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Dear Parent / Carer

As the new Director of Education, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your commitment and support which has been vital in helping our children and young people adjust to the new arrangements in place since they returned to school after the summer break. The collective effort from pupils, staff and families has made a real difference during this challenging and uncertain period.

Following the First Minister's recent announcement, you will be aware that East Renfrewshire will move to Level 4 of the current COVID-19 restrictions from 6pm on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November. Whilst our schools and early years establishments will remain open there will be some additional 'enhanced protection measures' and I wanted to provide an update on these.

We are very grateful for your ongoing partnership as we work together to implement the national guidance. I have attached a brief reminder of the general advice in place to stop the spread of COVID-19 in our establishments, along with a link to the relevant government education guidance. It is important that we all play our part over the next three weeks in seeking to reduce the numbers in advance of the school holidays.

### **Shielding children and young people**

If your child was previously on the shielding list then it is recommended that they do not attend school or nursery without a risk assessment informed by the clinical team caring for them. You will be receiving a letter in the coming days from the Scottish Government providing you with more information and confirming that your child should be shielding. You may have already discussed this with school. If not I would encourage you to do so. I would like to reassure you that whilst your child is at home, their school will provide learning remotely and keep in touch during this period.

### **Physical education (PE)**

PE will now only be able to take place outdoors. Schools will consider the activities and clothing best suited to the weather conditions and will contact you with further details and advice on how we can continue to provide this important aspect of the curriculum whilst ensuring your children are prepared for the elements. In the case of extremely bad weather, a level of flexibility regarding the PE timetable may have to be applied.



### **Clubs and activities**

Unfortunately, all non-essential clubs and activities outside of the usual school timetable will be paused. This includes all school run activity and sports clubs, both indoors and outdoors. However, schools will continue to provide supported study as this is an essential strategy by our schools to address learning loss.

### **Out of school care**

If you access after school care or breakfast clubs, these will be able to continue to operate. The new guidance enables regulated childcare provided by Out of School Care to continue to operate as normal in our establishments.

I know that this is an anxious and challenging time for everyone. Our schools and early years centres are doing everything they can to help suppress the virus and keep children, young people and staff safe.

Our children and young people have responded magnificently to the difficulties that COVID-19 has brought, demonstrating resilience and adaptability. They have received outstanding support from all our staff since we returned in August and I want to acknowledge their hard work and dedication.

I look forward to working with you over the coming year to ensure that despite the uncertainty and change our children and young people continue to learn and thrive.

Yours sincerely



Mark Ratter  
Director of Education



## General Advice

- If your child displays any of the three main Covid-19 symptoms (new persistent cough, high temperature or fever, change of taste or smell), do not send them to school – everyone in your household should stay at home and you should book your child a test.
- If anyone in your household develops Covid-19 symptoms the whole household must isolate. This applies even when the individual is awaiting the results of a test or waiting to have a test taken.
- Wherever a new positive case is detected and Test and Protect is activated for any possible transmission in the school, we will contact all parents and carers at that school or nursery to make them aware. Please be aware, where a pupil or member of staff hasn't been within the school or nursery during the infectious period, we would not normally share information on a positive case.
- All close contacts of the person who tested positive will be contacted directly, and asked to self-isolate. Please remember, it is only the close contact who has to self-isolate and not the entire household. If you don't hear from us, your child is safe to continue attending as normal.
- If your child has to self-isolate, the school will provide home learning. This will be communicated to you by the school directly.

## Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance on reducing the risks from COVID-19 in schools

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-reducing-the-risks-in-schools/>

