

Our ref: RB/LM

Your ref:

Date: 19 March 2020

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Dear Parent / Carer,

The purpose of this letter is to outline arrangements for schools and early years settings in Inverclyde during the developing events of COVID-19. Please remember that this is a rapidly changing situation and that all measures being taken are primarily to ensure the safety of our young people, their families, our staff and the wider community. As more families and work force are affected we have to plan for the short, the medium and the long term effects of this outbreak. Education staff have been working behind the scenes to prepare for activities for all children in the event of schools closing and have developed plans to support the most vulnerable. These plans include ensuring activities have been prepared and communicated by schools in a variety of ways and ensuring that meals are available for children entitled to free school meals and a clothing grant from the first day of closure. We are fortunate in Inverclyde to have a dedicated workforce who are committed to supporting our young people and their families in Inverclyde. This workforce will also be affected by the impacts of COVID-19, therefore we have to ensure that any measures put in place can be sustained and delivered by the workforce who are available. It is anticipated that schools will be closed until the end of the academic year. Please note the following measures that will be put in place:

- After the announcement from the first minister about school closures all schools and early years centres in Inverclyde will be closed to pupils from the end of the school day on Friday 20th March.
- Lunches will be available to those entitled to free school meals from Monday 23rd March and a message will be sent out as to where these can be accessed. We have tried to make sure that lunches are available in a range of easily accessible venues.
- We are issuing a survey to ask the parents of key workers to let us know their childcare requirements and those who qualify will be contacted to explain arrangements. Please note, it will take time to establish exact childcare arrangements for key workers but the intention is to open the initial provision early next week. The survey can be accessed at the following link <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/DQ6DZT6>
- SQA exams – the Scottish Government has announced that SQA exams will not take place this year. Please be assured that the SQA will do all that they can to produce a credible certification model that will be based on coursework, assessment and prior attainment. We are aware that there will be many questions surrounding these circumstances and we will continue to work in partnership with the SQA to achieve the best outcomes for our young people.

All of our schools would like to thank the Inverclyde Community for the many kind offers of support they have received over the recent weeks. This is a time when everybody needs to pull together with understanding and patience to help each other support the young people in our community in the best way possible.

Yours sincerely,

R. A. B.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development