

5th August 2021



Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you and your children are having an enjoyable Summer and that there has been time for some rest and some fun.

Now that the Scottish Government have confirmed the latest covid guidance, I am writing with some information for all parents about the return to school. For those who took SQA courses in 2020-21, there is also a reminder of the procedure for results day next week and appeals.

Please do continue to keep in touch with events in school by following our [Facebook page](#). Once term starts you will also be able to read our [Daily Bulletin](#) on the school website.

Kind regards

Jane Partridge, Head Teacher

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S5 – 6: SQA Exam Results and Appeals

Pupils who took SQA courses in school year 2020-21 will receive their certificate from SQA on Tuesday 10th August. Grades on the certificate should match those already communicated to pupils and parents at the end of last term; if they do not, please contact the school.

If you have any queries about your results, wish to appeal a result, wish to make a change to your course choices for 2021-22 or are leaving school and need support with your next step, staff are available in school to help you from 9am – 4pm on Tuesday 10th August. Pupils and parents are welcome to drop in between these hours or to contact the school on 850660 or admin.sa@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk.

Please note that pupils can only register themselves for SQA appeals until 12th August; further appeal registrations can be made through the school until 27th August. Further information on the SQA Appeals Service is available on <https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/79049.html>

S1-6: COVID self-testing

All pupils and staff are asked to complete a lateral flow covid self-test one or two days before returning to school in August, and then to continue taking tests twice a week until guidance changes. Test kits are available for collection from the school foyer from 8:30 – 4pm every weekday until Monday 16th August. Kits can also be collected from local pharmacies.

The test result should be recorded on the government website <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>. If the result is positive, you must self-isolate and book a PCR test; please do not attend school.

If you have not already done so, please complete a [testing consent form](#) and drop it off at the school office.

S1-6: Preparing for the return to School

School restarts for pupils on Tuesday 17th August at 8:50. In preparation for the return, please ensure that your child has the following items:

- schoolbag
- pencil case with pens and pencils
- refillable water bottle
- PE kit (own choice, but suitable for indoor and outdoor PE). Please note that all S1 pupils have PE on the first day of school, as do the Advanced Higher and National 5 class and pupils who have chosen PE as an option in S3.
- Young Scot Card for cashless payment in the Dining Hall
- facemasks – current government guidance is these will continue to be required in school for the first 6 weeks

Pupils in S1-4 will be given a school planner; pupils in S5/6 should have their own method of recording homework and important dates.

Please ensure that your child's account is topped up with money if required for purchases in the Dining Hall. Parents of children joining us in S1 will receive a letter direct from OIC Catering on how to do this.

S1-6: COVID procedures for the new term

Government guidance for schools with regards to the actions to be taken to reduce the risk of covid infection was updated on 3rd August. Whilst most restrictions are being relaxed in society due to the fact that the majority of adults are now vaccinated, in schools, large numbers of young people who are not vaccinated are mixing, and therefore there is a need for more action to reduce risk. As a result, covid restrictions in schools will be largely unchanged from last term, for the first six weeks of the new term. In summary, the risk mitigations in place on our return will be:

- Pupils/staff with covid symptoms must not attend school; they will be isolated and sent home if symptoms develop while at school
- Frequent hand cleaning
- Extra cleaning of the building, particularly frequently touched surfaces; pupils clean desks and chairs and any equipment used at the end of each lesson
- Distancing:
 - At least 1m distancing staff:staff and staff:pupil
 - Pupils should:
 - avoid physical contact
 - avoid crowding together
 - continue to use the 1m floor markings when queuing for the dining hall
 - be seated facing the front in classes, and spread out if it is a small class
- Face coverings throughout the school building
- Face coverings on school transport
- Staggered arrival, departure, break and lunch
- At-home twice-weekly covid testing for all pupils and staff
- Avoidance of large gatherings
- Increased ventilation – doors and windows are kept open and we encourage pupils to bring layers to wear
- No bells at change of lesson, to reduce congestion in corridors
- Use of the entrance behind the theatre where appropriate, to reduce congestion in the foyer

Covid mitigations which are no longer required:

- PE, Drama and Music will operate as normal in the new term.
 - We are no longer required to keep groups of pupils separate, so on arrival at school in the morning pupils of different ages may mix in social areas of the school. Small-scale events mixing junior and senior pupils are now permitted, such as an older sports leader working with a junior group or pupils of all ages coming together at a pupil council meeting. However, the continued requirement to stagger break and lunch-times means junior (S1-3) and senior (S4-6) pupils will still be separate at these times.
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S1-6: Free School Meals and Clothing Allowances

Families are encouraged to check whether they are entitled to assistance with paying for school meals and clothing. The current clothing allowance is £150 per child, and if your child is entitled to free school meals the price of a meal is credited to their cashless account every day, meaning they look no different to any other pupil when paying for their meal.

If you receive Universal Credit or other benefits, or are on a low income, please see the [OIC Website](#) for more information on eligibility and applying. If you need help in applying, please contact your child's Guidance Teacher.

S1-6: Young Scot Cards

Young Scot cards are used within school for contactless payment in the Dining Hall. This keeps our queues running quickly and helps reduce the risk of covid transmission.

If your child has a Young Scot Card, please ensure they bring it to school.

If they have lost or damaged their card, there will be an opportunity to apply for a replacement during registration on the first day of term.

S1-6: Vaccinations

This year, the Scottish Government will be offering seasonal flu vaccinations to all secondary school pupils and staff, in addition to the normal offer for primary schools. The rationale for this expansion is to maintain the resilience of educational services during the Scottish Government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and to reduce the risk of infection and transmission of the virus. Vaccinations will be administered within school, and consent forms will be sent to parents once we have been given details by NHS Orkney.

Young people aged 12-17 are being offered covid vaccination in specific circumstances such as being clinically vulnerable or living with someone who is immunosuppressed – details are [here](#). At the time of writing, the Scottish Government is considering whether covid vaccinations will be offered to all 16 and 17 year olds.