the information about what you need to do on the [NHS Inform website.](#)

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Will testing be available to staff, pupils and school transport people?

Schools will follow the Scottish Government's advice on the Test and Protect approach.

If a child or staff member falls ill with COVID-19 how will this be checked and what will the next steps be for detecting the spread and communicating around this? What will the deep cleaning arrangements be in this situation?

Schools have in place contingency plans to deal with positive cases of COVID-19. The Test and Protect process will be followed. In addition, schools will have arrangements in place to isolate potentially infected areas, and arrange for the appropriate level of cleaning, in line with Health Protection Scotland guidance.

If classes are split and someone in that class has parents showing symptoms will all children have to isolate?

The Scottish Government's guidance will be followed in schools, as well as current self-isolation rules. If a child has parents displaying symptoms, then they should self-isolate for 14 days. There is no requirement for anyone else to self-isolate, unless they have been contacted by the NHS Test and Protect service, or if they themselves have symptoms of COVID-19.

What will the Council's approach be to checking with families where there are underlying health conditions (not necessarily among children in schools, but parents or other family members)? Will this be considered as part of the planning for return to school? Will parents/carers where this is the situation be invited in to see the mitigation measures before children return to school?

As part of each school's individual risk assessment, particular regard will be paid to those who fall within the vulnerable categories, as defined by the Scottish Government. Any risk assessment to support a pupil will be shared with their parent/carer.

What happens if the virus recurs? Will schools have to close again?

If the virus gets worse after restrictions have been lifted, schools may need to close again, possibly even at short notice. These decisions will be taken based on national, expert advice and Scottish Government guidance, and your child's school will make you aware of the specific arrangements.

What happens if my child or someone else in our household is shielding?

If your child is shielding, they should continue to learn from home, and will be fully supported by their teachers to do so. If you have any concerns about your child returning to school, you should contact their teacher or headteacher to discuss this.

If a child lives in a household where someone else is shielding, you should continue to follow the latest government guidance on shielding and contact your child's teacher or head teacher to discuss this further.

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