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## **Recovery Plan**

# **Ongoing Supports and Monitoring for when Educational Establishments Return after COVID-19**

## **Education Guidance and Planning Tool for Establishments**

**April 2020**

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	p. 3
Foreward	p. 4
Recommendations	p. 6
Resources	p. 17

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In preparing for educational establishments re-opening in some format, the following guidance is divided into themes around the following set of nine recommendations:

**Recommendation 1: Plan how establishments will operate in a post-lockdown COVID-19 world.** Plans need to be in place to allow educational establishments to operate in a COVID-19 resilient manner that includes social distancing and hygiene considerations.

**Recommendation 2: Support is provided for educators as they return to establishments.** Educators have had to adapt hugely to working remotely during the closures. We need to ensure all educators are well regulated prior to, and during, their return to work.

**Recommendation 3: Educational establishments plan regulating activities for the first few weeks of school after lockdown using the R4L toolkit.** We need to take an extended period of time to prioritise making sure all pupils are well regulated on their return to school.

**Recommendation 4: Educational establishments follow a programme of health and wellbeing lessons for the first few weeks after lockdown.** These should be focused on re-establishing connections with others, understanding stress and resilience, and, for some pupils, support to understand grief and loss.

**Recommendation 5: Educational establishments plan ending and beginning activities for young people in transition.** Orientation activities and new relationships need to be established digitally.

**Recommendation 6: Secondary educational establishments plan and deliver ‘reunion’ activities and follow up contacts with, and for, leavers.** School leavers will miss out on an important life marker of leaving school. Alternatives need to be created.

**Recommendation 7: Primary educational establishments plan play based, regulating experiences for P1 in August 2020 and beyond, to allow time for regulation and attention skills to develop.** Our pre-school children are likely to be the most affected by the extended schools closures and need the most time to adapt and develop the underlying skills they need for future learning.

**Recommendation 8: Support for vulnerable families is planned on a needs led basis with particular consideration for the impact of COVID-19.** We need to listen to what different families experiences of the lockdown have been and be sensitive to how best to support them without judgement during a return to education.

**Recommendation 9: Planning of learning is based on post-lockdown assessments to continue to close the poverty-related attainment gap.** Decisions need to be made about what assessments will be used to reassess regulation, wellbeing and learning needs for each child.

## FOREWARD

As educational establishments re-open after the COVID-19 closures, consideration needs to be given to how schools will operate within social distancing parameters.

Children, families and staff will also need ongoing support and monitoring to help them process what has happened to them during the school closures. Particular groups of children, parents/carers and staff may be more vulnerable to the effects of the school closures such as those who experienced personal loss during COVID-19, those who have experienced previous grief and loss in their lives, or who have mental health difficulties. Health and wellbeing will need to be a main focus of schools for some time to come (see for example Meredith, 2020).

In whatever format establishments are re-opened, consideration needs to be given to a slow reintroduction to educational establishments to re-establish connections and routines and give time for the sharing of experiences and loss over the COVID-19 school closures. Thought needs to be given as to how any experiences of trauma and feelings of grief and loss can be acknowledged as a school community and supported when appropriate. In addition, schools should spend time focusing on activities that calm children down physically and through good quality interactions with trusted adults ( or 'somatosensory and relational regulation') in order to ensure pupils return to being Ready for Learning as quickly as possible.

This guidance expands upon the specific recommendations contained in the 'Trauma Recovery Plan – Briefing for Senior Managers' with actions to be operationalised by all educational establishments and individual educators across Clackmannanshire. The underlying rationale for these recommendations can be found in the Senior Managers' Briefing document. The actions are set out under the headings of 'universal' (all establishments and educators must take them into account) and 'targeted'

(recommendations that are not applicable in every setting and/or are only required for some children and young people), and the document is formatted in such a way that it can be used as an action planning tool.

**Recommendation 1: Plan how educational establishments will operate in a post-lockdown COVID-19 world.**

COVID-19 is not going away. We are going to have to learn to live with it and change our daily lives accordingly and develop 'COVID-19 resilience'. Social distancing and protecting each other from the spread of infection is likely to be a new 'normal'. Schools are not easy places within which to manage social distancing. Consideration needs to be given to the use of space, number of interactions, the purpose of being together and good hygiene practices.

<b><u>Universal</u></b>	<b>Action</b>
Plan developed for reintegration of pupils which allows for social distancing protocols to be enforced and supports a phased return to full-time attendance.	
Plan regarding the implementation of hygiene practices for staff and pupils developed	
Daily timetable developed across school which blends face-to-face contact with online learning opportunities.	
Break and lunchtimes planned in a phased way so as to adhere to social distancing protocols.	
Staffing decisions based on assumption that amount of change for pupils will be kept to an absolute minimum	
<b><u>Targeted</u></b>	
Specific plans put in place for re-integration of pupils who have additional support needs and/or are considered to fall into the vulnerable child categories	



## **Recommendation 2: Support is provided for educators as they return to establishments.**

In the same way that we need to be mindful of our expectations for pupils in the short term, we also need to be aware that staff may find it hard to work at their normal capacity in the short term, and may require additional emotional support as they re-adjust to being back in school full-time. Without this support, there is a risk that staff returning to work do so in a dysregulated state and are therefore unable to provide the containment and regulating presence learners will need when they return – ‘*a dysregulated adult can never regulate a dysregulated child*’ (Bruce Perry ‘Office Hours’, 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020).

<b><u>Universal</u></b>	<b>Action</b>
Regular opportunities are built in for staff to meet, both in person and virtually, throughout the closure, re-opening and beyond focused on maintaining positive relationships across the staff team	
More frequent opportunities are offered for staff to take breaks during the re-opening phase	
Staff are given the opportunity to participate in virtual wellbeing sessions offered by the EPS	
<b><u>Targeted</u></b>	
Staff who are at risk of experiencing higher levels of difficulty over the re-opening have plans put in place to take account of their specific circumstances	



**Recommendation 3: Educational establishments plan regulating activities for the first few weeks of school after lockdown using the R4L toolkit.**

Taking a neurosequential perspective of stress highlights the need to plan for those children where the stress of COVID-19 has shifted them on the resilience and vulnerability scale further towards vulnerability. These children will be more easily dysregulated and need somatosensory and relational regulation activities as part of their school day. We need to think both about what our expectations are for pupils as they return to school in terms of what we can expect them to achieve, and how we can support their social and emotional needs to help them become more regulated and in a better position to take on new learning.

<b><u>Universal</u></b>	<b>Action</b>
Timetables are restructured to include very frequent opportunities for brain breaks and regulating activities for the first 4 weeks of schools re-opening, in addition to normal break and lunchtimes	
Range of regulating activities/resources available in each classroom	
Teaching of new academic material should not take place for at least four weeks – focus should instead be on health and wellbeing (Recommendation 4), revision and re-assessment (see Recommendation 9)	
<b><u>Targeted</u></b>	
Brain breaks and regulating activities may need to make up the majority of a pupils day, and may require a higher level of adult input in order to co-regulate	
Re-assessment of academic position needs to be undertaken in small chunks and only after a regulating activity has taken place	

**Recommendation 4: Educational establishments follow a programme of health and wellbeing lessons for the first few weeks after lockdown.**

Children and young people affected by stress need time to share their experiences and feel understood. All schools should prioritise exploring these experiences during the first few weeks. A staged approach to supporting health and wellbeing needs to be in place.

<b><u>Universal</u></b>	<b>Action</b>
All pupils have the opportunity to complete the R4L brain lessons, either in class or via FLIPClacks.org within the first four weeks of re-opening	
All pupils have the opportunity to explore feelings of loss and grief relating to the closures	
All pupils have the opportunity to spend time re-establishing friendships with peers and connections with key adults during the first four weeks of re-opening	
<b><u>Targeted</u></b>	
Consideration is given as to whether the above actions need to take place in smaller groups with higher levels of adult support for some pupils	

**Recommendation 5: Educational establishments plan ending and beginning activities for young people in transition.**

Transitions are a challenging time for many children and young people as they are forms of loss and change. In normal circumstances enhanced transitions are well developed. Consideration needs to be given to ‘endings’ and ‘beginnings’ for all children in transition at this time.

<b><u>Universal</u></b>	<b>Action</b>
Nursery and primary establishments to offer virtual leavers activities, followed-up by in-person farewell celebration once establishments re-open	
Primary and secondary establishments offer virtual activities to introduce learners to new environments	
Primary One and S1 cohorts to have additional planning around what their first week in school will look like to include additional time to settle in to the new environment	
<b><u>Targeted</u></b>	
Some pupils may require enhanced adult support from a familiar adult from their previous establishment to help facilitate the very early days in their new environment	
Consideration given as to whether some pupils should have a phased introduction to their new establishment	

**Recommendation 6: Secondary educational establishments plan and deliver ‘reunion’ activities and follow up contacts with, and for, leavers**

There is an increased chance that pupils who are ending their school career during the time of COVID-19 will experience higher than normal levels of anxiety and loss. Schools may find that they have an increase in the number of these pupils seeking to maintain contact with the school and/or who find it harder to sustain the positive destinations identified for them.

<b><u>Universal</u></b>	<b>Action</b>
Opportunities for leavers to experience farewell activities once schools re-open are provided	
Plan for and expect a higher number of pupils than normal seeking contact with key members of staff following official school leaving date	
Maintain links with those likely to struggle to maintain positive destinations for a longer time period than normal	
<b><u>Targeted</u></b>	
Provide a higher than normal level of contact to pupils who have not managed to secure a positive destination	

**Recommendation 7: Primary educational establishments plan play based, regulating experiences for P1 in August 2020 and beyond, to allow time for regulation and attention skills to develop.**

Nursery-age children are likely to be the most affected by the extended school closure given their developmental stage and amount of change which happens within a short period in this age group. This, combined with the fact that they are likely to have had far more unstructured time while at home than normal, means that we will probably need to make quite significant adaptations to not only the environment and curriculum demands we place on this group of children, but also to our expectations with regards to what we want them to achieve in the initial stages of Primary One.

<b><u>Universal</u></b>	<b>Action</b>
Learning environment is adapted to provide low-stimulus space that is matched to the developmental stage of pupils	
Significant amount of time is spent explicitly teaching key skills for later success in learning	
Recommendations 3 and 4 above are given particular consideration for P1 cohort and may need to be continued over an extended period of time	
Formal introduction of taught literacy and numeracy material not to commence for at least six weeks	
Additional planning and resources in place to support separation from parents in the initial stages of term	
<b><u>Targeted</u></b>	
Pupils with additional support needs may require a more phased introduction to P1	

**Recommendation 8: Support for vulnerable families is planned on a needs led basis with particular consideration for the impact of COVID-19.**

Many families, especially those who are our most vulnerable, will have experienced significantly increased levels of stress over the period of the COVID-19 school closures. While there will be an element of relief for parents/ carers to get back to the routine of schools being in session, they may find it hard to support their children back in to their normal routines and structures. It is important that as educators we are sensitive to the additional pressures families have been under and that we respond to the challenges they have been facing with empathy and compassion – they will all have been doing their best with the resources (both physical and emotional) that they have had available to them.

<b><u>Universal</u></b>	<b>Action</b>
Ensure that expectations on parents are kept to a minimum and those that are required are scaffolded and supported e.g. by presenting information more than once and in a variety of different formats	
Offer opportunities for parents to come together either virtually or in person (or both) as a group to share and explore their experiences of parenting through the school closures to help support future planning	
Provide parent versions of health and wellbeing lessons so that they are well-informed and messages can be reinforced between home and school	
<b><u>Targeted</u></b>	
Continue to offer regular ‘check-ins’ to vulnerable parents and flag them for additional support through vulnerable pupil panel if required	

Consider what re-integration will look like for pupils of vulnerable families – may need to balance need for phased reintroduction with need to provide respite for parents/carers	
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**Recommendation 9: Planning of learning is based on post-lockdown assessments to continue to close the poverty-related attainment gap.**

As one of the nine Scottish Attainment Challenge authorities, we will continue to have a focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap once schools re-open. We will continue to use data to support our understanding of pupils learning, and to guide where we need to go next in our improvement journey, but we will support you in balancing this need alongside what we know will help our pupils be in the best emotional state to take on new challenges.

<b>Universal</b>	<b>Action</b>
Re-assessment of pupils stage of learning will begin towards the end of the 4 week re-integration phase using Teacher Professional Judgement (TPJ) procedures	
Assessment of pupils emotional and social needs will begin as soon as they return using a range of assessment tools including, Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, TPJ etc	
Learning pathways for each pupil guided by the results of these re-assessments, including revision of previously taught material if required	
<b><u>Targeted</u></b>	
In addition to above, education establishments may also wish to consult with the EPS about more in-depth assessments that could be used for more vulnerable pupils, including the Behaviour Rating Index of Executive Function (BRIEF2), NME mini map etc	



## RESOURCES

Readiness for Learning toolkit - this website has ideas, links and resources to help you plan what R4L looks like in your establishment. <https://sites.google.com/view/r4ltoolkit/home>

Applying Nurture as a Whole-School Approach – A framework to support self-evaluation. Link to Education Scotland document to help plan the use of nurturing approaches in education establishments.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/applying-nurture-as-a-whole-school-approach-a-framework-to-support-self-evaluation/>

Meredith, M., 2020. Five ways to help children heal when schools re-open. [Blog] *Mary Meredith: Where one size never fits all*, Available at: <<https://marymered.wordpress.com/2020/04/14/five-ways-to-help-children-heal-when-schools-reopen/?fbclid=IwAR3JwpvRsz6reEluA4by7r4hVKZ4xtR3hv99pO0LEMi0THzQaQhoxchW-Uw>> [Accessed 29 April 2020].

Viewpoint – online survey portal for the completion of Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires. Details of how to create survey etc will be shared in the CLPL for Educators Google Classroom at a later date

