

Moray COVID-19 Response



Education, Communities and Organisational Development: Education

Moray Education Parent/Carer Guide

Bee Safe
in MORAY 

Parent/Carer Guide

Information for your child(ren) returning to school following Covid-19



Scottish Government Update

The Depute First Minister (DFM) has announced the expected return to school for **all** children, young people and staff taking full account of progress made in suppressing COVID-19 in Scotland, the scientific advice received and the advice of the Education Recovery Group and other key stakeholders. This guidance has been designed to assist you and your children in preparation for returning to school and to provide you with reassurance of what this will be like so that you can work with your children to support any concerns or worries they may have.

There will be a great deal to digest within this guidance and your child's school will also update you and provide a learner guide for information to help prepare learners to return after an extensive break from attending school. Your child's school will refine systems they will be putting in place and will evaluate the impact of that over the course of August and beyond. We hope this guide will answer and clarify many of the questions you may have, with a particular focus on:

- Health and Safety
- Children and Parents
- Pupil wellbeing
- Learning
- Keeping Safe during COVID-19

This guidance is relevant as of **30 July** when the DFM announced his plans for schools reopening. This **may change** should there be any updated national guidance and we will share any changes via your child's school but also via Moray Council social media pages (Facebook and Twitter) and the website.

Preparing your child to return to school

Some children and young people may be anxious to return to school for a number of reasons. Please use the information in this guide to support your child prior to return. If you have particular concerns, please ensure that you inform the school of this week beginning 10 August and certainly prior to their return on 12 August. You may also wish to look up resources available from the National Parent Forum who have produced guidance for parents on the return to school <https://www.npfs.org.uk/>.

It is really important that children start to reconnect to normal patterns and routines and so a return to school will support this and ensure that their education continues.

Moray Council Update

We have taken the decision that all primary school pupils and secondary school pupils will return on 12 August with no staggered start. Every child in Moray is important to us and so we would not wish any child to feel that they are not welcome back on the first day of term. Schools will run internal transitions to familiarise children with operating procedures and processes and to help them in returning to the school environment. For those children starting school either at P1 or S1 or moving to a new school, staff will make arrangements to ensure their transition is well supported.

Risk Assessments and Policies

- Risk assessments for each school have been created and agreed with staff, trade unions and with Moray Council Education and Health and Safety staff. Schools will have adapted these to suit their own environment and buildings and to take account of any local risks. These will continue to be updated once buildings are fully operational.

Health and Safety

There are a number of updates to Health and Safety procedures within schools. Below is a summary of key measures in place for the safe return of our learners and staff. As and when further questions arise, we will add to this and share this with you:

- All staff will be briefed on the in-service days of the increased safety protocols relating to COVID-19 and will follow the control measures identified on the Risk Assessment document
- Child friendly graphics using the BEE Safe in Moray logo will be present across all establishments. Examples of these are contained at the back of this booklet so that you can share these with your child(ren) prior to returning. As part of the transition arrangements staff will draw attention to the signs and help children to understand the routines and processes for their school/setting. We have also had a social media campaign to highlight these also. Children will be reminded of these regularly over the course of the first few days back until they get themselves familiarised and how they will impact on their movement across the school or access to rooms.
- Cleaning patterns and routines have been implemented for our schools and settings to support the prevention of spread of COVID-19, these are specific to each school/setting
- Increased handwashing protocols will be put in place and there will be reduced access to some facilities for children – staff will regularly remind children about this. We have changed the soap to a gentler one and this has proved to be better when children were in the hubs.
- You may wish to give your children their own sanitiser and or wipes but they will not be able to share these with anyone.
- Hand sanitiser stations will be present on entry and exit and where necessary throughout the buildings where hand washing is not possible. Children and young people will be expected to hand sanitise as they enter and leave the building and where necessary staff will support this.
- One-way systems may be in place across the school/setting where this is necessary and signs will assist children to navigate round the building
- It is not necessary for children to wear masks, however if they wish to do so they can, particularly if they are in a busy area eg canteen, corridors.
- All inhalers, epi-pens and medicines should be updated by parents and sent into school, clearly labelled. It is essential that the school has this for 12 August.
- Schools may update their positive behaviour policy and this will be shared with you separately.

School Transport

- School transport will be treated as an extension of the school estate and so no physical distancing will be necessary.
- Children and young people should hand sanitise prior to boarding school transport in the morning (as hand sanitiser may not be provided by individual transport operators). You may wish to do this before leaving the house or provide your child(ren) with hand sanitiser for personal use.
- Hand sanitiser will be available for use prior to boarding school transport for the home journey.
- Children are encouraged to use the same seat each time they travel or they may be allocated a seat.
- Transport operators will inform you of any queuing arrangements for picking up children.
- Children should not consume food and drink on school transport.
- When children/young people use public transport to travel to school there may be designated areas for school children to sit.
- Where your child has additional support needs, the school will inform you of any bespoke arrangements to ensure their safe transport to school. This includes use of taxis and escorts where applicable.
- You may choose not to send your child on school transport but opt instead to transport them yourself.
- Your school may be in touch with you early in the term to undertake a survey to understand how you will be travelling to school.

Children and Parents

- A number of changes have been made within each school in an attempt to maintain the Health and Safety protocols listed above. We have attempted to list as many examples as possible.

- If you have booked or are honouring a holiday for the week beginning 12 August the absence of your child(ren) will be authorised given that there has been a change to the summer break dates.
- The cooperation of everyone in school is essential in order to support a safe return. Positive behaviour at all times is essential and this means being mindful of the feelings of others, any anxiety people may have in returning to school and adhering to all guidance. This includes use of PPE when needed, social distancing, new one-way systems and entrance/exit routes and making sure we take notice and comply with instructions on new signage.
- If your child is unwilling to follow clear guidance and rules in place to ensure the safety of yourself and others in the school, you may be asked to collect you from school. Please be respectful at all times where following guidance and rules in place is not an option – they are in place to keep everyone safe.

Classrooms

- All schools have been decluttered with excess furniture and fittings stored in suitable containers adjacent to premises to provide as much room as possible and to allow the teacher space to support 2 m social distancing.
- The amount of movement between rooms in school will be kept to a minimum
- Secondary schools may remove the use of ‘period’ bells with a softer end of period movement procedure in place to limit the number of young people in the corridors
- Many soft furnishings, resources and display areas will be removed to provide additional space or they may be covered
- Classrooms will look very different and some schools may share photographs of rooms using their normal communication methods prior to opening.
- You may see school windows open throughout the day – this is to ensure that there is adequate ventilation.

Access to the Site

In order to prevent any larger gatherings, it is vital that parents/carers remain outside the school gates/walls at all times. The following measures have been put in place to try and ensure the safety of our children and staff:

- Visitors to our schools will be kept to a bare minimum – should you need to speak with the Headteacher or a member of staff please contact the school by phone or email or their preferred method in order to arrange a time to discuss your concerns.
- Parents will be asked to remain outside the building/grounds at all times. We understand that new P1 children may find the first few days tricky and so your school will share arrangements for dropping off your child with you. We will unfortunately not be able to allow you access to the school building.
- Access to schools will only be permitted in an emergency. Contact should be via normal communication methods.
- You should arrange to drop your child(ren) off and pick them up at an agreed location ensuring that social distancing is adhered to and adopt a “park and stride” approach or walk to school where possible
- Schools may stagger drop off and pick up times and they will inform you of this. They may also inform you of any changes to the entry and exit doors that children will use
- Parents will not be able to drop off forgotten items or additional belongings to the school office. This includes packed lunches – children will receive a school packed lunch and you will be charged for this in the event of this happening.
- Children must arrive to school at the designated time. Late attendance will be closely monitored as it risks the safety of staff and pupils.
- We ask that one parent maximum drops off or picks up children from school.
- Please consider a ‘park and stride’ approach to avoid congestion outside the school. Where at all possible, children should walk to school. Car sharing with children from other households is discouraged.
- Parents should not physically approach staff at school drop-off and pick-up times. Parents should maintain a 2m social distance from other parents.
- There will be no Breakfast clubs or after-school clubs initially. You will be informed by your child’s school when these can restart.

- There will be no school trips outwith the locality of the school initially.
- If you have to pick up your child as they are showing symptoms, the school will provide you details regarding pick-up.

Learner well-being

Learner well-being and safety will be a number one priority throughout reopening. Although school will be different in many ways, every attempt will be made to maintain normality wherever possible.

Physical Distancing

- Primary schools – there is no requirement for physical distancing between children in primary schools
- Secondary schools – there is no requirement for physical distancing between children in secondary schools. However to further minimise risk across the senior phase, physical distancing should be encouraged where possible and there is the capacity to do so. This will not however impact on the number of young people who return to school or on class sizes.
- We will be encouraging children to maintain distance where possible particularly indoors this includes not crowding together and discouraging social physical contact (hand to hand greeting/hugs) – younger children will find this particularly difficult.
- We will discourage gatherings eg more than 50 people in one area and so there will be no assemblies or parents evenings for the foreseeable future.
- Any adults in schools will maintain a 2 m physical distance between them and other adults and between them and learners.
- Where adults interact with children face-to-face for more than 15 mins eg in our enhanced provisions then face coverings will be worn.
- Some staff may choose to wear face coverings
- Fire drill procedures will be updated so that children and staff can muster safely outside

Break and Lunchtimes

- Schools may stagger break and lunchtimes and will advise you if they wish to do this
- Every effort will be made to discourage children from large gatherings outside including designated areas for classes or year groups. You will appreciate that this will be very difficult to manage
- Though much equipment will be out of bounds and the sharing of equipment not permitted, we will encourage children to be as active as possible during any timetabled breaks. Where there is fixed outdoor play equipment children will be informed when this is available to use and when not

Lunch times and catering

- Primary 1-3 Universal Free School Meals will be reinstated from the start of term on Wednesday, 12 August 2020. Free School Meals for registered pupils will continue in other stages and year groups.
- The online I-pay system should be used as much as possible for topping up money for school meals, where minimum top-up is £2.30. This will keep cash handling in school by catering staff to a minimum. For families without online access at home for topping up using I-pay. Your school will provide information regarding this and where cash can be an option in some circumstances.
- The Eat out to Help out scheme applies to the school meal service and we will have information to you about this once this becomes clearer
- The primary school meal service will be reduced initially:
 - There will be no tuck shop service (in those schools who previously offered this)
 - The menu will be a cold lunch with option of sandwich filling and 3 choice dessert option
 - We hope to introduce a hot meal choice in week 4 – more details to follow
 - Children are welcome to bring their own packed lunch if this is preferred.

The secondary meal provision will be a reduced service:

- Free School Meals will continue for those pupils registered. If your circumstances have changes – as with Primary children – please speak with your child(ren)'s school. As with Primary, the I-pay system should

continue to be used where possible for topping up online. There will be no access to the I-pay machines in school

- The Secondary lunch option is for a reduced cold menu option only for break and lunch. At breaktime, this may include scones, pancakes, muffins, fruit and drinks. At lunch time, this may include sandwiches, salad boxes, baguettes, fruit, muffins and drinks
- Young people may bring a packed lunch from home. Please try to remember to maintain healthy options wherever possible.
- If young people go offsite for lunch they need to follow the rules eg wear a face covering in shops. They will also need to sanitise when leaving and re-entering the school building.
- Free school meal vouchers will stop on Friday 7 August. They are valid for 12 months from the date of issue.

Uniform

- As all children return to school/ELC settings, normal school uniform requirements should be adhered to. If this causes you any difficulty, please contact the school or setting and they will be able to signpost you to support or provide you with good quality used clothing. You may wish to label or name your child's school uniform, bag, packed lunch box and any other item for easy identification.
- School uniform should be washed as normal and changed regularly if marked. Once again, if you have any concerns or queries please do not hesitate to contact the school or setting.

Learning - Curriculum

Due to the extended period of lockdown and remote learning it will be essential that each school assesses where each child is in their learning. Over the course of the first few weeks tasks and activities will be planned to gather this information and to ensure that your child is then set work which will be appropriate to them. We understand how difficult this time has been for parents/carers juggling other commitments. Within each school they will set their priorities which will broadly be:

Primary

- Health and wellbeing and the emotional wellbeing of children
- Literacy core skills
- Numeracy core skills
- Other key core skills
- Interdisciplinary learning – seeing how children can transfer their skills and knowledge in other areas of the curriculum

There may be some changes to normal school routines:

- Children may use one jotter rather than a range for each subject
- We will be limiting the number of resources available and for our younger children they will access toys and equipment which are easy to clean
- Our approach to Early Years' learning is through play activities and so we will carefully manage any use of sand, water and playdough to meet hygiene requirements
- We would ask that you do not encourage children to take toys from home or to share their personal belongings with their friends. Younger children will find this tricky and so wherever possible please limit the additional items being brought in to school.
- We will not be encouraging the use of pegs – children will take their bags and jackets into the classroom and have these beside their desk at all times
- School staff will limit the amount of resources going between home and school and many will make use of reading bags for books. Please be assured that there will be a process in place to ensure that any library or other books are quarantined before being reissued.
- Music/singing will be avoided during the initial return to schools as we are awaiting national guidance on how to undertake this safely.

Secondary

- As primary above where this is appropriate

- We will be issuing separate information about senior phase and national qualifications once we receive these.
- There will be separate arrangements for particular subject areas and Headteachers will keep you updated if there is anything that will affect your young person.

Moray College for Senior Phase Pupils

- Initially, the input from Moray College will be on a virtual basis. This will be reviewed during August and revised risk assessments will be provided to enable this to take place when it is safe to commence our school/college partnership.

Outdoor Learning

- The Scottish Government have suggested an increase in the use of outdoors for outdoor lessons and schools will consider this as they plan learning on return
- PE lessons may take place outdoors more often than previously. The school will advise you if this is the case and children must be dressed appropriately for the weather
- In the event of good weather, children should arrive at school already wearing sun cream. Sun cream can be brought to school, where it will remain until the end of term, and children should be aware of how to apply it themselves. Staff will not apply sun cream for any pupil.

Keeping Safe during COVID-19

- We will maintain vigilance at all times for the symptoms of COVID-19
- If a pupil or staff member tests negative for Coronavirus they are welcome to return to school.
- **Do not** send your child to school if they have:
 - a continuous cough
 - fever/high temperature
 - loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste
- Follow the guidance from <https://www.nhsinform.scot/>
- Children should inform a member of staff if they feel unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 whilst still at school.
- If they are over 16 they will be sent home as soon as possible
- If they are under 16, you will be contacted and arrangements made to pick them up as quickly as possible. It would be preferable that any adult from their household picks them up and not a grandparent. You will then need to follow the national guidance for households with possible COVID-19 infection including testing and self-isolation. They will be asked to isolate in a well ventilated designated space until they can be collected. Staff monitoring these pupils will wear protective PPE equipment if they cannot safely maintain a 2m distance.
- All persons in school displaying Coronavirus symptoms, however mild, will be sent home immediately and they should then follow Government guidelines on self-isolation.
- If a child or young person whose family members are displaying symptoms of Coronavirus you must follow Government guidance on self-isolating.
- If a child, young person (or their parent/carer if under 16 years) or staff member is contacted by a contact tracer and told to self-isolate for fourteen days, the person should leave school to self-isolate at home straight away and, if possible, wear a face covering en route and avoid public transport.
- If there are a number of confirmed cases in a school and there is a concern for the safety of the staff and pupils it will contact Grampian Public Health colleagues and ask for advice. Any decision to close a school will be a joint decision between Public Health and Local Authority colleagues and you will be advised of this by the Headteacher through normal processes. Should this arise, a period of remote or blended learning will be instigated and you will be kept up-to-date by the Headteacher.
- You should then follow advice given and your child(ren) should self-isolate if necessary. Please inform the school if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19.
- There will be a national surveillance programme and young people in the senior phase and staff may be able to opt in to this. We will inform you of this later.
- Should there be a spike in local cases then information and planning will be provided as part of our contingency actions.

Thank you for taking the time to read this guide. Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact your child's school and we will update the guidance where necessary or the school will provide information relevant to their establishment. Also, a copy of the learner "Top Tips" are included which you may wish to use or share with your children prior to their return.

Please continue to follow national guidance and advise to keep safe and stop the spread of COVID-19.

Vivienne Cross
Head of Education (Chief Education Officer)
30 July 2020

Examples of our Bee Safe in Moray signage to share with your children

