

Falkland Islands Schools – Covid-19 Guidance – May 2022

This guidance is for parents and members of the public to inform stakeholders about the protocols that will be in place in all the Falkland Islands Schools' settings across the Islands following the easing of Covid-19 restrictions on Wednesday 4th May 2022.

The information in the following pages is set out to allow you to navigate easily to the relevant information you need, and dip in and out as needed. We hope you find it useful.

If you still have questions about school, or Stanley House, please make direct contact with them.

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Covid-19 update

At the end of March 2022, the Falkland Islands Government announced that the Covid-19 restrictions in place in our community will be removed from Wednesday 4th May 2022.

Covid-19 will be a feature of our lives for the foreseeable future, so we need to manage the risk and as much as possible continue with our business of providing education.

In the Falkland Islands we have been very fortunate to avoid lengthy periods of school closure, therefore we have considered what measures we will need to put in place so that schools will remain open and our students can continue to have access to education.

With border controls being lifted, we will begin to see Covid-19 in our community. The aim of the following protocols in schools is to slow the spread of Covid-19, so that service disruption is kept to a minimum. It is likely that we will move through 3 stages, starting with few cases, leading to wider transmission, and finally we will see higher numbers of positive cases in the community. These protocols aim to slow the spread so that schools remain open and the amount of positive cases does not overload key public services.

In line with the changing stages of Covid-19 transmission in the community, the measures we put in place now, will reduce in the future. We will inform parents when we make changes.

We recognise that this situation will affect people in different ways, therefore we would encourage parents to contact the schools or Health Service, if they want to talk through their concerns. The School Nurse, along with the Emotional Wellbeing team, are able to take referrals for children and families who might be struggling with anxiety about Covid-19.

Useful contact numbers:

Infant Junior School and Camp Education	Tel: 27294
Falkland Islands Community School	Tel: 27147
Stanley House Hostel	Tel: 27443
School Nurse Service	Tel: 28055 or Mobile: 53712
KEMH Covid-19 Guidance	Web: KEMH Covid-19 Guidance

<https://falklands.gov.fk/covid-19/information/kemh-guidance>

Current status

- The schools (including Camp Education) and Stanley House closed for the April school holiday on Thursday 14th April and will re-open for Term 3 on Monday 2nd May 2022.
- Stanley House will re-open on Sunday 1st May to receive students ahead of the start of Term 3.
- Year 11 students have had separate communication and individual timetables regarding their school attendance after the April holiday, as it depends on when their GCSE exams are scheduled. Falkland College and FICS are planning the usual transition programme for Year 11 students, more information will be sent about this in due course. Some updated guidance for Year 11 is included in this communication.
- The schools do not have capacity to provide support for remote learning or setting work where parents choose not to send their children back to school without medical advice. If parents would like to talk through concerns, please contact the schools or the School Nurse service on 28055 or Mobile: 53712.

Protocols in place in Falkland Island schools following easing of Covid-19 restrictions on Wednesday 4th May 2022

Entry to and Exit from the schools

- Hands sanitised on entry to the building. Sanitiser available in all classrooms.
- A high temperature is one symptom of Covid-19. Forehead scanning thermometers will be used by class teachers and form tutors to monitor the temperature of all students on entry to their classroom or tutor room in the morning and afternoon. **If students have a temperature of 37.6°C or higher, and which remains at that level or higher after 10 minutes, a family member will be called to collect them.** The schools will offer the family member a LFT (lateral flow test), so that they can test the student at home. If the student is asymptomatic and the test is negative, they may return to school. If the test is positive, families should follow public health advice [KEMH Guidance \(falklands.gov.fk\)](https://www.falklands.gov.fk/kemh-guidance) and also report the result to the KEMH by emailing surveillance@kemh.gov.fk or calling 28000.
- If a student is displaying any of the symptoms of Covid-19:
 - a new continuous cough
 - a fever or high temperature (37.6C or greater)
 - a loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste (anosmia)
 - a sore throat
 - diarrhoea, vomiting or muscle aches and painsthey may not be well enough to attend school and, in that case, should stay at home. If these symptoms are discovered while at school, a family member will be called to collect them. In this situation people should follow public health advice [KEMH Guidance \(falklands.gov.fk\)](https://www.falklands.gov.fk/kemh-guidance), which is to:
 - contact KEMH to arrange for a test
 - to stay at home
 - avoid contact with other people
 - to follow public health guidance about when to return to school
 - only return to school when they feel well enough
- Children in IJS&CE already line up in separate areas, which avoids congestion when entering the school.
- At FICS students will be asked to enter school as usual and proceed straight to their tutor group classrooms. The one-way system will be followed at all times.
- At break-times all students will go outside, unless the weather is inclement, at which point they will go to their classrooms or tutor rooms.
- At IJS&CE breaktimes will remain in 3 groups.
- There will be orderly exits from classrooms and school at dismissal times, at break, lunch and the end of the day.

Managing people and spaces in school buildings

- Covid-19 spreads through the air via droplets that are exhaled from the nose and mouth of an infected person. There is not a legal requirement to wear a mask, but public health advice suggests that you might want to consider wearing one in crowded and enclosed spaces. Staff and students may choose if they want to wear a mask at school. The schools will supply the masks for staff and students (if they choose to wear them) which will ensure that the masks worn are effective and changed regularly. To be effective, students should not 'play' with masks and should wear them as advised.
- We will avoid unnecessary visitors in schools and ask students, parents, carers, and visitors, not to enter the education or childcare setting if they are displaying any symptoms of Covid-19
- We will remind students about effective hygiene practices
 - wash and sanitise hands regularly
 - correct wearing of masks
 - encourage students not to touch their face
 - sneeze into a tissue or the crook of your arm
 - open windows and doors when in a room with others
 - stay at home if you have flu-like symptoms or test positive for Covid-19
- In the early stages of community transmission, we will separate key members of our schools' office staff in order to maintain a high level of staffing resilience and service provision. We will also hold staff meetings in smaller groups or larger rooms.
- We will support the well-being of staff, students and families through provision of support materials, lessons/activities to support well-being and reduce associated anxieties
- We will maintain a one way system to control movement of students around the school

Managing cleaning and hygiene

- We will provide regular reminders about hygiene and teaching about hygiene where appropriate: handwashing, sanitising, mask wearing, avoiding touching your face, coughing etiquette; posters will be displayed
- We will ensure help is available for children and young people who have trouble washing their hands
- All areas of school will be cleaned regularly and rubbish removed
- School desks cleaned regularly (desks cleared at the end of the day for cleaning)
- All toilets cleaned every day;
- High touch areas cleaned regularly: (toilet flushes, door handles, light switches, banisters)
- We will ensure adequate supplies of cleaning / hygiene products (soap, hand sanitiser, surface cleaner, cleaning cloths, disinfectant) are maintained
- Classroom doors and windows open, where practicable

Management of Attendance

- We will take the register promptly and apply the attendance policy as usual
- If a student is unable to attend school i.e. children who are shielding on medical advice, they will have remote learning provision and be registered as 'educated offsite'
- Children working and playing at school will share other viruses. Any child who is unwell with any illness must stay at home and remain at home until they are fully recovered. If an illness is discovered while they are at school, a family member will be called to collect them.

Management of food and eating

- Breakfast club at FICS will continue as usual
- Breakers club at FICS will continue as usual
- There are no school provided snacks at IJS&CE
- Wash / sanitise hands before and after eating own snacks
- Wash / sanitise hands before and after preparing food in lessons
- We encourage students to bring their water bottles, if they do they **must** take it home daily for cleaning
- Students who bring in their own snacks **must** ensure it is a nut-free, healthy snack

Other guidance

- As this is the winter term and break times are outdoors, please ensure students are appropriately dressed for the weather.
- When appropriate, we will work with healthcare professionals and parents to plan how best to continue supporting the children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities to stay healthy and access education.

Year 11 guidance

The first live iGCSE examination on Wednesday, 4th May 2022. We are clear that it is 'business as usual' with regards to examinations. Students in Year 11 should follow the same guidance as all students and any advice issued by KEMH. Sanitiser will be available before GCSE exams start. Students may wear masks when they sit GCSE exams. An invigilator may require a student to remove their mask temporarily, at a distance, for identification purposes only.

If a student is symptomatic:

If, on the morning before an exam, a student has any Covid-19 symptoms, then they should carry out a lateral flow test (LFT) at home. Students will be given tests in advance to take home. They should ensure that the test is only taken one hour after last eating, drinking, brushing teeth or using mouthwash. If the result of the self-test is positive, then the student should attend KEMH to have a confirmatory test undertaken by a clinician, with the student's consent. KEMH will run a swabbing clinic between 7am and 8am for students on the days that there are morning GCSE exams. FICS will give students more information about how to access the confirmatory test in due course. KEMH will provide a letter and record of the test, verifying the result, for medical evidence. This is important because it will be evidence that is submitted to the exam board in the case of a student's absence from an exam. There are clear procedures about absences from a GCSE exam which is set out by the exam boards.

If the test is negative:

If the result of the self-test LFT or the clinician LFT is negative, then the student should attend the exam as normal.

If your self-test is positive

If the result of a self-test LFT is positive, please contact the school office on 27147 and inform the secretary that you are seeking a clinician test. If the clinician LFT test later turns out to be negative, then the student should go to the exam as usual. In some circumstances, it may be possible to start the exam slightly late, but good communication will be needed with the school. The student must remain in the supervision of the parent/carers as per the signed declaration for overnight supervision.

If the clinician test is also positive:

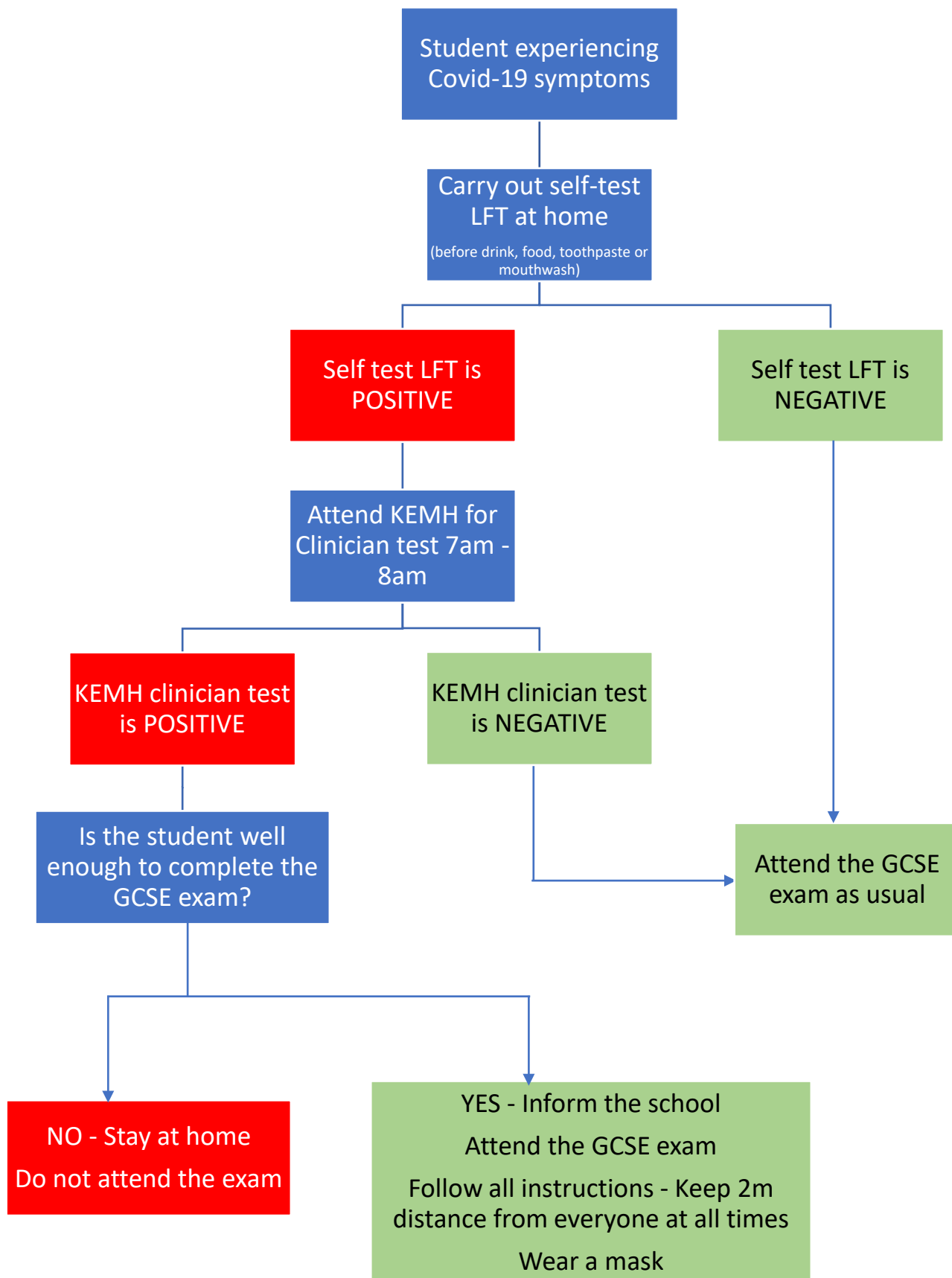
If the result of the clinician **LFT is positive**, and the **student is unwell**, they **should not attend the exam**. The KEMH test record will be used as part of the evidence provided to the exam board in line with their procedures for student absence. FICS will not use a positive self-test as part of the evidence for the exam board for student absence. FICS will only use evidence from a clinician test. If the result of the **clinician test is positive**, and the student **is well enough to complete the exam**, they **should attend the exam**. **Call the school** to inform them of this and **attend the GCSE exam**. There will be further measures in place. **Follow all instructions**, keep **2m distance** from everyone at all times and you **must wear a mask**.

Remember:

It is important to remember that to follow this guidance, students should get up early enough to take a lateral flow test before breakfast, if needed. The lateral flow test should be taken before eating, drinking, brushing teeth or using mouthwash. Before taking the test gently blow your nose then wash/sanitise your hands. The result of a lateral flow test takes about 20 minutes.

See overleaf for a simple flow chart of this information

Flow chart for GCSE students



What parents and carers can do:

- talk to your children about Covid-19 and the importance of hygiene practices particularly handwashing
- follow all public health guidance
- avoid gathering in large numbers at school entrances or in playgrounds, follow hygiene practices and be a role model for your children
- ensure your children are picked up from school promptly
- ensure Year 11 students are up in good time on each day of their exams to allow for Covid testing and issue of results if applicable
- look out for any further guidance we may send to you
- if you still have questions, please phone and ask, we want to make sure you are well-informed

Parent/carers information to support children's wellbeing

During this change, we're here to support your child and your family in whatever way we can. Most children will not experience any anxieties; however, you may notice some signs of increased anxiety about the upcoming change, these might include:

- Trouble sleeping
- Expressing sadness, anger or fear
- Sharing false information that they're hearing from their peers or seeing online
- Wanting to talk about Covid-19 all the time
- Not wanting to talk about the current situation at all
- Having trouble concentrating
- Acting out behaviours – this might include things like picking fights with you or with siblings
- Becoming afraid to leave the house
- Distancing themselves from their friends and family
- Exhibiting intense emotions but being unable to talk about what they're feeling

We've pulled together some information on the following pages to help you support your child. We hope you find this information helpful.

If you have any concerns about how your child is coping or you need any other support please contact the schools or the School Nurse.

How to talk to your child about what's happening

It's important to talk to your children about what's happening.

For younger children

Children pick up bits of information from their friends, from the news and from listening to adults talking around them – but they can misunderstand what they're hearing.

Deal with the news head-on and talk about it openly and calmly, giving them the facts

- Give them age-appropriate information – take a look at:
 - [#covibook](#) – for under 7s in multiple languages
 - [Children's guide to coronavirus](#) – a download from the Children's Commissioner to help explain the situation to children
- Teach them how to know if information they find on the internet is reliable. Explain how some stories on social media may be based on rumours or inaccurate information
- Encourage them to take breaks from listening to or reading the news – overexposure isn't helpful

Encourage questions

- This will give them the confidence to reach out, if they have anything to ask
- Be reassuring but honest when answering questions – it's ok if you don't have all the answers
- Be ready to answer the same question over and over – children tend to repeat themselves when they're feeling uncertain or worried, so you might have to answer the same questions more than once as they seek extra reassurance

Be a role model

- Recognise and manage your own worries first. Be open about your own feelings and let them know it's normal to be concerned
- Follow public health guidance and hygiene practices

Explain how our body's immune system protects us

- It's constantly working against germs without us knowing. We can't and don't need to control this process
- Explain that we're taking precautions against this particular germ to slow down its spread
- Remind them how important it is that they eat healthy food, sleep and exercise, as this helps to fight germs
- If it helps, reassure them that the effects of this virus on healthy young people are very mild

Keep doing your bit to help children reduce the spread of germs

- Remind them to maintain good hygiene practices like handwashing, not touching your face and sneezing etiquette
- Encourage them to sing 'happy birthday' twice when they're washing their hands

For older children

Older children will have the same anxieties about their own health and that of their family and friends as younger children. In addition to the steps above:

- **Reassure them** if they are in Year 11 read the guidance about the GCSE exams with them. Ask for support from the school if needed
- **Encourage them to maintain social ties** – relationships are especially important for older children, so give them room to keep in touch with their friends
- **Equip them with accurate information** – for example:
 - [Mythbusters](#) from the World Health Organization
 - [Data visualisation pack](#) from Information is Beautiful (regularly updated)
- **Share tools to help them manage anxiety**
 - Young Minds: [practical steps to take if you're anxious about coronavirus](#)
 - Mind: [how to take care of your wellbeing when staying home](#)

If your child struggles with higher levels of anxiety

Some children are naturally more anxious, the current situation can make those anxieties worse.

- Encourage them to use relaxation techniques such as controlled breathing
- Look out for signs and try to get ahead of them early by challenging unhelpful thoughts and assumptions
- If you're worried about your child's anxiety, you can access support through the School Nurse Service 28055 or Mobile: 53712.

Where to turn to for help

It's okay to not be okay. We all need someone to talk to sometimes. If you feel overwhelmed, there is online support or people you can call on for support:

ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
Mental Health Foundation Provides information and support for anyone with mental health problems or learning disabilities	Website: www.mentalhealth.org.uk
Mind A mental health charity	Website: www.mind.org.uk
Samaritans Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair	Phone: 51515 Local number, but direct line to Samaritans UK Website: www.samaritans.org.uk
SANE Emotional support, information and guidance for people affected by mental illness, their families and carers	Website: www.sane.org.uk/support
YoungMinds A charity dedicated to children's mental health	Website: www.youngminds.org.uk
NSPCC Child protection charity	Website: https://www.nspcc.org.uk/ Phone: 28888
KEMH School Nurse Service Emotional Wellbeing Team	Phone: 28055 or Mobile: 53712 Phone: 28082

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers - May 2022

Q. When will the 5-11s get their 2nd vaccine?

The second vaccine for 5 to 11 years olds will be 8 weeks following their previous vaccine i.e. mid way through May 2022.

Q. Why are there no social distancing measures in place?

Following the successful vaccination programme, the aim of the measures will be to slow – not entirely prevent - the spread of Covid-19 in the community.

Q. How long will these measures stay in place?

The measures will be reviewed in line with KEMH advice.

Q: Have you got enough staff?

Both of our schools are fully staffed. We have a staffing resilience plan and a business continuity plan to address staffing shortages that may occur for any reason.

Q: Do schools, colleges and childcare settings need personal protective equipment (PPE)?

The public health advice indicates that staff in education do not require personal protective equipment (PPE). However, we may see PPE used by medical and care professionals, and those administering first aid. Staff and students may choose to wear masks. Masks will be provided.

Q: Will educational settings have enough cleaning equipment?

Schools have sufficient supplies of cleaning products. FIG has been working with suppliers to ensure continued supplies are prioritised.

Q: What should educational settings do in terms of daily cleaning regimes?

It is recommended that all educational and childcare settings follow the Public Health England (PHE) guidance on cleaning for non-healthcare settings. Education settings should clean equipment, toys and high touch surfaces more regularly.

Q: Parents have concerns about the efficiency with which young children wash their hands following use of the toilet. What additional measures are there in place to address this?

Schools teach children the importance of hygiene measures, particularly handwashing, and provide support where it is needed.

Q: Should educational settings ask parents/carers to report pupils' temperatures at the start of each day?

Educational settings will remind parents/carers of the need to follow the advice on Covid-19 from KEMH. Schools will monitor student's temperatures and call a family member if their temperature is 37.6°C or higher. Parents/carers should be vigilant about signs of a high temperature.

Q. Do parents have the right keep their children away from school and home school them as a result of concerns related to Covid-19. If yes, what help would be given in terms of home schooling?

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child receives an efficient education. They can do this by sending them to school or, if they already attend school through Camp Education, by ensuring that they continue to access school as usual through the Camp Education service.

If a parent decides that they want to teach their child themselves at home, they can apply to the Director of Education through the Elective Home Education policy.

The schools do not have the capacity to support home learning, or to set work to complete at home, when it is reasonable and safe that children attend school.

Q: If a parent of a child is asked by health services to shield, can their child have their education supported at home?

The schools will follow the advice from KEMH in each case.

Q: What happens if a member of school staff has been asked to shield?

Currently there are no school staff who have been asked to shield. The schools will follow the advice from KEMH in each case.

Q. If there is COVID in the household, should students still come in to school (e.g. if a sibling is positive)?

Students should still come to school if they are symptom free.

Q. Are there any differences for Camp Education?

No – hygiene measures will be in place in all educational settings.

Q. What about Stanley House?

Stanley House is open to all students currently enrolled and will operate as normal. Stanley House will contact parents to inform them of any particular arrangements.

Q: If there is a school / boarding closure, what will happen to the children at Stanley House and what guarantees do parents have to get our children home quickly and safely?

With everyone's cooperation, the measures we put in place will slow the spread of Covid-19 in the community which means that a school closure is unlikely. The Department of Education will follow all health service advice. We have already demonstrated that we can rapidly implement a closure as and when required. Therefore, should a situation require it, for whatever reason, schools and Stanley House can react quickly, with adequate arrangements in place for children to return home in Camp.

Q: What happens if a boarder in Stanley House becomes unwell?

If a boarder becomes unwell, then we will follow all health service advice and they will remain away from school until they are well enough to attend. Measures will be put in place to lessen cross infection.

Q. Should I be worried about my children bringing reading books etc between home and school?

No – providing the child washes their hands before and after reading the book and always before eating any food, then there is little risk. During the COVID-19 pandemic it is important that hygiene is enhanced at all time, and this includes wiping down tables and high-touch surfaces.

Q. Can Year 11s access the GCSE exam through MS Teams or another remote platform?

No, this is not possible. As an exam centre, FICS must follow exam board procedures.