



**New Machar School**  
**COVID-19 – Return to School**

**August 2020**

## **Return to School procedures/guidelines**

This guidance has been developed to support a safe 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.

The Scottish Government has agreed that schools will reopen on the 11<sup>th</sup> August. In Aberdeenshire, Monday 10<sup>th</sup> August and Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> August will be In-Service Days and school will only be open to staff. New Machar School will be implementing a “soft start” approach for all pupils during Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> August-Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August to allow pupils to ease back into school smoothly and to ensure they are familiar with the updated procedures and guidelines.

**Pupils will return in their allocated bubble for the first week only.**

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2020: ACHIEVE bubble will attend school from 9am-3pm**

**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2020: INCLUDE bubble will attend school from 9am-3pm**

**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2020: MOTIVATE bubble will attend school from 9am-3pm.**

**Monday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020: All P2-P7 pupils return to school full time –a separate timetable has been sent out to all new P1 pupils parents/carers regarding the P1 phasing entry.**

We do not however expect the return to school in August to be a return to normality. We must remain vigilant and continue to manage the risks of COVID-19. This guidance has been designed to help our school community and pupils to do so, and ensure the safety of children, young people and staff.

In order to address the risks identified in our risk assessments, we will adopt core public health measures in a way that is appropriate to our school setting.

Ensuring a positive learning environment for all children and young people, should include measures focused on preventing and responding to infections.

Essential public health measures include:

- Enhanced hygiene and environmental cleaning arrangements
- Minimising contact with others (groupings, maintaining physical distancing for adults)
- Wearing appropriate PPE where necessary
- A requirement that people who are ill stay at home; and
- Active engagement with Test and Protect

Please see below procedures/guidelines to be followed by New Machar School when all staff/pupils return in August 2020.

### **School Day – Start/Finish**

On our return, school will operate between the hours of 9am-3.15pm. Information regarding staggered start/finish times are details further within this guidance. Pupils should NOT arrive before 8.50am.

An adult will be on duty in each playground to direct children to their appropriate door on their first day at school

Staff should ensure they are prepared for the following the day and leave the school building. It would be appreciated if all staff leave the school building by 3.45pm/4pm to allow the cleaning team to carry out their enhanced cleaning. There may be times in which SLT will have to remain later if dealing with a child protection issues/situation that cannot be dealt with the following day.

### **Personal Hygiene**

New Machar School will encourage and support all children, young people and staff to maintain COVID-secure personal hygiene throughout the day, this will include:

- Frequent washing/sanitising of hands for 20 seconds and drying thoroughly and always when entering/leaving the building, before/after eating and after using the toilet.

- Encouraging children, young people and staff to avoid touching their faces including mouth, eyes and nose.
- Using a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze, and use bins that are emptied regularly for tissue waste.
- Children with longer hair are requested to wear their hair tied back to reduce the potential amount of hand-to-face contact

Parents/Carers may wish to provide their child(ren) with their own hand sanitiser for personal use only whilst they are in school. Pupils are welcome to wear bottle clips to ensure they always have sanitiser when required.

We will display appropriate signage throughout the school to remind pupils about the importance of hand washing as well as reinforce this in class as well as through our digital assemblies.

On arrival to their entry point, pupils will be asked to use hand sanitiser before entering the school building by a member of staff. Once hands have been cleaned, they will be directed to their classroom where their class teacher will be waiting for them. Personal belongings such as coats/bags should never be left unattended – pupils will be asked to place these under their desk on the floor, avoiding any contact with their workstations.

### **Drop off/Pick Up**

In order to ensure the safety of parents/carers during drop off/pick up times, it is essential that all parents/carers follow our guidelines:

P1 pupils will enter via the usual P1 door – in order to avoid large crowds, each P1 class will have a designated drop off period.

Parents/Carers should walk their child to the P1 door whilst maintaining a 2m distance from others. A member of staff will then welcome your child into school. Once your child is in school, parents/carers should then leave the school grounds immediately.

P1/2 9am (pick up 3pm)

P1Y 9.05am (pick up 3.05pm)

P1F 9.10am (pick up 3.10pm)

Please note, during the initial phasing in period, P1 Parents/Carers should refer to the separate timetable issued by Mrs Duncan.

Staggered times will commence during the W/C 31/8/2020.

**P2L/P2I** pupils should enter/exit via the usual P2 doors. They should line up at 9am, where one class at a time will be met by their class teacher. Pupils should not arrive early or be left alone in the playground. Parents should ensure physical distancing is adhered to until class teachers welcome pupils into the building.

**P3G/P3H** pupils should line up at the Portabcabin from 9am. Designated line up points will be signed. One class at a time will be met by their class teacher. Pupils should not arrive early or be left alone in the playground. Parents should ensure physical distancing is adhered to until class teachers welcome pupils into the building. As soon as the class teacher is present, all Parents/Carers must leave the playground.

**P4-P7** pupils should arrive at the usual P6-P7 door from 8.50am (After School Club entrance). Designated line up points will be signed. Pupils should enter the school playground on their own. Parents/Carers should NOT to wait in the playground with P4-P7 pupils. Doors will be open from 8.50am to avoid large crowds, however it is not expected all pupils arrive at this time. Doors will remain open until 9.10am. An adult will be present to guide and direct pupils where to go.

**If driving pupils to school**, Parents/Carers should remain in their cars where possible and allow pupils to walk safely on to the school grounds. Where this is not possible, Parents/Carers should think carefully about where they park – if possible, they should park away from the main entrances and walk their child to the school entrances before heading back to their car.

**Transport pupils** should exit the bus and head straight to their designated entry point.

## **School Uniform**

As per Scottish Government Advice, when we return to school, classes will be encouraged to spend significant periods of time outdoors.

Full school uniform may be worn, however please be mindful that outdoor activities may be messy and as a result, skirts, trousers and shoes may get dirty or indeed damaged. In this regard, and because pupils will be unable to change their clothes and shoes within the school environment whilst social distancing measures are in place, should parents wish, it will be acceptable for pupils to come to school with casual bottoms on (no jeans), and with a school sweatshirt/cardigan/jumper on top. Casual footwear may also be worn.

Updated Government Guidance to school suggests that “school uniforms/clothing should be washed/cleaned as normal”

Information on ordering school uniform can be found on our website.

Information on school clothing grants can be found by following the link below:

<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/schoolinfo/assistance/school-clothing-grants/>

## **PE Kits**

All PE will take place outdoors in most weather types. Children should NOT bring a PE kit to school as they will be unable to change. They should have appropriate outdoor footwear only (please note indoor shoes will not be permitted for the time being) and an appropriate jacket to be worn on colder days.

## **Resources**

For those who have enquired about the resources- pupils should bring into school on their return, we would ask, where possible, that you provide a pencil, eraser, glue stick and some coloured pencils. These resources would stay in school, in your child’s tray and would only be used by your child – you may wish to provide these in a pencil case or in a resealable bag.

## **School Bags/Reading Folders**

National guidance states that if a child brings their own bag into school that only they use then this should not increase the risk of indirect spread of the virus. We are allowing pupils to bring school bags to school; however they will be instructed to keep them on the floor under their tables and not on their desks/worktops. P1-P3 pupils should bring their reading folder to school every day.

## **Enhanced Environmental Cleaning**

At New Machar School we will ensure that an enhanced environmental cleaning regime is in place. This regime will be in line with Health Protection Scotland Guidance for Non-Healthcare settings. This specifies in particular:

- Ensuring regular detergent cleaning schedules and procedures are in place using a product which is active against bacteria and viruses (COVID Guard – training will be given to all staff to ensure appropriate use of this spray).
- Ensuring regular (at least twice daily) cleaning of commonly touched objects and surfaces (e.g. desks, handles, dining tables, shared technology surfaces).
- Ensuring that where possible movement of individuals between work stations is minimised and where work spaces are shared there is cleaning between use (e.g. each individual, children, young people and staff, has a designated desk (P3-P7)).
- Ensuring there are adequate disposal facilities.
- Wedging doors (other than fire doors), open, where appropriate to reduce touchpoints.
- Setting clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean and physical distancing is achieved as much as possible.
  
- We will also ensure more frequent cleaning of rooms/areas that must be used by different groups, including staff (e.g. classrooms, toilets and staff areas).
  
- Movement of children, young people and staff between classrooms will be minimised wherever possible. Where this cannot be avoided, the provision of appropriate cleaning supplies to enable them to wipe down their own desk/chair/surfaces before leaving and especially, on entering the room will be considered.

## **Dining Hall/Lunches**

We are planning for most children eating in their classroom, however some will eat in the hall. This is to maximise the spaces available to avoid different groups from mixing with one another for a long period of time. We have made some changes to the lunch times – please see table below.

Our P1 pupils, when they begin full days, will eat their lunch in the hall, alongside P3G/P3H.

	Lunchtime
P1F	12.30-1.30pm (hall)
P1Y	12.30-1.30pm (hall)
P1/2	12.30-1.30pm (hall)
P2I	12.30-1.30pm (class)
P2L	12.30-1.30pm (class)
P3H	12.30-1.30pm (hall)
P3G	12.30-1.30pm (hall)
P4E	12.15pm – 1.15pm (class)
P4S	12.15pm – 1.15pm (class)
P5KT	12.15pm – 1.15pm (class)
P5N	12.15pm – 1.15pm (class)
P6L	12pm – 1pm (class)
P6M	12pm – 1pm (class)
P7H	12pm – 1pm (class)
P7R	12pm – 1pm (class)

P1-P3 PSAs lunch break: 1.30pm- 2pm.

When pupils are finished their lunch, they will walk to their designated exit and head to their designated play area in the playground, where they will be met by a PSA. A bell at 1.30pm will signal all children to line up on the field (at designated markers), where class teachers will then meet them to take them back inside. Once inside, pupils will be expected to wash hands before entering their class area.



P4-P7 PSAs will break from 1.15pm-1.45pm.

SLT/Class Teachers and PSAs will support pupils to ensure lunch is served as smoothly as possible.

Once finished, pupils should only leave the school building when instructed by an adult. They should then exit via their exit point and head to their designated play area in the playground. P4-P7 pupils should line up at their designated area when the bell signals and will be collected by their class teacher.

All pupils lunch breaks will last one hour, starting from the time they have their lunch.

Pupils will be able to go off-site (home) for lunch **but are requested to remain off site until the end of the lunch break.**

Staff can safely eat in the dining hall if they wish. They should use their own crockery and cutlery in staff areas and ensure they are cleaned with warm general purpose detergent and thoroughly dried before being stored for re-use.

### **Breaktime**

Break times will be staggered to allow for maximum physical distancing between different pupil groups.

P1-P3 break will commence at 10.50am- 11.05am. (2 PSAs)

P4-P5 break will commence from 10.35am-10.50am. (2 PSAs)

P6-P7 break will commence from 10.20am-10.35am. (1PSA/SLT)

Pupils should not share their snacks and should remain in their designated play area with children from their class only. They should not mix with other class groups. Please note we have some children who have allergies. Could parents/carers avoid nut based snack products.

When the bell signals, pupils should line up at their class designated line up point, where they will be met by their class teacher.

### **Shared Resources in School/Home Use**

Children and staff can take books and other resources home, although unnecessary resource sharing including textbook should be avoided. Cleaning between uses will be in accordance with the Health Protection Scotland Guidance for Non-Healthcare settings.

Our Library will remain closed for the time being.

### **Ventilation/Clothing**

To improve ventilation, schools are being encouraged to open windows so the building may be cooler than would normally be expected. Even on warm days, having a layer of indoor clothing other than a shirt or blouse might be advisable. This advice will be reviewed as we head into the winter months. This will also help reduce contact with door handles. Internal fire doors should never be held open.

**THIS YEAR, MORE THAN EVER, IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT ALL ITEMS OF CLOTHING ARE CLEARLY LABELLED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.**

### **Minimising Contacts (Groupings)**

In line with the scientific advice, wherever possible, efforts will be made to keep children and young people within the same groups for the duration of the school day.

In open plan settings, we will ensure clear demarcation and separation between the areas in which different groups learn.

We will avoid whole school assemblies and other types of large gatherings. Assemblies will continue to be broadcasted digitally and shared with all classes.

Passing briefly in the corridor or playground is considered low risk, however our risk assessment will consider the ways in which busy corridors, entrances and exits could be avoided.

### **Physical Distancing and Minimising Contact for Adults**

2meter physical distancing between adults, and between adults and children and young people who are not from the same household should be maintained. This includes non-staff adult visitors to the school e.g. contractors, deliveries etc. Adult visitors to schools will be strictly limited only to those that are necessary to support children and young people or the running of the school and arrangements should be communicated clearly to staff and the wider school community.

Parents/Carers should not enter the school building, unless previously arranged by the Head Teacher or in an emergency situation. Parents/Carers should email/phone the school should they wish to talk to a member of staff.

### **Face Coverings**

Where adults cannot keep 2m distance and are interacting face to face for a sustained period (about 15 minutes or more), face coverings should be worn. Should the prevalence of the virus in the population start rising we may encourage adults to wear face coverings as part of an enhanced system of approaches to reduce transmission.

Impact of wearing face coverings on learners with additional support needs will be considered.

**Anyone (staff or pupil) who wishes to wear a face covering is free to do so.**

### **PPE required in specific circumstances**

**Routine Activities** – No PPE is required when undertaking routine educational activities in classroom or school settings.

### **Suspected COVID-19:**

Gloves, aprons and a fluid-resistant mask should be worn by staff if a child or young person becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 and needs direct personal care.

Eye protection should also be worn if a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes such as from coughing, spitting or vomiting.

Gloves and aprons should be used when cleaning the areas where a person suspected of having COVID-19 has been.

If a pupil displays any symptoms of COVID-19, they will be isolated from their group and supervised in our Medical Room. Parents/Carers will be called to collect their child. On arrival, parents/carers should ring the bell at the main reception – a member of staff will bring the pupil to the front entrance. Parents/Carers will not be permitted into the building. A COVID-19 test should be booked and pupils should self isolate for 10 days.

### **Intimate Care**

Gloves and aprons should continue to be issued when providing intimate care to a child or young person. This can include personal, hands-on care such as washing, toileting, or first aid and certain clinical procedures such as assisted feeding.

Fluid-resistant surgical masks and eye protection should also be worn if a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes such as from coughing, spitting or vomiting.

Gloves and aprons should be issued when cleaning equipment or surfaces that might be contaminated with body fluids such as saliva or respiratory secretions.

### **Expressive Arts/French/Spanish/PE learning**

All staff can operate across different classes and year groups within a setting where this is necessary to facilitate the delivery of the school timetable. Where staff need to move between classes and year groups, they should try and keep 2m distancing from learners and other staff as much as they can.

French/Spanish will continue to be taught in individual classrooms. Singing will not be permitted; however, the use of music will still be used to help pupils understand the language being taught.

Expressive Arts – this may be taught outdoors or in the GP room to allow for 2m distancing. Singing will be avoided during the initial return to schools. Singing will not be permitted; however the use of music or instruments will still be used to deliver experiences and outcomes. Any instruments used will be cleaned after each use and will not be shared by multiple classes.

### **Staying vigilant and responding to COVID-19 symptoms**

The whole school community should be vigilant for the symptoms of COVID-19, and to understand what actions they take if someone develops them, either onsite or offsite. The most common symptoms are:

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

It is essential that people do not attend school if symptomatic, but instead self-isolate (along with their household) and follow guidance on NHS Inform and from Test and Protect. Children, young people and staff will be supported to follow Test and Protect procedures.

All children, young people and staff must inform a member of staff or responsible person if they feel unwell with symptoms of COVID-19. SLT will support an affected individual where required. If the person has mild symptoms, and is over 16, they should go home as soon as they notice symptoms and follow the guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection, including testing and self-isolation. If the individual is a child below the age of 16, parents/carers should be contacted and asked to make arrangements to pick the child up from school (preferable this should be an adult member from their household and not a

grandparent) and follow the national guidance for households with possible COVID-19 infection including testing and self-isolation.

If a pupil at New Machar School develops symptoms, they will be asked to sit in the medical room at least 2 meters away from other people. Windows will be open to allow for ventilation. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and will be advised to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze and then put the tissue in the bin.

If an individual is so unwell that they require an ambulance, the school will phone 999 and inform the call handler we are concerned about COVID-19.

Individuals should wash their hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell.

New Machar School will manage outbreaks (2 or more confirmed cases within 14 days) in line with the guidance on outbreak response.

We will also maintain an accurate register of absences of children, young people and staff and whether these are due to possible or confirmed COVID-19. All staff must sign in at reception daily.

If an outbreak is confirmed, we will work with the local HPT to manage it.

### **School Transport**

Please refer to the information sent out to parents/carers on 4<sup>th</sup> August regarding information relating to school transport.

### **Opportunities for dialogue with staff**

We will continue to complete annual reporting, however there will be no parents evening meetings this year. Depending on the situation after December 2020, we will update parents/carers whether face to face appointments can be made.

Under normal circumstances opportunities for dialogue with staff would often present themselves at the school door at the beginning or end of the pupil day. This will not be possible for the time being and any parent wishing to engage directly with a teacher should do so by contacting the class teacher via SeeSaw once new class accounts have been activated. Alternatively parents may contact the school office, by phone or email ([newmachar.sch@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:newmachar.sch@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)), but not in person, requesting an opportunity to have a conversation with the class teacher and indicating briefly the aspect requiring discussion.

Teachers will not be able to engage in dialogue with parents at the start or end of the day. As stated above, parents should vacate the school grounds as quickly as possible after drop off/ pick up time.

Please note also that we need to minimise the handing in of forgotten snacks / lunches to the office as this could very easily be a source of spreading the infection. We would therefore request that parents ensure their children come to school prepared and organised for the day ahead.

### **Catering**

Local Authorities' duty to provide free school meals to children and young people who are eligible for them remains. Online accounts can be topped up with funds to allow pupils to purchase a school meal.

### **Closing Statement**

I am aware that this is a significant amount of information but hopefully it will offer you both clarity and some degree of reassurance that we are

putting the safety of pupils and staff as our highest priority when we return to school.

The full risk assessment will be posted on our website and as we begin to see how these arrangements work in practice further adjustments may be required.

If anyone wishes general or child specific clarification or guidance, please contact the school.

I would like to thank you for your understanding and support to ensure a safe return is in place for all pupils and staff at New Machar School.

Best wishes,

Mr Carle