

Dear Parent/carer,

Clarification on School Return January 2021 – ASN children and young people

Following the letter you received from Derek Brown, Executive Director of Education and Families, all head teachers of ASN schools in the local authority are writing to parents/carers to provide further clarification on plans and arrangements for the return in January 2021.

You will be aware that the First Minister announced that the school Christmas holiday is being extended to Monday 11 January 2021 for all pupils when online learning will be provided. This is to reduce the risk of the new strain of Covid-19 (coronavirus) from spreading in our communities.

Arrangements for 6 – 8 January

Schools and early learning establishments will be open from 6 to 8 January 2021 only for key workers and very vulnerable families for childcare support. Following updated guidance published by the Scottish Government (21 December 2020) which explains that vulnerable children includes children with multi-agency support plans and disabilities, I can confirm that all ASN schools and provisions will be open for all pupils from 6 January 2021.

Understandably, you may have concerns about your child attending school during the health pandemic and it is recognised that there is a balance between providing quality educational opportunities for our children and young people while keeping them and our staff safe. The Education and Families Service will review the Scottish Government guidance in the first week of January and make effective plans for every child who attends an ASN establishment.

If you have any concerns about your child coming to school, please get in touch with me between 6 and 8 January and we can discuss your child's needs and what educational support would be best for them together with health and other lead professionals.

Until then, there are a couple of points I would like to clarify:

- The Scottish Government guidance states that children and young people who are on the shielding list should not attend school or childcare services while in Level 4.
- Arrangements are in place at the school to be open here from 6-8 January for those who require childcare. Given the serious nature of the government restrictions, you may want to consider whether your child is best placed to be in school or at home but the school will be open.

Arrangements for 11 – 15 January

From 11 to 15 January, the school will be open for all children to access learning and teaching. However, although measures are in place at the school to minimise risk of virus transmission and to allow a regular flow of movement around the building, there may be some parents/carers who would prefer to keep their child at home. It is important that we offer the right family learning package for you and I want to support you in making the right decision for your child.

- We want to offer bespoke support packages for individual children as there will be some parents/carers who, following discussion with me and their lead professional, know that their child is capable of participating in online learning at home. If that is the case, we can provide family-learning packages through our online learning offer. In addition, home learning packs can be made available to children and young people.

- For those children and young people who need appropriate individual in-school support, we can provide a bespoke offer such as a part-time model, which can be fully discussed with you in January.

Other Issues

- Note that school transport will be operating as normal from 6 -15 January.
- For those who are eligible for free school meals, whether because of universal provision for P1-P3 or because you are otherwise entitled, Paypoint vouchers will be administered by SMS for the period 6 – 15 January. In addition, lunch will be provided for those who are in school.

Family Support Packages

We have only been able to offer a reduced curriculum due to the pandemic but ensuring that your child is provided with a quality learning experience while keeping them safe is paramount to me.

I understand that this is complex and challenging but it is important that we work together to ensure your child receives the best possible care and learning opportunities over this period.

I will be working with my team between 6 and 8 January 2021 to confirm arrangements and I look forward to hearing from you then.

I would like to wish you a merry Christmas and happy new year.

Regards,

Miss Marie Love

Head Teacher