

## Wallace Hall Update – 08.03.21 - COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

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

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Dear Parent/Carer

## WHOLE SCHOOL

Following last week's Scottish Government announcement where the First Minister said that all primary pupils would return full-time to the classroom from 15<sup>th</sup> March and that every secondary pupil would have some time in school prior to the Easter break, we are finalising plans for how that will work. We are still required to comply with 2m social distancing in classes in the Academy which means we can only have around one third of pupils per class in at any given time. We also have to provide work for the remainder of the classes who are at home. Please see Academy section for more details.

It looks like all pupils will be back in school full-time from the start of the new term, which is great news.

### **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.

We are pleased to say that we are going to benefit from electrostatic cleaning in all rooms. We are told the product/disinfectant lasts 4 weeks on surfaces so rooms will be sprayed on a 3 week cycle. This will be done at weekends and/or evenings after 1800. The areas have to be unoccupied to spray and then ok to re-enter after 15mins. This will really help to minimise the risk of catching COVID19 from surfaces. This will begin for Wallace Hall next week.

### **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.**

**Uniform** – School Uniform **must** be worn by all children attending school from 22<sup>nd</sup> 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.

### **Catering**

Free School Meals will be provided to all Early Learning and P1-3 pupils. In addition, our canteen facilities will also be available **to all other pupils attending classes** 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, 1m 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.

**For any S4-6 pupils who haven't been into school yet, arrangements have been made for us to deliver/you to collect kits later this week. Thereafter pupils can collect further supplies of kits from the School Office.**

### **Childcare Hub**

**The Childcare Hub will remain in place for Academy pupils and your children can attend on any of the days that they normally attend and if they aren't in class on those days. All mitigations in place around the school 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 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/>

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

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

**These resources have been shared by NHS colleagues to support the return to school when this happens:**

In the Children, Young People and Families section: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/29910/>, you will find resource packs focusing on supporting a return to school, written by the NES Early Intervention TIPS Clinicians in NHS Grampian, as detailed below:

- [Back to school : activity pack](#)
- [Back to school : resource pack](#)
- [It's ok to worry about going back to school : resource pack for parents](#)

- [It's ok to worry about going back to school : resource pack for parents of neurodiverse children](#)
- [It's ok to worry about going back to school after coronavirus : resource pack for teenagers](#)

There is also a resource for parents/carers to support children and young people with long-term physical health conditions, with tips for managing anxiety about coming out of lockdown:

- [Coming out of lockdown - managing worries : a guide for parents/carers of children and young people with long-term health conditions](#)

### **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**

We are looking forward to welcoming back the P4 - P7 children next week. A letter will be sent to parents and carers later in the week to confirm the arrangements for their return.

## **ACADEMY**

### **Return to school – Senior Phase Pupils**

All Academy pupils will attend school part-time from Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March and specific information for your child will be sent to you on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March. For pupils in S1-S3 this will be for one day per week and for Senior Phase pupils it will be for a minimum of 1 day per week. Some senior phase students taking practical subjects, and who have been attending school for those classes, may also be in a little more often.

Teachers will continue to provide remote learning for pupils at home but, due to their class commitment in school, they may not be available online at the usual class times. More information will follow on this too.

As all Academy pupils will be receiving blended learning (a mix of in-school and remote lessons), this means that their timetable will be quite different from what they are used to for the two-week period. We hope that you will be understanding of the changes and of the reduction in teacher/pupil contact during this time.

**School Transport** will be provided in the mornings and at the normal end of the school day i.e. 3.45pm. **Please note that 1m social distancing will be mandatory on all school transport as is the wearing of face coverings.**

**Study Class – Senior Phase pupils** will be able to study in the Academy Library if they have free periods although we would encourage them to go home where possible. If they can't walk home then they have to make their own arrangements for transport.

**Lunchtime** – pupils must remain in school over lunchtime. Normal school meal provision will be available or pupils can bring a packed lunch.

**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.

However, if pupils are timetabled for PE, they should come to school in their PE kit and will remain in that all day.

### **SQA announcements**

The SQA have made a number of announcements this session regarding their alternative certification model. They are still in discussions about other changes that may also be implemented to make the system as robust and as fair as possible. In recognition of this rapidly changing landscape the SQA have created a Blog for pupils, parents and carers. Within this Blog they have included details of all of their previous announcements and this is also where they will post any future announcements. The link to the Blog is shown below.

<https://blogs.sqa.org.uk/2021/>

### **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=9h0uvVqNZ0imR0h8KnQC3oVzg206p41EomP0uLwJEUhUOEpbVjNDQUZLWE1LQOE3TVBKUk5MRjYzSiQIQCN0PWcu>

### **Support**

While details are yet to be confirmed about the phased return of secondary pupils, we understand that some students will be feeling apprehensive about returning to school. To support children with the transition back to school, we have posted links to helpful NHS resources on our school website and social media pages (links below). There are resource packs aimed at children and teenagers and there is a support guide aimed at parents/carers. The resources offer practical advice to pupils and parents on how to prepare for the return to school after Lockdown. In addition to this, contact details for outside agencies and information on the support that they can offer families, can also be found. If you have a specific concern which is not addressed in the resource packs, please contact the school office and a member of staff will get back to you to discuss this.

Pupils pack - <https://bit.ly/3rpajPu>

Parents pack - <https://bit.ly/3qgbsro>

Parents of pupils with neurodevelopmental conditions - <https://bit.ly/2Od5Pgl>

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.