

Wallace Hall Update – 19.02.21 - COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

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Public Health Phone Number: 01387 272724

NHS24 Phone Number: 111

NHS Website: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/>

Dear Parent/Carer

WHOLE SCHOOL

We hope you enjoyed the mid-term break and that you managed to get some fresh air and a rest from home learning.

The plans for ELC, P1-3 and some Senior Phase pupils are going ahead for next week.

Dr Gillian Brydson sent out a very informative letter today, please click on the link below to view the letter:

<https://bit.ly/37qeUcq>

We would like to draw your attention to some of the points she made, and in bold, we have highlighted some of the changes:

Health and Safety

Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our pupils and staff remains paramount. Risk assessments for all schools are being updated in light of the newly published guidance. In all schools there continues to be 2m physical distancing for all adults. **In secondary schools, 2m physical distancing will apply to everyone in the building, including pupils.** As the phased return begins next week, we will again reinforce with pupils and staff the key messages about the current effective mitigations to control virus transmission: **face coverings for adults and senior phase pupils;** regular hand washing routines and good ventilation. We appreciate your support in ensuring that your child does not attend school if they are displaying COVID-19 symptoms. We ask for your support in reinforcing these messages with your child at home.

Drop Off and Pick Up

As before, schools may implement staggered start and finish times, to safely manage drop off and pick-up times. Given the ongoing stay at home message in place across Scotland, we would ask that, if possible, only one parent/carer comes to the school at drop off and pick-up times. In line with Government advice, we would ask you to maintain 2m physical distancing with other parents at the school gates. All schools will continue to restrict access to their grounds and/or buildings. As before, face coverings should continue to be worn by all adults (unless exempted) when they go to the school. **We would really appreciate it if all parents could ensure that they do not approach our staff at a distance of less than 2m.**

Catering

Free School Meals will be provided to all Early Learning and P1-3 pupils who return to in-school learning. In addition, our canteen facilities will also be available to senior phase pupils who are attending school for practical subjects and to pupils attending the Childcare Hub. The menu will be very similar, if not the same as, the normal school menu.

Transport

Transport will be provided as normal to all eligible pupils returning to school. **In secondary school transport, 2m physical distancing will be observed as an additional mitigation measure.** Face coverings should be worn by all children and young people aged over 5, in line with the Government position on public transport. Car sharing with someone from another household continues to be strongly discouraged at this time.

Asymptomatic Home Testing for Staff and Senior Phase Pupils

As part of the range of COVID-19 risk reduction mitigations in schools, an asymptomatic testing programme is being made available to all staff and senior phase pupils. Participation in the programme will be encouraged but voluntary. Regular testing will help to identify asymptomatic individuals in school environments at the earliest possible opportunity and ask them and their close contacts to self-isolate, thus minimising the likelihood of them passing on the virus. We are pleased with the high level of senior phase pupils who have opted in to taking the tests. This will really help towards Wallace Hall being a safer place to be for everyone.

Uniform – School Uniform **must** be worn by all children attending school from 22nd February, whether returning to class or to the Childcare Hub. **Please ensure that your child also has a warm jumper with them which they can wear in class. We are required to have windows open for good ventilation.**

Childcare Hub

All of the mitigations will also apply to all children in the childcare Hub. Pupils in The Hub will have slightly different arrangements for lunchtime and will not be allowed to mix indoors with any pupils who are in because of the phased return. They must also wear school uniform and in the secondary they must wear face coverings at all times and maintain 2m social distancing.

Support for Parents/Carers

Please find below a few links to some very useful information to help support parents/carers at this difficult time:

<https://www.triplep-parenting.uk/net/uk/hot-parenting-topics/my-child/and-school-life/>

<https://www.place2be.org.uk/our-services/parents-and-carers/>

<https://clearyourhead.scot/>

ICT Access

If your child(ren) does not have access to a device like a computer, laptop or tablet at home please email the school to let us know. We will try to help with this.

We have been advised by the local authority that the supply of laptops has now been used up and there are no more laptops available at this time. However, they are awaiting a further supply of devices through government funding but that could be a few weeks away. In the meantime, if you do feel that your children would benefit from a device, please continue to let us know and we can add you to the list for future availability.

School staff contacting parents/carers

Please be aware that the majority of school staff are working from home at present. Therefore, should they need to make contact with parents by phone, they will do so from a withheld number or 'no caller ID'. This is as per the Regional Policy on contact during Lockdown. We're aware that lots of people do not answer calls from withheld numbers as they are often nuisance calls. However, for the period of school closure we'd appreciate if these could be answered to allow us to engage with parents more effectively.

PRIMARY and ELC

Following the letter from Gillian Brydson, letters to parents and carers will be emailed later today with further details about the return to school on Monday:

- 1) ELC
- 2) P1 - 3
- 3) P4 - 7
- 4) Primary Hub

The Parent Club website has been updated with advice about helping ELC and P1 - 3 children return to school on Monday. Please click on the following links for up-to-date information:

<https://www.parentclub.scot/topics/coronavirus/winter-startback/scottish-schools-reopening>

<https://www.parentclub.scot/topics/coronavirus/winter-startback/scottish-nurseries-reopening>

ACADEMY

Return to school – Senior Phase Pupils

Some Senior Phase Pupils will be returning to school on a part-time basis from Monday 22nd February, so they can complete practical course work. Individualised timetables **have now been** sent out for pupils (by Thursday 18th February) who have to return to school on week beginning 22nd February. **If you do not receive a timetable, then your child should not return to school.** The pupils will be taught in their designated classes for the whole morning, ending at 1.10pm. **Please check your junk folder in case our email has gone into there.**

School Transport will be provided in the mornings and at the normal end of the school day i.e. 3.45pm. If your child(ren) wish to leave at lunchtime you would need to make arrangements for them to be picked up or to take alternative public transport or to walk home. However, there will be a study class available for any pupils who wish to remain in school for the afternoon. Any pupil remaining in school must attend the study class. **Please note that 2m social distancing will be mandatory on all school transport as is the wearing of face coverings.**

Lunchtime – pupils who are remaining in school for the afternoon will not be allowed to leave the school grounds – they can either buy lunch in the school canteen or they can bring a packed lunch. Academy pupils should pre-order each morning in the usual way. They should do this for break and lunch choices. If they don't order in the morning there will be nothing available for them. Normal charges will be in place.

School Uniform – All pupils coming into school **must** wear uniform. This includes children attending the Childcare Hub. **Please ensure that your child also has a warm jumper with them which they can wear in class. We are required to have windows open for good ventilation.**

COVID Testing – **If you have not already requested a testing kit for your senior phase child returning to in-school learning and you wish to do so please let us know either by email or by calling the school office.**

Further supplies of kits will be given to pupils as and when they are required. Pupils will be offered the chance of further test kits each week they are in school.

S4/S5 Leavers

Please click on the link below if your child(ren) are planning to leave school this summer:

<https://bit.ly/3iR7BPk>

Outstanding Learning Agreements – S4-S6

Students 16 years of age between 1 October 2020 and 28 February 2021, may be eligible for an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) from January 2021. Further information is available on the following link.

<https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15247/EMA>

All applications should be made by filling in the online application form below as soon as possible.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=9h0uvVqNZ0imR0h8KnQC3oVzg206p41EomP0uLwJEUhUOEpbVjNDQUZLWE1LQ0E3TVBKUK5MRjYzSiQIQCN0PWcu>

Support

We are aware that some pupils understandably struggled with Home Learning during the last lockdown and also we are aware that the last lockdown had a significant impact on the mental health of pupils, particularly with stress and anxiety. We have identified a number of pupils who we feel could benefit from support either with home learning, organisation or mental health and someone from school will be in touch to offer support, this is entirely optional and we will respect the wishes of pupils and families with this.

However, our support is not limited to a select group. Our Health and Wellbeing page of our website has a number of useful resources and links that may help pupils and/or parents/carers in supporting their children's wellbeing. There are also contact details for our PTs of Pupil Support, who can be contacted at any time for any pupil or family that requires support. The link to the page is

<https://www.wallacehall.co.uk/health-wellbeing>

We have also produced a Frequently Asked Questions document regarding Home Learning which can be found here: <https://bit.ly/2LwXGIm>

Finally, we are aware how difficult a period this will be both academically and mentally for pupils and families. Please get in touch with the school if you feel there is anything we can do and we shall do our best to help.