

Coronavirus – measures to remain in place at schools

The Scottish Government has announced that the current Covid-19 safety mitigations in schools are to remain in place for now, following advice from senior clinicians.

Pupils will continue to be required to wear face coverings in secondary school classrooms as they begin to return from the October break.

Secondary-school pupils, and staff in primary and secondary schools, will also still require face coverings in communal areas or when moving around the building.

The Chief Medical Officer has advised that while there are encouraging signs, a more cautious approach would allow more time for 12 to 15-year-olds to take up the vaccination.

Confirming that school mitigations will remain in place for now, Education Secretary Shirley-Anne Somerville also urged continued vigilance to protect pupils and staff.

Ms Somerville said: “In recent weeks we have seen the previous sharp decline in Covid-19 case numbers starting to level off, and that is why we have decided to adopt a cautious approach and maintain safety mitigations in school for the time-being. Progress with vaccinating 12-15 year olds has been remarkable and is already over 40%. However, this was only rolled out a few weeks ago and allowing further time will mean that that

encouraging figure rises even higher.

“This decision is based on advice from senior clinicians and takes account of the most recent data. We will continue to monitor case rates on a weekly basis, with a view to lifting restrictions at earliest possible time.

“While I fully understand that this will be disappointing news for some young people and their parents, as has been the situation throughout, the safety of children, young people, and all education staff, remains the overriding priority. There is no room for complacency and we must all continue to remain vigilant to reduce the spread of Covid-19.”