



# Education & Children's Services

## Improving Lives Together

### Ambition | Compassion | Integrity



16 August 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

### Return of Pupils from Wednesday 18 August 2021

I hope you and your family have enjoyed the Summer break. We are looking forward to the Term ahead and as we prepare to welcome back pupils, I would like to update you on some important information.

Following the First Minister's latest briefing on 3 August 2021, it has been agreed that with the updated Scottish Government guidance, many of the COVID-19 measures in place at the end of term in June will remain in place for a period of at least six weeks. This is to enable monitoring of the impact of the return to school on COVID-19 case numbers.

Measures remaining in place until the October holidays will include:

- Physical distancing of at least one metre distancing between all staff, and between staff and pupils.
- Face coverings to be worn by all staff and young people aged 12 and over.
- Enhanced cleaning, ventilation and hygiene measures.

There are changes to other measures which are to be **put in place as soon as possible**, including:

- Removing the requirement to maintain groups or 'bubbles' in schools.
- On dedicated school transport only adults and young people aged 12 and over should wear a face covering.
- Changes to the arrangements for self-isolation and contact tracing.

**Please note, that as indicated in my previous Term 4 newsletter, we shall be keeping the staggered starts and end times for the first 2 weeks only.**

#### **Start & End times:**

*Start & End arrangements shall initially remain the same. Please see an outline below.*

*A reminder that pupils of older and younger pupils, can also enter at the same time as the earliest sibling time to save families waiting outside:*

#### **Nursery**

*New pupils – entry times have been sent to individual families.*

#### **Current pupils**

*If your child is currently in our Nursery, please keep the same times as the last session.*



### **Primary**

9.00 – 3.05	P4 & P5
9.05 – 3.10	P2/3 & P6/7S
9.10 – 3.15	P1/2 & P6/7H

### **New Primary 1s – 1<sup>st</sup> day 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021**

The only exception to the above is for our new Primary 1s on their first day. For this, the new Primary 1s shall enter the building from the main school entrance **at 9am**. Mrs McDonald and I shall come out to collect and welcome everyone.

There is plenty space for social distancing etc, as well as a lovely big family hug on the first day.

### **Self-isolation, contact tracing and testing**

- If your child tests positive for COVID-19, or if they display symptoms, then they should isolate as previously advised.
- If your child is identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive, you should arrange a COVID-19 test for them as soon as possible and not wait for any symptoms.
- Self-isolation requirements (including contact tracing and testing) are being updated in line with the changes to self-isolation for the wider community. This will mean that if your child is aged 5 or over, and is identified as a close contact, then while they will initially be asked to self-isolate, they can return to school if they subsequently receive a negative PCR test result and remain symptom free.
- If your child is under 5 years of age, then they do not need to isolate as long as they remain symptom free.
- The revised approach to contact tracing means that groupings of pupils (or 'bubbles') are no longer required and will be removed as soon as possible.

### **Face Coverings/Physical Distancing**

- Primary pupils no longer require to wear face coverings on school transport.
- All staff are still required to wear face coverings and physically distance from pupils and other adults in school.

### **Young People Living with someone in the Highest Risk Group**

- Children and young people who live with a person who is at highest risk should now attend school from Wednesday 18 August 2021. All children and young people attending school should comply with the arrangements for the reduction of risks of transmission of the virus within schools, such as hand hygiene.

### **School Meal Service**

- Currently due to ventilation restrictions, we will continue to operate a classroom based bagged meal service for the first few weeks of school. This will mean the existing 2 choice menu will remain in place while we plan for the return to a dining centre based service over the next few weeks.

### **Drama, Music, PE and Dance**

- Restrictions on Drama, Music, PE and Dance have now been removed and further information on how and when these will return in school will be provided in due course. It continues to be the case that external/community halls are not to be used by schools at this time.

### **School Visitors**

- There is provision, in individual cases, for parents to visit school premises to support their child. This will only be where this has been **agreed in advance with the Headteacher** and each request will be subject to a risk assessment. Any visitors are expected to comply with our arrangements for managing and minimising risk (including physical distancing, hand hygiene and use of face coverings).

### **External Support**

- Support provided from other Services/Organisations can resume in school where necessary, however, provision of the support will continue remotely via virtual means where appropriate.

### **Ventilation**

- Ventilation is one of the key mitigations in minimising risk and, as we move towards colder weather, you are asked to ensure your child is dressed appropriately to take account of changing temperatures within the school building. Perth and Kinross Council is undertaking assessment of ventilation throughout schools, including using CO2 monitors.

### **Continuing to Manage and Minimise Risk**

- Current measures, such as hand hygiene will continue.

Whilst the changes to restrictions are very welcome, I would stress the importance of following all measures we have in place within the school to ensure the safety of pupils and school staff. I would appreciate your assistance in reinforcing the importance of this message with your child.

We will continue to monitor any further announcements by the First Minister and will keep you updated if there are any further changes affecting your child's education.

Perth and Kinross Council updates information for parents/carers on its website [www.pkc.gov.uk/coronavirus/schools](http://www.pkc.gov.uk/coronavirus/schools) and also its Facebook and Twitter sites.

I understand that you or your child may have ongoing concerns about their return to school with the changes in restrictions, but I would wish to reassure you that as well as their education, their health and wellbeing is very important to our staff, and we will continue to support all pupils to attend school safely.

I would like to thank you for continuing to support the school and your child's education during these times. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

I look forward to welcoming all pupils back to school on Wednesday 18 August 2021.

*Suz McKenzie*

Abernethy Primary & Nursery Headteacher