

Our Ref: MS/LK
Your Ref:
Contact:
Tel: 0141 577 8635
Fax: 0141 577 3276
Email: Mhairi.shaw@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk
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Education Department
211 Main Street
Barrhead
G78 1SY

To All Parents / Carers

Dear Parents and Carers

I wrote to you at the beginning of this month to update you on our recovery plans as we started to move out of lockdown and I indicated that I would keep you informed of any developments.

I have no doubt you will be well aware of the announcement made by the Deputy First Minister John Swinney of the Scottish Government's aim for all pupils to return to school as normal in August, if we as a country continue to make progress in suppressing the virus. We issued a short media statement on Tuesday welcoming this decision and indicating that we await further guidance from the Scottish Government on how schools can return safely, for us on 10 August (staff) and pupils on Wednesday 12 August.

This is exactly what we have been hoping and striving for and do not want our children and young people to be away from the classroom and their teachers for any longer than was absolutely necessary. However, all of the planning that we have been doing in schools and across the Council will stand us in good stead should the scientific advice and data indicate that we cannot welcome all our children and young people back at the same time. All of the risk assessments we have completed will not go to waste – I am confident that many aspects of those will still stand when August comes along, but until we see the guidance, we will not be in a position to share those with you. We will of course continue to follow those simple strategies such as hand washing, additional cleaning of buildings, etc. to make sure that we also contribute to controlling the spread of the virus.

We will continue to stay in touch with our Head Teachers and likewise they will keep in touch with you with any updates and information which will need to be shared prior and on the run up to schools reopening to pupils on 12 August.

By the time that date comes along our senior pupils will have received their results from the SQA. I know this has been an anxious time for those who did not have the benchmark of sitting exams to at least estimate how they had performed, but I am confident they will get their rewards and I eagerly look forward to 4 August as I do every year.

Once again I would like thank you for your patience and forbearance during what has been an inordinate term of school closure. I am sure all of the learning we have all done during this period will not have gone to waste, but we do look forward to getting schools back to some sort of normality and I know you will too. Believe me our staff will be focusing on how we recoup any loss of learning over the whole of next session and beyond, but we will continue to need to show patience as we do that. Again, schools will be able to give you more detail of how they will tackle that after the summer break.



Finally, thank you again for all your support – to your children, to their schools and to the department – we genuinely appreciate it, especially during these very challenging times.

I hope you and your family have a lovely summer.

Kindest regards

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Mhairi L. Shaw".

Mhairi Shaw
Director of Education

