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**North Ayrshire Council**  
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

Your Ref: Our Ref: AMcC/LB

If telephoning please call: 01294 324400

10 November 2021

Dear parent / carer,

### **Christmas Activities 2021**

As we approach the festive season, it has been necessary to consider how to manage the lead-up to Christmas in the safest way possible. We have consulted with the Public Health Department of NHS Ayrshire and Arran as well as discussed these matters with Education Services in East and South Ayrshire to ensure we adopt an Ayrshire-wide approach to the pre-Christmas period.

In terms of the ongoing Covid-19 situation, we must take a prudent approach to managing exposure of pupils and staff to additional risks in order to maintain service provision in our schools. We have worked hard to increase the number and range of activities schools can safely manage within the school week and I know many people will be pleased to see the phased reintroduction of some extra-curricular activities, breakfast clubs etc.

However, Covid-19 infection levels, while lower than a few weeks ago, are still relatively high across Ayrshire. Therefore, in order to balance the overall risks to service continuity and ensure that we are able to keep our schools open, we have taken some difficult decisions around some of the traditional Christmas activities in school this year.

Christmas parties will be allowed in a scaled back format in our primary schools. Your child's Head Teacher will provide details of how these will work this year.

Unfortunately, we will not be arranging any trips to pantomimes or concerts in the weeks leading up to Christmas. Current national guidance does not permit school assemblies to take place because of the enhanced transmission risks of having large groups in close proximity in an enclosed space for an extended period of time. Collectively across Ayrshire, we have taken the decision to treat performances with audiences in the same way.

I understand there will be many disappointed children and adults on hearing this news. However, I know our schools will make every effort to ensure that the festive period in our educational establishments is full of learning and enjoyment, with activities being managed in the safest way we can, to ensure that we minimise the risk of interruptions to learning in the weeks before Christmas.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Head Teacher / Head of Centre.

Yours sincerely

Andrew McClelland  
**Head of Service (Education)**