

Covid-19: Closure of daycare of children services: information for parents



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On 19 March 2020, the Deputy First Minister announced that all local authority schools and nurseries in Scotland would be closing from the end of the school day on Friday 20 March 2020, as part of the Scottish Government's response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, unless they are involved in the provision of emergency childcare.

This means that:

- **If your child is at a local authority nursery**, this will be closing from the end of the day on 20 March 2020 unless it is staying open to provide emergency childcare.
- **If your child is at a private nursery**, that may also be closing, or it might be changing the way it operates so that it is able to provide childcare for key workers.
- **If your child attends an out of school club**, it is likely to be closing, or providing childcare for key workers.
- **If your childminder is at a childminder**, they may continue to operate, with reference to public health guidance.

We understand that this will be a difficult time for your family. Parent Club Scotland (www.parentclub.scot/elc) are preparing guidance for families, to help them to adjust to new routines.

The Parent Club Scotland guidance will also have information on: home working, parental leave, and financial support.

Who will still be able to access early learning and childcare?

Local authorities have been asked to ensure ELC provision is available for key workers. More information about who is considered a key worker is on the next page. You can contact your local authority if you think you might qualify.

Local authorities will also be identifying children who may, due to individual or family circumstances, be more likely to require access to early learning and childcare.

Where can I get more information?

Your ELC setting will give you information about their closure or their new way of operating. Local authorities and ELC settings are working hard to think about how to support families in their communities.

Parent Club Scotland (www.parentclub.scot) will shortly have a new hub to support families affected by these closures. This will include practical advice about money matters, and also ideas and tips from other parents about supporting your child at this time. You can follow Parent Club Scotland on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter to get the latest updates.

If my child isn't at nursery, does that mean they can't see friends?

Parent Club Scotland are working with the Chief Medical Officer to develop guidance for families on what social distancing will mean for children. This will be available very soon.

Who is a key worker?

Key workers are those in posts which ensure that essential services can be delivered and cover tasks within the local community which support the vulnerable and aid community resilience. This may be slightly different in each community to allow the country to address local priorities. Whilst decisions will be taken at the local level, we would expect this to include consideration of:

Category 1 – Health and Care workers directly supporting Covid-19 response, and associated staff; Health and Care workers supporting life threatening emergency work, as well as critical primary and community care provision; Energy suppliers.

Category 2 – All other Health and Care workers, and wider public sector workers providing emergency/critical welfare services (e.g Fire, Police, Prisons, Social Workers, etc) without whom serious damage to the welfare of the people of Scotland could be caused.

Category 3 – All workers without whom there could be a significant impact on Scotland (but where the response to Covid-19, or the ability to perform essential tasks to keep the country running, would not be severely compromised).

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