



SOUTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

A parent/carer's guide to starting school – August 2020

Secondary Schools

We are looking forward to welcoming our children and young people back and have implemented a range of measures within each of our schools and educational establishments, in line with Scottish Government guidance, to make everyone feel assured about the safety, risk assessment and infection control measures we have put in place.

We have prepared this Q&A to let you know what will happen on your child's return to school. We have also produced a video to let you see the cleaning, hand-sanitising, signage and safety measures we have put in place.

<https://youtu.be/IH4jet-PXdc>

This general information should be read in conjunction with guidance that schools may issue to parents to reflect individual contexts.

Q. What will learners be doing in school?

The predominant focus of learning initially in the new session within the Broad General Education will be centred around a recovery curriculum which will emphasise the importance of health and wellbeing as well as Literacy and Numeracy, extending to other curricular areas as appropriate. Within the senior phase, learners will focus on their chosen subject areas. Some practical lessons may not be available immediately when they go back – e.g. aspects of music. They will be reintroduced during the term once guidelines on how to do it safely have been developed by Education Scotland.

- ✓ Subject specific guidance relating to physical education and other practical subjects is currently being created by Education Scotland and key messages will be communicated as soon as it is available.
- ✓ All young people will be able to enjoy as much time as possible time outdoors as part of their learning, breaks and lunch time. Dedicated areas inside and outside the building will be allocated for specific groups.

Q. What equipment will they need?

- ✓ Young people should bring their own water bottle.
- ✓ Young people should bring a school bag, including personal stationary items.
Personal belongings should not be shared.
- ✓ Young people should wear their school uniform every day. School uniform should be cleaned as normal; individual schools will advise on arrangements for PE.
- ✓ Special consideration on the return to education has been given to those children with additional support needs.

Q. What safety measures have been put in place to support return?

A range of measures are in place within each of our schools in line with Scottish Government guidance. I want to reassure you that while safety is the priority, we will do everything we can to reduce the impact of this on the school and your child's learning experience. As all schools are different, we feel that it is better you hear direct from them and they will contact you about any specific requirements.

Risk assessments have been carried out before the reopening of school buildings in August. This is a requirement based on the duty of care which the council has for staff, children and young people and they have been developed in partnership with the trade unions. There will be appropriate signage on aspects of infection prevention in all of our buildings.

Personal Hygiene

The young people will sanitise their hands on entering the school building with sanitising dispensers located in all classrooms and other key areas around the school. The need for good hygiene and regular cleaning of hands will be emphasised to staff and young people and incorporated into the daily routine including before and after eating. Young people will be reminded about the 'catch it, kill it, bin it' campaign for coughs and sneezes and to avoid touching the face.

Enhanced Cleaning

There will be a weekly clean using an electrostatic spray and a product which kills COVID-19 within 5 minutes, leaving a lasting protective coating on surfaces. In addition, there will be a daily clean and further cleaning of high-density touchpoints during the day.

Distancing

Adults should keep 2m from each other and from young people. If this cannot happen, there may be a requirement for staff to wear face coverings.

Learners do not have to physically distance from each other, however, in line with scientific guidance, schools have to make efforts where possible to keep children in the same groups within the duration of the school day. This may result in changes to drop off/pick up arrangements and interval and lunch time so that groups can be kept physically distanced.

Young people will still be encouraged to keep a safe distance and avoid physical contact.

Although the government advice is that pupils and staff do not need to wear face coverings if physical distancing is being observed we respect that this is a personal choice, and anyone can do so if they wish.

Although young people will not require to use a face covering in school, they will however require to use one if leaving school premises at lunch time to attend shops or to travel on public transport. When not using face coverings, they must be placed in a plastic bag and put inside school bags. If leaving school premises young people will have to sanitise hands on exit and re-entry to the building.

Environment

Wherever possible, classroom windows and doors will be left open to ensure that rooms and other areas are well ventilated throughout the day. There will also be a focus upon increasing the amount of outdoor learning (weather permitting).

Traditional assemblies will not take place, but alternatives may be considered by the Head Teacher.

Q. Getting to and from school

We ask that young people, where possible, walk, cycle, scoot to and from school, avoiding the car as much as possible.

If travelling on public transport remember to comply with rules on face coverings and distancing. As public transport capacity may be less please ensure you leave enough time to get to school. While not in use face coverings should be kept in a plastic bag inside the school bag.

If travelling on school transport, there is no requirement to physically distance and no need for face coverings. More detailed information for those accessing both mainstream and additional support needs transport will be issued via the school.

Privilege transport applications will be held on file and allocated by the end of October.

If using the car then please consider congestion, and park away from school and walk the remainder of the way if possible to do so.

Q. How do we drop off / collect our children?

To avoid congestion staggered starts and maximising the use of all access points to school grounds and entrances to the school building will be in operation. Each school will provide specific details on drop off and pick up arrangement times. Parents should avoid congestion at school and are reminded of 2 metre distancing and are requested to avoid congesting the immediate school gates,

Q. What can children bring to school and what equipment will they need?

- ✓ Children should bring their own water bottle.
- ✓ Children should bring a school bag, including personal stationery items.
Personal belongings should not be shared.
- ✓ Children should wear their school uniform and this should be cleaned as normal; individual schools will advise on arrangements for PE.
- ✓ Special consideration on the return to education has been given to those children with additional support needs.

Q. What if someone falls ill?

Do not send your child to school if they or someone in the household displays any of the virus symptoms below:

- New continuous cough
- Fever/high temperature
- Loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste

If during the school day a young person becomes ill, they will be moved to a room with a member of staff. Parents will be asked to collect their child who will not be permitted to travel home on dedicated school transport. If someone in the school becomes ill and tests positive with COVID-19, SLC will follow the advice from the Scottish Government and the relevant procedures will be followed accordingly.

Schools and nurseries are 'complex settings' under the Health Protection Scotland 'test and protect' approach. This means that schools will be a priority for identifying, testing, and supporting the self-isolation of any children or staff suspected of having the virus.

Q. What are the arrangements for school catering?

Catering facilities will resume, and free school meals will be available as normal. Packed lunches are allowed in school and it is asked that packed lunch boxes are wiped down daily.

Staggered breaks and lunchtimes may take place in order to reduce numbers of young people in the dining area. Other food stations may be set up to reduce congestion and an ordering app has been developed to help speed up the lunch process and reduce queueing (except Calderglen High). The video link below explains how to use it

[School lunches - Secondary schools](#)
[Grab and go app](#)

Additional Information

After school clubs and activities will remain closed at this time.

Q. Visits by parents and others to school

Strict guidance applies on visitors and parents will not be allowed into the building. Other arrangements such as phone calls, meetings, texts and the use of social media will all be used to keep communication flowing.

Please follow us on social media for regular updates and check the school website. If you have any specific queries or concerns, please contact the school office.

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Q. If a child becomes symptomatic, is there a dedicated room where children can be left supervised/unsupervised safely until collection?

Yes, if someone becomes unwell, they will be asked to go home and or be shown to a designated room. Staff will then use face mask/appropriate PPE. The room will be closed until cleaned, use bin with lid.

Q. How many thermometers do you have? Is there a record of staff trained in using them? Record of cleaning them?

Current health advice is not to use thermometers in a school setting. The view being staff are not trained in this and this is best done, if at all, by health professionals

Q. How robust are your track and trace measures for contacts?

Test and Protect

NHS Lanarkshire and Health Protection Scotland are finalising a guidance note and protocol on 'test and protect' for schools and educational settings.

The emphasis will be on the need to continue to observe the preventative measures like good hygiene, distancing and not being complacent.

The protocol will outline clearly what will happen if there is an identified positive case in relation to an adult, child, or young person in a school or educational setting.

NHS will convene an incident management team (an assessment team to look at each case on an individual basis, two cases at present is deemed a cluster). The assessment will involve senior public health professionals, the Head Teacher or rep, Education Resources rep and council rep (e.g. Environmental Health or H&S) to determine the next steps and consider if a school/setting should be closed.

The safety and wellbeing of individuals and the community will be the determinant factor in the decision-making process.

The establishment of incident management team by NHS is a well-established public health procedure and education is a key partner given our duty of care for children, young people and staff.

Q. How many children need to be symptomatic before they would close the school?

As detailed above. Based on current guidance schools may be closed when two cases are confirmed or if there is a community outbreak. This guidance may change.

Q. Do staff have access to full PPE? Have they been trained how to put it on and remove it safely?

The guidance sets out that the wearing of face coverings is not required. However, individual risk assessments will be undertaken to determine whether PPE is required for staff who provide personal care and support to a child.

Our approach is that staff and pupils are free to wear a face covering if they wish to do so.

The risk assessment and guidance advice that detail how to wear and dispose of face coverings should be clearly outlined.

New measures to support return

A range of measures are in place in each of our schools and nurseries, in line with Scottish Government guidance. I want to reassure you that while safety is the priority, we will do everything we can to reduce the impact of this on the school or nursery day and your child's learning experience. As all schools and nurseries are different, they will contact you directly about any establishment specific guidance.

However, there are standard measures in place for everyone:

- **Robust hygiene and cleaning procedures** have been introduced across all nurseries and schools. This includes regular hand washing and the cleaning of surfaces and equipment throughout the day. All nurseries and schools will be cleaned daily.
- **Hand washing/cleaning** – on arrival into school or nursery, children will wash or sanitise their hands before they settle into the classroom or learning space. We also ask that children and young people wash their hands before they leave home in the morning. In secondary schools, the use of hand sanitisers may be employed as an alternative to hand washing.
- **Physical distancing** - as per the Scottish Government guidance, children and young people do not have to physically distance while in nursery, school or on school transport. However, we will encourage physical distancing where possible to further minimise any risk. In addition, we will avoid bringing children and young people together in large groups such as school events or assemblies. Physical distancing will also be in place between staff and children and young people where possible. Visitors coming into nurseries and schools will also be restricted and parents should not enter school buildings except in emergencies and are asked to contact the school or nursery direct in advance.
- **Lunch times** - may be staggered, where possible, to reduce children and young people queuing in large numbers. Children and young people can bring their own packed lunch. Hot meals will be provided, and menus published.
- **Home to school transport** provided by the council will continue as normal for eligible children and young people. They do not have to physically distance and will not need to wear face coverings. However, no food or drink should be consumed while on a school bus. For children and young people travelling on public transport, please follow Scottish Government guidance on face coverings and physical distancing.
- **Personal belongings** - Some restrictions will be in place in relation to personal belongings. Children and young people may bring in their own pencil cases and other materials for their own use as normal. We will ask that school bags are kept on the floor.
- **Parking** - If arriving to school by car, please park as far away as possible from the building to avoid congestion. If you can, please consider walking or taking another form of active travel.
- **Restrictions** – the Scottish Government guidance advises that parent/carers should not enter the building or classrooms and that social distancing of 2 metres takes place at playground entrances/exits. We appreciate this is change particularly at the

beginning of a new term when children start school but this is designed to keep you and everyone in the community safe.

Helpful links for parents

You may find the information bulletin produced for parents by parents and published by the National Parent Forum for Scotland helpful: www.npfs.org.uk

We recognise that there may be other questions you may have and whilst it is usually best to contact your child's school you can contact us by email on: Educationcovid19@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

You can also follow us on social media for regular updates and check the school website.

We are all in this together and we need everyone to do the right thing to keep us all safe.