



7 January 2022

Headteacher Update

Dear Parents and Carers

Further to my letter earlier this week, please can I provide a further update following announcements from Scottish Government this past week. The First Minister announced that there were two changes to the self-isolation rules, and one change to the requirement for PCR testing, and that all of these changes will take effect from 6 January. These changes are not to apply retrospectively, meaning that anyone asked to isolate before 6 January should continue to follow the advice they were given at the time they were asked to isolate.

Changes to self-isolation for those who test positive for COVID:

- While the initial advice when someone tests positive will still be to self-isolate for 10 days, there will now be the potential to end isolation after seven days as long as you, firstly, have no fever and, secondly, record two negative lateral flow tests, one no earlier than day six after testing positive and another at least 24 hours after that.

Changes to self-isolation for all close contacts of positive cases – who are either under the age of 18 years and four months, or who are older than that and fully vaccinated (this is defined as having had first, second and booster or third doses of the vaccination):

- For all close contacts the requirement to self-isolate will end and be replaced by a requirement to take a lateral flow test every day for seven days. If one of these tests is positive, self-isolation will then be required.
- Anyone identified as a close contact who is over 18 years and four months and not fully vaccinated will still be asked to self-isolate for 10 days and to take a PCR test.

(Please note that any distinction between household and non-household contacts has now been removed and all are treated as close contacts).

Changes to the advice on testing:

- For those who have symptoms of COVID, the advice **remains** to book a PCR test, even if you have a positive lateral flow test. The advice to everyone is to test regularly with lateral flow devices, especially before meeting up with others. However, from 6 January, if your lateral flow test is **positive, and you do not have symptoms**, you will no longer be required to take a PCR test to confirm the result. Instead, you must immediately isolate

and also report your result online so that Test & Protect can commence the contact tracing process and give advice as quickly as possible. You will also receive an online form that you must complete, as would happen with a PCR positive test, to ensure your contacts are notified. There is an exception for people who may be eligible for the Self-Isolation Support Grant who are advised to take a PCR test to ensure they can confirm their infection to be potentially eligible for financial support.

Lateral Flow Tests

The importance of regular testing with Lateral Flow Test devices has been re-emphasised. In addition to all secondary school children being asked to take LFTs before returning to school this week, pupils are asked to test twice per week as well as before socialising with other households.

Whilst correct at time of writing, I am aware the guidance can change rapidly. The most up to date information can always be found here. [NHS inform - Scottish health information you can trust](#)
[NHS inform](#)

Lunchtime arrangements

Our updated arrangements for lunchtime appeared to work well yesterday and today. All pupils who purchased lunch in school were able to use the seating in our canteen and snack bar areas whilst pupils bringing lunch to school were able to use the assembly hall. There were plenty of free seats in both areas. As you know, all three areas are used throughout the day for a variety of purposes and as such, we will be asking pupils to vacate and move outside when they are finished eating, but no later than 1310. This will allow us a short window of 10 minutes to carry our essential cleaning of the areas, before being used from 1320. Whilst many pupils choose to travel to Union Street (and return with lunch) and are welcome to bring their food into the assembly hall, we would ask that they too are finished by 1310. These arrangements are separate to our Wet Weather protocols.

These remain challenging times for us all and I would seek to reassure you we are doing everything we can to ensure the safety of all staff and pupils. As always, I appreciate the role you play in helping to ensure our systems and processes work for the benefit of all.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ross McLaren". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R' and 'M'.

Mr R. McLaren
Headteacher