

## Education Services

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**Clackmannanshire  
Council**

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Our Ref: LS / NW

Your Ref: -

Date: 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020

Dear Parent / Carer

### Re-opening of Schools

As you may know, the Scottish Government made an announcement yesterday (30th July) confirming that all schools will reopen in August. In Clackmannanshire, all school staff will return on the 10th of August to prepare for welcoming back children and young people from Wednesday the 12th of August. I hope everyone is looking forward to going back, restarting their in-school learning, and meeting up with their classmates and friends.

In this letter I hope to answer some questions on topics that apply to almost all Clackmannanshire schools and pupils. Where arrangements differ or are specific to individual schools, schools will issue supplementary information on **Thursday 6th August**. Where children have specific additional support needs or are vulnerable due to family circumstances - school staff will help you plan the best way to provide additional support. Some children may be upset or have experienced trauma from what has happened during the pandemic - your school can arrange additional support for them too. Children identified as having greater health risks may have a risk assessment carried out before they return. Please contact your child's school if you have any specific questions once they are open again on the 10th of August. If you have any questions in the meantime, please e-mail [education@clacks.gov.uk](mailto:education@clacks.gov.uk).

I know it has been almost 5 months since schools were closed and you may have a few questions and concerns about schools reopening. I can assure you that the health, safety and wellbeing of all school staff, children and young people is our number one priority and we have taken every precaution to ensure any risks are mitigated as much as possible. Every school has been risk assessed and guidance issued by the Scottish Government on physical distancing and other health and safety matters will be followed by all schools. [You can see that guidance here - link.](#)

**Public Health** - If you, your child or a member of your close family becomes ill, especially with Covid-19 symptoms, please do not send them to school. Contact [NHS Inform online](#) and follow their advice on booking a test. If a child arrives at school with any symptoms, they will be isolated and sent home as soon as possible. You can find out more at Test and Protect - <https://www.nhsinform.scot/campaigns/test-and-protect>. If any cases of Covid-19 are detected in a school, we will follow Public Health advice.

**Getting to school** - Start times and end times of the school day may be staggered - schools are making local arrangements and will communicate these to you. Schools will also confirm the arrangements for school transport. Guidance says the same rules apply on dedicated

school transport as in school i.e. no physical distancing or face coverings needed. [You can see transport guidance here - link.](#)

If children travel to school on a public service bus - whether they pay for their season ticket or not - they will be expected to wear a face covering and physically distance by 1 metre. We would encourage children to walk, cycle or wheel to school if they can. If they travel to school by car, please avoid parking near the school gates. Parents/carers should not meet in groups outside the school, or block paths which may make physical distancing difficult. Schools will give you specific advice about drop off and pick up arrangements.

**Attendance and finance** - we wish to welcome back all pupils from the 12th of August, including those who were 'shielding' unless they have been advised by a clinician not to return to school at present. Please let the school know if that is the case so they can provide support. Family support workers, wellbeing workers and support staff are there to support children and families so please ask for help if you need it. Support with finances is also available - you may now be eligible for free school meals, clothing grant or Educational Maintenance Allowance for older pupils. You can find out if you are eligible on the Clackmannanshire Council website - <https://www.clacks.gov.uk/learning/financialassistance/>

**Health measures in school** - All children and young people will be encouraged during the day to wash / sanitise their hands regularly and practice good cough hygiene. Schools will be subjected to enhanced cleaning with products which are effective against viruses. Ventilation in schools will be increased by opening windows and doors. Children will not need to stay physically distant from each other but staff members will stay 2 metres away from children as much as possible. If a staff member has to be less than 2 metres away from a child e.g. during a 1-2-1 meeting or to give first aid, they will use suitable PPE which may include a face covering and / or sterile gloves etc. Older pupils in secondary school will be encouraged to physically distance where they can. Children and young people will not be asked to wear face coverings - some pupils, particularly older pupils or those who may be at increased risk, may choose to do so. Every effort will be made to minimise pupils mingling in large numbers - assemblies, collective worship and choirs are suspended for now, classrooms have been reconfigured to ensure 2 metre distance between children and staff, and movement around the schools will be staggered and minimised to reduce contact between large numbers.

**School uniform and items brought from home** - it is important to make sure clothes are clean and washed regularly to minimise the risk of spreading infection. If you need additional uniform items, please speak to your school for advice as they may have a small supply of pre-loved items they can give you.

We are also asking children to bring the minimum amount of personal items from home and ensure any items are clean before they bring them to school and can be cleaned when they take them home.

**School lunches / packed lunches** - we are making arrangements for school lunch provision and your school will let you know about the individual plans for your school.

**Learning, including outdoor learning** - parents, carers and young people have done very well in continuing to learn at home during lockdown. Every activity done as a family can be a learning experience and we have seen some creative and fun ways that parents/carers and children have taken learning forward. Do not worry if learning at home did not go as well as you hoped. Our teachers are skilled in assessing where children are in their learning and what support they need.

Under normal circumstances, all school classes have children who are learning at different learning levels and teachers have the professional experience to provide each child with the learning experiences they need to progress.

Schools also plan to make greater use of the outdoors for learning as being outdoors is also good for mental health and wellbeing. Please ensure your child dresses appropriately for the weather for any outdoor learning organised by the school.

**Breakfast clubs and after school clubs** - specific guidance was produced for out of school care providers which enabled them to reopen from the 15th of July with appropriate changes and safe set up in place. Please contact your provider and ensure they are back up and running again and what the arrangements are for your child to attend. School run breakfast clubs will operate again as soon as possible - your school will provide information on this.

**Exams and Timetabling** - senior pupils will receive their SQA results on Tuesday August 4th. If you have any questions about your child's results please contact your school and they will make arrangements to discuss these with you.

All young people will be issued with their new timetable when they arrive on their first day.

I hope I have covered the main issues, including those of a practical nature, to enable a smooth return to school from the 12th of August. We have produced a FAQ page on the Clackmannanshire Council website - answering questions we have received so far from parents/carers and we will add to it as we go along. You can see that here - <https://www.clacks.gov.uk/coronavirus/returntoschoolcv/>

We will continue to follow Government advice to keep everyone safe and we have already worked on 'phasing recovery plans' to recover from the impact of the pandemic and some additional contingency plans should we need to go into lockdown again.

If you have any other question or concerns, please direct those to the relevant school when they reopen from 10<sup>th</sup> August or if it is a Clackmannanshire-wide issue, please email [education@clacks.gov.uk](mailto:education@clacks.gov.uk) so we can respond and add to our FAQs.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



**Lorraine Sanda**  
**Chief Education Officer**