



**Director of Children's Services: Helen Budge**

**Children's Services**

Hayfield House  
Hayfield Lane  
Lerwick  
Shetland  
ZE1 0QD

All Parents and Carers

Telephone: 01595 744000

If calling please ask for  
Helen Budge

Direct Dial: 01595 74 4064

Our Ref: HB/RC/kk/S40-37/corr/21/003  
Your Ref:

Date: 04 February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

## **Information to all Parents and Carers: Shetland Schools to start Phased Return of Children and Young People later this Month**

On Wednesday 06 January 2021, I wrote to you to confirm that there would be a period of remote learning in place for the month of January. Furthermore, since my last letter, the Scottish Government subsequently extended remote learning to Wednesday 17 February 2021.

I now write to inform you that the First Minister, on Tuesday 02 February 2021, has announced a planned phased return of schools and early learning and childcare settings later this month.

More specifically, in Shetland, Children's Services are now planning for **children in Early Learning and Childcare settings and all primary one to primary three children** to return to their setting on a **full-time basis**, after the February long weekend, from Tuesday 23 February 2021.

There is also a planned **part-time return, on a very limited basis**, for **senior phase, secondary four to secondary six pupils**, from Tuesday 23 February 2021, to allow them to undertake work that is necessary for completion of essential practical work for national qualification courses. Further information about how this limited provision will be operated will follow from Children's Services and secondary settings shortly.

Children in other year groups will continue to be at home, engaging in remote learning.

The Scottish Government has also committed to expanding testing provision for school and early learning and childcare staff, and for senior phase pupils. More detail will follow for parents and carers of children in secondary four to secondary six.

**This proposed phased return will only be finalised by the Scottish Government around Tuesday 16 February 2021, and will be dependent on the on-going suppression of coronavirus in Scotland by then.**

Meanwhile, key worker provision will continue during the phased reopening of schools for eligible children from primary four to secondary three. Children of key workers will continue to access their remote learning in their setting. Your child's school or early learning and childcare setting will shortly be in touch with you to ascertain your requirements from Tuesday 23 February 2021. New key worker applications will continue to be processed centrally in Children's Services, following existing criteria and processes and the application form is available on the Covid-19 Updates webpage:

<https://www.shetland.gov.uk/schools/schools-covid-19-updates>

Arrangements for children and young people requiring additional support that are currently in place from primary four to secondary six will also continue.

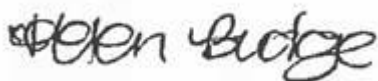
I understand that parents and carers will have a range of thoughts and views on these planned later this month. I include a link below to the Parent Club, the Scottish Government website for parents and carers, for more information: [FAQs on Scottish childcare and nurseries reopening | Parent Club](#)

I would like to reassure you that health and safety will continue to be absolutely paramount to all of our planning for the phased return of some of our children and young people. There are already a range of measures and mitigations in place in all our school and early learning and childcare settings, which will be reviewed, and enhanced where appropriate, before children and young people return.

You should continue to discuss any concerns or worries that you have around your child's education more generally at this very challenging time with your school's Head Teacher and/or their pupil support teacher in secondary.

Children's Services and your child's school/early learning and childcare setting will also continue to update you over the coming weeks, and I would like to thank you again for all that you are doing supporting your children's learning.

Yours sincerely



Helen Budge  
Director of Children's Services