

People &

Midlothi

Partnerships

Midlothian Council
Fairfield House
8 Lothian Road
Dalkeith
EH22 3ZG

Executive Director
Ms Fiona Robertson



8 March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Further to the First Minister's announcement last week, we are delighted that current scientific evidence now confirms we can move forward to allow the full time return of P4-7 children to schools from 15 March.

The Arrangements for P4-7

Children in P4-7 should continue to make use of the soft start times to the school day as was in place previously. This means that classrooms will be open from 8:55am until 9:10am, with children not arriving at the playground before this time. On arrival, they should enter through the garden door for P4 classes and classroom doors for P5-7. Our P1-3 classes will continue to use the entrances they have been using since their return.

Scottish Government guidelines for school still ask that all adults on school grounds wear face masks and maintain 2m social distancing from people out with their own households. **To ensure physical distancing for adults and pupils we have staggered finishing times for the four classes who leave via the same exit in Juniper block.**

As from 15th March

Monday-Thursday

P1W and P1B will finish at 3.05pm.

All other classes will finish at 3.20pm

Friday

P1/2M & P2A will finish at 12.15pm

All other classes finish at 12.30pm

It is advised as part of our risk assessment that children should wear fresh clothes each day and as such we will continue with our 'relaxed' school uniform policy. We feel that wearing a school uniform should be part of a return to school

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and will give children a sense of identity. Our school uniform is simple and easy to wash so we are suggesting that children wear school uniform, or school colours. The most important thing is that their clothes are newly washed each day. It will be extremely important that all school uniform worn is labelled with your child's name. Please do not be offended if we check when children remove jumpers and write names on labels as your child must only wear their own clothes.

School Lunches

All children P4-7 should bring a packed lunch to school. BACS payments will continue to be paid to those from P4 upwards who are entitled to Free School Meals for financial reasons. Further information about Free School Meals during this period can be found here:

https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/855/school_meals/117/free_school_meals_and_clothing_grants/3

Remote Learning

All children should be returning to school on 15 March unless self isolating due to symptoms/a positive test/ have been asked to stay at home by NHS Track and Trace. Face to face learning in the classroom will take the place of remote learning. Google Classrooms will continue to be used for homework/communication purposes.

LFD Testing

All staff who are returning to classrooms to teach will be offered LFD testing kits. The expectation is that staff will at home test twice a week and record results online. Schools will be recording the distribution of these kits following government guidance.

Risk Assessment

As before, all schools and ELC settings have been risk assessed with colleagues from our Health and Safety service, with enhanced health and safety measures and protocols put in place that follow the current public health and government guidance.

These include observing the age-appropriate physical distancing measures outlined by current government guidance as well as public health advice to help reduce the spread of the virus, guidance on handwashing and hygiene, use of PPE, updated fire safety arrangements and use of transport.

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We would appreciate that you go over the safety measures with your child before they return. It is important that they understand the need for regular hand washing or sanitising throughout the school day. Children in all classes except in P1 and P2 will be allocated a seat in their classroom so we can provide information as to close contacts if needed for track and trace. Children will still be active in small groups across the day. Children will play with their year group in the playground in an allocated area. We apologise in advance for muddy conditions as we require to use all spaces even in rainy weather. If you would like your child to change they can keep spare clothes and or footwear in their school bag. Children should not bring toys or personal items to school.

Cleaning

Every school will continue to have an enhanced cleaning regime in place, with staff on duty throughout the school day. Toilets, door handles, bannisters and other surfaces in constant use will be cleaned on a rotational basis to ensure the highest possible levels of cleanliness.

Transport/Safe Routes to School

School transport will run as normal and there will be crossing patrols in place for those walking to school. Please be reminded roadworks are in place on Mauricewood Road and the crossing patrol has moved further up Mauricewood Road between Mauricewood Avenue and Mauricewood Bank. There is no vehicle access to Mauricewood Avenue. There is still a safe route to school across Mauricewood hill via the footpath. We would ask all parents/carers to consider walking/scooting/cycling to school where possible. For those who must use cars to bring their children to school we ask you to please be considerate to our neighbours when parking in the residential streets around the school.

We would like to thank you for your ongoing support as we continue to develop our plans following this recent announcement. We will keep you updated with any further information via our usual channels of communication.

Yours sincerely,

Judith Mathers

Head Teacher