

LB/HM

April 2021

John Muir House  
Haddington  
East Lothian  
EH41 3HA  
Tel 01620 827827

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope that you have managed to enjoy some of the lovely sunny weather over the Easter break. I wanted to write to you to provide a further update as we begin the summer term. We are all really looking forward to welcoming all children and young people back to our schools full-time on 20 April. With infection rates of Covid-19 continuing to fall nationally, the reopening of schools to all learners feels like a positive step for all of us.

While schools remain safe, Scottish Government guidance is clear that there are measures that must be in place to continue to suppress transmission of the virus. Many of these measures will be familiar to you and your child, especially for those learners who had already returned to school before Easter. Children who are shielding have been advised to stay at home until 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

#### **Primary school**

Our schools will continue to operate as they did before the Easter break. We continue to ask that parents and carers maintain 2m physical distancing from one another, wear face coverings and avoid congregating at either end of the school day to reduce the risks of community transmission.

However there have been some additional measures in secondary schools that we need all of our young people and families to be aware of.

#### **Secondary school**

After Easter, pupils will no longer need to maintain 2m physical distancing within school buildings. Distancing is still required for adults and staff members.

All staff and pupils must wear face coverings at all times within school buildings unless they are medically exempt. If this is the case for your child, please discuss it directly with your school.

The Scottish Government has extended the use of Lateral Flow Device testing kits to all secondary age pupils. These should be completed at home twice per week – full instructions are included within the pack. In the event of a positive result, a follow-up PCR test should be requested from Test and Protect and all members of the household should self-isolate. It is important to note that this testing is not mandatory but the Scottish Government is encouraging pupils and staff to make use of them.

#### **Ventilation**

Guidance on ventilation remains unchanged and, while we are seeing the weather improving, we continue to ask you to ensure your child comes to school in clothing that will keep them comfortable in well-ventilated spaces.

**Reporting cases of Covid-19**

We ask that you continue to report all positive cases of Covid-19 to your school and to the [covidinschools@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:covidinschools@eastlothian.gov.uk) mailbox out of normal working hours and follow the national public health advice on self-isolation.

**Home to school transport**

Face coverings remain mandatory for all passengers at all times during the journey, unless medically exempt. Please check your transport providers' website for further information and up to date timetables.

**Senior phase and transitions**

We know that some of our children and families may be concerned about the disruption to learning caused by the pandemic and the closure of school buildings. Our staff are already working around the clock to ensure that appropriate support is in place and that we can continue to ensure we are helping all learners to progress in their learning.

For our senior phase young people, we know that this will also be a stressful time as schools gather assessment evidence for national qualifications. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's school if you have any concern or want to discuss any aspect of your child's learning or wellbeing. The summer term is also an important time for transitions as learners prepare for their next steps. Schools are working on their plans that both support the needs of our learners and that are also COVID-19 safe. Schools will inform parents and carers of what is being planned in due course.

We are grateful to all of our children, young people and families for the support you have shown and for continuing to follow the essential public health guidance to ensure our schools remain safe and supportive places to learn. We ask that you continue to remain vigilant and continue to support the safe operation of our schools during the summer term when we hope we will see some further lifting of restrictions.

Yours sincerely



**Lesley Brown**

**Executive Director Education and Children's Services**