

NEWTONGRANGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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EDUCATION DIVISION

Head Teacher
Miss V Morgan



Midlothian



Our Ref:



Monday 16th August 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Reopening of School – 18th August 2021

I hope that you and your family are well and you have managed to have some fun over the summer with family and friends and enjoy the lovely weather.

From the 9 August we have moved to beyond level 0 and this allows the removal of many of the restrictions that we have all been living with in society.

Following on from the letter Mrs Fiona Robertson, Executive Director Children, Young People & Partnerships, issued today, please find detailed below further information regarding mitigations in place for Newtongrange Primary School and ELC setting to ensure safe return to school on Wednesday 18th August.

It has been agreed that many of the Covid-19 mitigations and safety 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. We remain very hopeful that many of these mitigations will only be in place for a short period of time and we will continue to keep you informed as these mitigations are removed or changed.

To ensure that we comply with the guidance on social distancing and good hygiene, the following arrangements are in place at Newtongrange Primary School and ELC Setting.

Patterns of Attendance for P1-P7

- **All P2 – P7 learners** will attend school full time from Wednesday 18th August 2021.
- **P1 learners** will have a phased start into school and will attend school on Wednesday 18th August – Friday 14th August from 9:00am – 12:00 noon.
- **P1 learners** will attend school full time from Monday 23rd August 2021.

Patterns of Attendance for ELC setting

We will be offering 1140hrs this session and ELC returners will start ELC on Wednesday 18th August 2021. Drop off for ELC is between 8:30am-8:45am and collection between 2:50pm – 3:05pm, Monday to Thursday and on a Friday drop off is between 8:30am-8:45am and collection between 11:55am-12:05pm.

Arrangements for dropping off and collecting your child

The arrangements for Parents and Carers to drop off and collect children requires careful consideration, to ensure that large gatherings of people are avoided and physical distancing between adults and children of different groupings is maintained. In order to effectively achieve this, we will have staggered starts and ends of the day. This will allow us to carefully manage the movement of learners around the school site.

Please support us to maintain Social Distancing by arriving at the school gate as close to the drop off time as possible. If your child arrives late at school, please bring them to the school office, where a member of staff will welcome them into school.

- We request **that only one** parent or carer brings their child to school. Older children may walk to school on their own.
- Staff will be in the playground to welcome children and direct them to their lines and entry points.
- To ensure Social Distancing is maintained, Parents and Carers are asked not to stop to talk to others in the playground or congregate around the school gates.
- During wet weather we do not have the capacity to allow children to enter school before the required drop off time.
- During Covid-19 restrictions we cannot permit parents and carers into school unless in exceptional circumstances.

There will be a one-way system in place for those parents and carers who drop off and collect their child at the start and end of day. Staff will be on hand to support you to collect your child and leave the school premises safely.

The table below details the staggered start and end times for the different groups.

Staggered start and end times	
Mon-Thurs - Start time 8:45am – End time 2:55pm Friday – Start time 8:45am – End time 12:05pm	Mon-Thurs - Start time 8:45am – End time 2:55pm Friday – Start time 8:45am – End time 12:05pm
P1a (from 23 rd August)	P1b & P1c (from 23 rd August)
P2a	P2b
P2/3	P3
P3/4	P4
P4/5	P5
P5/6	P6
P7a	P7b

We have also staggered the daily routine to limit the likelihood of groups overlapping at transition points, including break and lunch times.

Lunches

All children within ELC-P3 continue to be entitled to free school meals and these will be provided by our Midlothian Catering Services. From August 2021, P4 children will now also be entitled to free school meals. Children within P5-P7 are required to continue to bring a packed lunch from home. BACs payments will continue to be provided to P5-P7 learners who are entitled to free school meals. Learners will eat their lunch in their classrooms or our ELC setting to avoid mass gatherings of children in line with national guidance. Cleaning procedures will be implemented at lunch times.

School Uniform

Where possible, **we continue to encourage all children to wear school uniform.** School uniform/clothing should be washed/cleaned as normal. School uniform can continue to be ordered through our school office. We also have a supply of quality second hand school uniform available for free to families. Please contact Lee Grieve, our HSP to check our uniform bank.

At this time PE changing rooms remain closed and children will not be encouraged to change for PE. **We advise that on the days children have PE they come to school dressed in sportswear.** We will communicate with you what day your child's class has PE in due course.

Safety measures to support return

I want to reassure you that our priority is to ensure the return is safe and we continue to follow all advice and guidance, where health and safety sits at the heart of our plans, with risk assessments and infection prevention and control measures in place.

Midlothian Council has a strict protocol in place for the reporting of suspected COVID cases, and the procedures to be followed by schools. Parents and carers must **NOT** send their child to school if they display any of the common symptoms:

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

If a child displaying any of these symptoms is sent to school or becomes unwell during the school day, we will contact you and ask that you to make arrangements to have your child collected immediately.

Further guidance on this can be found on the NHS Inform website: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/>

Enhanced cleaning routines will be implemented using products which are effective against bacteria and viruses and there will be clear signage throughout school buildings to reinforce the infection prevention and control measures in place. Hand sanitisers will be at the entrances and in all appropriate areas across our school to enable learners and staff to hand sanitise regularly.

Face Masks, Face Coverings and PPE

Face coverings must be worn by adults wherever they cannot maintain the appropriate physical distance from other adults and/or children. Adults are required to wear face coverings at all times when they are moving around the school in building. Parents and carers and other visitors to school are requested to wear face coverings when on the school site, including at drop-off and pick-up times. Updated Early Years guidance now states, face coverings are not required for ELC, P1 and P2 staff when working directly with children. However, staff may still choose to wear a face covering in these circumstances. In certain circumstances, staff may wear enhanced PPE as required when working in specific environments. Your support in explaining to your child the need for face coverings and the way our school needs to operate during these times would be appreciated.

COVID-19 asymptomatic testing programme for school/ELC staff

School staff are encouraged to continue participating in the Asymptomatic Testing Programme as part of the package of COVID-19 risk reduction mitigations in schools across Scotland.

Build Back Better Curriculum Rationale

The Covid-19 global pandemic has had an impact on learning and teaching and 'school life' as we have previously known it at Newtongrange Primary School. Within the last and a half year, school has closed, opened, closed, opened again and still we face some uncertainty in the coming months as waves of the pandemic loom in some form or other. As a school, we have tried hard to embrace the challenges as they have come and adapted to new and different ways of thinking and working, some of which we might keep when we come out of these times.

Throughout the Build Back Better phase, the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of our children, staff and their families will be a key priority. We know that good health and wellbeing is vital to ensure that our children engage effectively in their learning.

When considering how to prepare and plan for our Build Back Better phase at Newtongrange Primary School, we begin by recognising that gaps within learning have developed for many learners and that curriculum needs differ for learners in comparison to pre Covid-19.

Through our planning, we will ensure that:

- Regular opportunities will be provided to continue to build relationships and resilience.
- Each of our learners will have a recognised key adult within school who can talk to them and support them with their wellbeing.
- The benefits of play and outdoor learning are recognised, including opportunities for our learners to be physically active, to enjoy and learn about their natural environment, and to relax.
- High expectations is promoted by all, including the continued belief that our learners can achieve academic success. We will make all of our expectations clear, break tasks down when required and provide supportive and clear feedback to check that our learners are on task and have understood the task correctly.
- We will use data to inform our curriculum planning with particular focus on improving literacy and numeracy attainment.
- Relevant interdisciplinary linked themes will be introduced and provide learners with opportunities to apply their literacy or numeracy skills within different contexts.

- Opportunities for developing skills will be planned for to increase our learners' digital abilities and equip them for the uncertainties of the future.
- Evidence of learning is collected and used to determine learners' achievements together with their next steps in learning.

As I stated early in this letter, hopefully many of these mitigations will be removed soon and that we will be able to reintroduce and enjoy all that our school has to offer in the near future, with parents and carers joining us physically at school events.

Please find attached a Parent Guide detailing further information regarding the return to school including a map of our one way entry and exit system and classroom layout.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming children back into our school and ELC setting on Wednesday 18th August.

Kind regards

Vicky Morgan
Head Teacher