

Wallace Hall Update – 09.12.21 - COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

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NHS24 Phone Number: 111

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

Dear Parent/Carer

WHOLE SCHOOL

Earlier this week the First Minister provided an update on the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus) in Scotland. In particular, the First Minister outlined the actions that we are all being asked to take in order to minimise the spread of the virus.

It is hoped that through our collective actions, it will minimise the need for further restrictions to be introduced.

As such, the First Minister asked for the following actions to be adopted with immediate effect:

Adherence to Current Measures

The First Minister emphasised the need for us all to return back to basics. We all need to strengthen current practices:

- **Wear face coverings** – ensuring that we wear face coverings in all designated areas
- **Hand and surface hygiene** – cleaning our hands and surfaces before use
- **Ventilation** – ensuring that any shared spaces are well ventilated

Testing and Isolation

If you or your child(ren) have symptoms of COVID-19, they should go for a PCR test and isolate until they receive the result.

If the result of their PCR test is positive, they must isolate for 10 days.

If the result of their PCR test is negative, they can return to school **only if**:

- They are not displaying any symptoms

In her update, the First Minister made reference to the new Omicron variant. Cases of this variant are currently increasing across Scotland. If you are identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive for Omicron, you must isolate for 10 days.

The First Minister emphasised the importance of regular testing. You can have the virus without displaying any symptoms. That is why regular testing is important. The First Minister asked that everyone takes a lateral flow test before every occasion when you intend to mix with other people e.g. going to someone's house, going to a restaurant, meeting others etc.

Lateral flow kits for Secondary pupils are distributed in school and for everyone else can be collected from any of our [Community Testing sites](#), from your local pharmacy or ordered online www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests

Vaccination

The First Minister also emphasised that vaccination is the best protection against the virus. If anyone has not yet been vaccinated, it is not too late to do so.

If you are unwell at all, with the main symptoms of COVID or other cold/flu-like symptoms, you can book a PCR test by clicking on the following link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/get-tested-for-coronavirus/>

We continue to do everything possible within school as far as mitigations are concerned as we are sure you will be doing the same at home. As positive cases are again on the rise in Dumfries & Galloway and in our community testing is vital to ensuring the safety of everyone in our school and our families.

However, we are aware that some pupils are discarding the Lateral Flow Device Test Kits that they are being provided within school. These are distributed through their Health & Wellbeing classes. If you have given consent for your child to accept the LFD Test Kits, can you please ensure that they have them and are carrying out their tests regularly, twice a week is the recommended testing regime. Once they have completed the test it is important that they record the result on the Scottish Government website – details are in the booklet provided with the test kits, even if it is negative.

Further information specific to our school is available in the Primary and Academy sections.

If your child shows any symptoms of COVID-19, please keep them at home and book a PCR test and inform the school at the earliest opportunity. This also applies if anyone in the home has developed symptoms or has tested positive. **If you advise us that your child has received a positive result, whether it is a Lateral Flow Test or a PCR Test, please let us know if any other school pupils have been in close contact with your child. Close contact would include sleepovers and also spending a lot of time together out of school. This will really help to keep our school community safe as we can arrange for them to self-isolate much more quickly if we have that information from you.**

If your child is contacted by the Track & Trace Team, you should follow advice given by them. This advice would include that your child should self-isolate, book a PCR test and remain at home until they have a result. If it's negative, they can return to school. If it's positive they will be advised by Test and Protect Team to self-isolate and given an end date.

If anyone in your household has symptoms of COVID-19, please keep your child(ren) at home until the person receives a result of a PCR test. You may wish to book your child(ren) in for a PCR test too. If positive you will be contacted by Test & Protect and given advice from them.

Some parents will have received a 'Warn & Inform' letter from school this week. This letter is only to inform you that there is a confirmed case of a person connected with Wallace Hall. If you receive one of these letters you don't need to do anything different except be more vigilant of anyone in your household having symptoms. If your child has been identified as a close contact you will hear directly from Test & Protect. If we, or the person who has tested positive, identifies your child as a close contact, and your child is in school at that time, we will contact you and ask you to collect them.

Disabled Parking Bays

We are very concerned about health and safety issues surrounding cars and buses coming into school and would appreciate your support in ensuring the safety of all the young people at Wallace Hall. Some parents are continuing to park in the disabled spaces or in the drop-off/pick-up area outside the primary school. We would appreciate your co-operation in using the main school car park unless you or your child is disabled and have an official disability badge displayed inside the front windscreen of the vehicle. Parents who are making use of this area should ensure that it is used just to drop off students. If you wish to wait at the school or if you are collecting a young person, please use the main car park. Please note that you should not be using the drop-off area **at all** between 8.30am and 9.15am and 3pm and 4pm, as per the signage in place along the drop-off bay. This route is **only** for buses and disabled badge holders at these times.

School Photos

As a number of pupils missed their school photos there will be a catch-up session tomorrow, Friday 10th December 2021. Any pupils who missed out previously will have the opportunity to have their school photo taken then.

PRIMARY AND ELC**Mitigations in place**

- Adults maintain a minimum of 1 metre social distancing at all times from other adults within the school building.
- Staff members wear face coverings when within a minimum of 1m of a child or other adult and when moving around the building. Staff members can choose to wear a face covering at any time.
- Windows/doors are open to allow good ventilation.
- Good hand hygiene takes place with frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Children work within 'class bubbles' and do not mix with other bubbles. This is maintained throughout the day, including during playtime and lunchtime.
- Pupils who have PE should come to school in PE kit on those days. They will remain in PE kit all day.
- PE will continue to take place outdoors where possible but the guidance now says that indoors PE is okay.
- Enhanced cleaning.
- An asymptomatic testing programme is made available to all staff. Participation in the programme is encouraged but voluntary.
- Primary aged children are no longer required to wear face coverings on school/public transport.

Extra Layers

Please could parents and carers ensure that your child has a cardigan or jumper with them each day, and if you would like to send an extra layer than please do. The windows in the classrooms are open to allow for extra ventilation.

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 a minimum of 1m 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 1m.**

Home Learning During Self-Isolation

In the primary school we will email parents each morning with work covered in class the previous day. If your child is unwell, however, they are not expected to complete the work. If your child has completed the classwork and is looking for more work, please get in touch with the school and we will point you in the right direction for accessing additional resources.

ACADEMY

Mitigations

- **All** pupils and staff members must wear face coverings at all times in classes and around the building (people who are exempt for health reasons and for whom the school have written communication from a parent do not have to and also when people are actually eating or drinking they can remove their face coverings briefly).
- **In class pupils no longer have to maintain 2m social distancing from each other (from 12th April), although pupils should maintain a minimum of 1m social distancing from staff members in class and at all times.**
- Pupils and staff should try to maintain a minimum of 1 metre social distancing at all other times within the school building, in corridors and other communal areas.
- Be outdoors as much as possible - wear appropriate clothing for all weathers.
- Pupils who have PE should come to school in school uniform (even if they have PE first thing) and bring PE kit with them. We are now allowed to use changing rooms so facilities will be available to all pupils to change in and out of PE kit.
- PE will continue to take place outdoors where possible but the guidance now says that indoor PE is okay.
- Keep windows/doors open to allow good ventilation - they should be open for at least 15 minutes before people come into class.
- Maintain good hand hygiene by washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and use hand sanitiser when soap and water isn't available.
- Always wipe down your workstation before and after use, in every class, using the anti-bacterial wipes provided.
- Secondary pupils must wear face coverings on school/public transport.

We advised you in December that all secondary pupils can now download the Protect Scotland App which helps Public Health to identify close contacts of anyone testing positive, who also has the App. We see this as a positive move and one that will help to keep all of our pupils and staff members safe. This is of course optional but we would encourage all secondary pupils to do this. To find out more about the App please click on the following link:

<https://protect.scot/>

S4, S5 and S6 Prelims

Although the exam diet has been cancelled for the past two academic sessions the SQA are planning on running an exam diet in April, May and June in 2022. In order to prepare our S4, S5 and S6 pupils for this we will be running a Prelim diet of assessments from Monday 10th January to Friday 4th February 2022. Full details of the Prelim plans were shared with all pupils during their HWB lessons on Tuesday 30th November. The Prelim presentation watched by pupils and all other accompanying information has been shared on the school website at the link shown below.

<https://www.wallacehall.co.uk/pi-sqa-exams>

Extra-Curricular Sports Matches

We are very pleased that extra-curricular sports matches are taking place again. However, we do need to ensure that we are complying with all COVID mitigations to protect everyone. We would ask you please to encourage your child to do a Lateral Flow Test the night before participating in any extra-curricular matches. LFD Test Kits are distributed fortnightly in school but if you need any more please contact the school office.

Home Learning During Self-Isolation

In the Academy S1-S3 pupils should access any work in their subject folders on Satchel One and S4-S6 pupils should access any work in their subject folders in Microsoft Teams. If your child is unwell, however, they are not expected to complete the work.

With the increased use of technology, such as Teams and Satchel One, we are now better placed to set work for pupils and keep in touch with them. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that teachers have lessons to prepare and deliver in class, and so they don't always have the time to set detailed / comprehensive lessons for those who

are absent. Where possible, we will endeavour to set work as close as possible to that which will be delivered in class. However, it may well be a 'scaled back' version due to workload in school.

If your child has completed the classwork and is looking for more work, please get in touch with the school and we will point you in the right direction for accessing additional resources.

School Uniform

School uniform should be worn at all times and is not weather dependent. The uniform policy states that only a black v-neck jumper must be worn so the school tie can be seen. During the current situation with COVID and the need for all areas of the school to be well-ventilated, classrooms may be cold. In this case, with the teacher's authorisation, pupils can wear their jackets/hoodies in that class. This will change on a class-by-class basis depending on how cold each classroom is. Individual teachers will make that judgement.

Vaccinations for 12-15 and 16 & 17 year olds

- If your child hasn't had their vaccine, you can get information on how and where they can go by clicking on the following link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/vaccines/>

Asymptomatic Home Testing for Staff and ALL SECONDARY Pupils

All secondary pupils should test themselves twice each week, using the Lateral Flow Tests provided by the school.

As part of the range of COVID-19 risk reduction mitigations in schools, an asymptomatic testing programme has been made available to all school staff and secondary pupils. Participation in the programme is 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. This will really help towards Wallace Hall being a safer place to be for everyone.

If you have not already signed up for the self-testing kits for your child(ren) you can do so by clicking on the link below to see a copy of the correspondence and then completing the Microsoft Form link within it:

https://645e8b6e-becd-4bbd-988d-5cb7cd92fae4.filesusr.com/ugd/92da19_b9086bcc88c34f64be9eb362a5c6a551.pdf

If your child tests positive on their Lateral Flow Test and you register their result, you should book a PCR Test. The PCR Test is more accurate and you will usually have a result within a few hours, **although due to the large number of tests taking place at present, your result could take longer**. It is important that your child and all members of the household self-isolate until the PCR Test result is confirmed. If it is positive you will be contacted by someone from NHS Test and Protect who will advise you of your isolation dates and ask you for more information on close contacts.

More information on the asymptomatic testing programme is available on the Support DG website: [SupportDG - Dumfries and Galloway Council - Asymptomatic Testing in Scottish Primary, Secondary and Special Schools, and ELC Providers \(dumgal.gov.uk\)](https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/support-dg)