



**Education, Communities &
Organisational Development**
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Dear Parent/Carer

First of all I wish to express my sincere gratitude on behalf of senior leaders and staff across our Moray schools and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings for your continued support and patience during this extended period of school closure.

A huge amount of work has been planned and prepared by staff to allow remote learning to continue across Moray at this time and with many different methods to support you as parents. This has been a big ask of you at a time when you too have had to work from home or faced other challenges and commitments during the time of the pandemic.

As we navigate through phase one of recovery, Headteachers and ELC managers are working with their staff to plan and prepare for an August return. Once joint risk assessments and essential cleaning have been completed, staff will return to buildings for limited periods, to access resources and to set up classrooms and areas for children and young people to return safely. Your support at this time, as ever, is greatly appreciated as staff may be unable to respond to any remote learning queries as quickly as they are currently. We also still have staff working as volunteers in our childcare hubs, delivering an essential service as well as supporting remote learning.

We are working with Headteachers and managers to assist them in developing their own recovery plans and these will be shared with you in due course. You will have many questions and anxieties I am sure and unfortunately we do not have all the answers but we will continue to work with our Headteachers and managers to support you. One thing is certain during this pandemic, that fluidity and flexibility are required as the world moves at a rapid pace. Our plans today may have to change tomorrow and so it is essential that we keep you updated as and when any new information comes to light.

As the plans for August progress we have to consider lots of variables including catering, cleaning, the availability of staff and for us as a rural authority the availability of transport. Our buildings vary greatly in terms of size, layout, rooms etc as do our school rolls and so our recovery plans will also have variability which will be unique or bespoke to each school and setting. It will be impossible to have a common or consistent Moray approach across all of our schools and ELC settings. In line with Scottish Government's guidance we are working towards the balance of

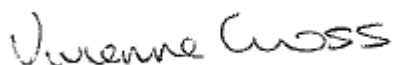
being in school and at home being around a half, however this may not be possible due to staffing, physical constraints and other variables. We will continue to monitor this on a regular basis and in particular once our buildings are again operational. Our utmost priority is to ensure that staff, children and young people are safe and healthy and so it is essential that we can put in place measures to achieve social distancing, currently set at 2m. Signage is being produced to support those entering buildings, although we aim to keep visitors to the bare minimum. Watch out on social media as we promote our Bee Safe in Moray signage.

August will see us return to a blended learning model which is a mixture of in-school and at-home learning. This will build on the remote learning to date which has been a mix of online learning and physical learning packs. We will continue to use online platforms such as Microsoft Teams and class DoJo and we will use the information you provided us from our Learner Survey to move towards a Moray approach to reduce the number of platforms in use. In addition though will be in-class learning where learners will work in small groups with a teacher and tasks will be set which can then be completed independently at home. Across Early Learning we will continue to promote the use of play and many children will continue to make use of the outdoors where possible to support and aid their learning. We are working on a parent/carer guide as well as a learner guide and will share these with you so that you are aware of the Moray approach and can continue to support your children.

I finish as I started, thanking you all for your support and understanding at this time. As each Headteacher and Manager shares their recovery plan with you, please be assured that they have your child's best interests at heart and that they have a monumental task in trying to plan ahead when they have no absolute certainty around the many variables I have mentioned. Your continued patience is greatly appreciated as we plan for something which is new to us all.

As ever please be safe, kind and careful as the restrictions start to lift.

Yours sincerely



Vivienne Cross
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