



Your Ref:
Our Ref: ES/SP
Contact: Eleanor Sheppard
Location: Marischal College

Date: 5th August 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you have all had a chance to relax over the school holiday period and enjoyed the opportunity to reconnect with friends and family. I write with a few updates in advance of the new school year which I hope will be helpful to you.

[National Guidance on reducing the risks in schools.](#)

Updated guidance on reducing the risk of COVID-19 in schools has been published. The guidance introduces an important change to self-isolation arrangements. From the start of term:

- Whole classes and large groups will no longer be required to self-isolate for 10 days if a member of the class/group tests positive
- Only the children and young people who Public Health believe are at the highest risk of being exposed to infection will be asked to self-isolate and take a PCR test
- A negative PCR test result will enable an asymptomatic learner to return to school and end their period of self-isolation.
- Only those returning a positive result or displaying symptoms will be asked to complete their 10-day isolation.

Families will still be advised of positive cases in their child's class and we ask that you remain vigilant to the symptoms of COVID-19 in order to limit any risk to our children and young people.

The vast majority of control measures in place in June 2021 will remain in place until the end of September. This includes the need for secondary pupils to wear face coverings on school transport and in schools. Primary children are no longer required to wear face coverings on school transport. One-way systems, physical distancing and staggered entry and departure arrangements will remain in place as well as enhanced cleaning arrangements. The change in contact tracing arrangements will allow schools to relax some arrangements put in place to maintain 'bubbles' and schools will consider what this means when they return for the new term. Updated risk assessments will be published on school websites when reviewed and agreed.

Aberdeen City Council will review local arrangements following the publication of updated national guidance anticipated at the end of September. We will keep you up to date with any resultant changes.

Testing arrangements

All school staff and secondary pupils who engage in the LFD testing programme are encouraged to restart twice weekly, at home LFD testing in the week prior to the return to school. Ideally, tests would be taken on a Wednesday and Sunday evenings, ready for the first day of school. Many schools provided test kits to staff and pupils prior to the summer break which can be used for this purpose. If your child did not receive test kits or if you require more, you can access them in a range of different ways, including [ordering online](#) for home delivery, or collecting kits from your nearest test site or pharmacy. You can also take a test at a local test site, which

may be better for those who need assistance with testing. Further information is available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested/>

If involved in the programme please make sure that you record your results online, whether positive, negative or void. This helps public health understand what levels of COVID-19 are and can inform policy on things like mitigations in schools.
www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result

Thanks to those of you who continue to support the testing arrangements.

Eligibility for Vaccine

Some young people aged 12-15 with severe neuro-disabilities, Down's Syndrome, underlying conditions resulting in immunosuppression, and those with profound and multiple learning disabilities may be eligible to receive a COVID vaccination very soon.

Neuro-disability is an umbrella term for conditions associated with impairment involving the nervous system. Conditions such as these broader groupings are:

- All forms of Paralysis, hemiplegias, paraplegias etc.
- Neurological Cancers
- Neurological infections (including encephalitis, polio)
- Congenital disorders likely to affect nervous system
- Neuro-degenerative conditions
- Ataxias
- Motor Neurone Disease
- Demyelinating diseases including MS
- Cerebral Palsy
- SupraNuclear Palsy
- Neuropathies
- Myaesthesia disorders
- Myotonic Disorders
- Musculodystrophies
- Vascular disorders - Intracranial haemorrhages, aneurysms, Strokes, Thrombosis, Arteritis, Dissections
- Spina Bifida, Hydrocephalus
- Neuro Developmental Disorders
- Congenital disorders
- Chromosomal Abnormalities (although Downs syndrome a separate JCVI group for this vaccination group)

GP records have been used to identify young people who have any of the conditions listed above. GP records have also been used to identify those with underlying conditions resulting in immunosuppression. It should be noted that epilepsy on its own is not included in this list although some children with epilepsy will be included if they have an additional neurological condition noted in medical records.

Young people with learning/Intellectual Disabilities will also be invited to attend for a vaccination. Please note that this group does not include all children with additional support needs, only those with profound and multiple needs.

All young people identified as eligible will soon receive an invitation to attend Orchard Brae School for their first vaccination from 9th August. If you do not receive an invitation by the start of the new school term and believe that your child is eligible

for vaccination, please contact the Support Line on 0800 0304 713. The support line operates from 8.30 to 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

We look forward to working with you in the new academic year and I know schools will communicate changes with you directly when they have welcomed the children and young people back.

Yours sincerely

Eleanor Sheppard