

COVID-19

September 2023 update for School Communities

Infection Prevention

As we go into autumn, Public Health Scotland and the Scottish Government has provided the following reminder for school communities:

- Washing hands thoroughly using soap and water will help prevent the spread of common infections such as colds, flu, COVID-19, threadworms and stomach bugs. Hands should be washed throughout the day, e.g. before and after eating; after using the toilet; after coughing or sneezing; and when returning from breaks. Children need to understand why it is important to wash their hands; be taught how to wash, rinse and dry their hands correctly; and have easy access to running water and soap.
- Staff and pupils should continue to follow the advice set out on the NHS Inform if they have symptoms of a respiratory infection such as coronavirus, this is summarised below.
- Adults including staff, volunteers and parents visiting early year's settings, should stay at home and avoid contact with other people if they have symptoms of a respiratory infection such as coronavirus and they:
 - have a high temperature or
 - do not feel well enough to go to work or carry out normal activities •
- They should do this until they no longer have a high temperature (if they had one) or until they feel better.
- Children who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people, where they can. They can go back to school, college or childcare, and resume normal activities when they no longer have a high temperature and they're well enough to attend.
- Where a school has any concerns about unusually high levels of absence, or reports of clusters of disease circulating within the school, they should contact their local NHS Health Protection Team, based in each health board for advice. Contact details can be found on the NHS website: [NHS Health Protection Team Contacts](#)
- Staff should be familiar with expected standard environmental cleaning regimes including being prepared for outbreaks
- Schools should aim to keep their environments well-ventilated and temperature, comfortable for learning and working
- Finally, vaccines are an effective and safe way of protecting yourself and your family from many infections. Schools play a vital role in promoting vaccination uptake among staff and children. This includes childhood immunisations, as well as COVID-19 and flu. Parents can ensure their children are up to date with their vaccinations by checking their Red Book, speaking to their health visitor or immunisation services. Find more details on the [Getting your vaccinations](#) page of NHS inform.