



Education, Communities & Organisational Development

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Dear Parent/Carer

Many of you will have seen the First Minister outline the measures being proposed to come into force from Boxing Day. The move to Protection Level 4 and changes to the start of term date will impact on what education and school looks like for your child.

The arrangements in place for the majority of children are as follows:

- We have requested and been granted an exceptional closure day for Tuesday 5 January to allow time for planning for childcare provision and remote learning
- Schools and ELC settings will open for childcare on 6, 7 and 8 January for staff and children of key workers and children who are vulnerable
- For other children, the Christmas break is extended until 10 January
- From the week beginning 11 January, remote learning will be in place for children learning from home and in school for children of key workers and children who are vulnerable
- Schools will provide information on what remote learning will take place and how this can be supported
- From 18 January the aim is to reopen schools and ELC establishments assuming there is confidence that the virus is under control

An online form is available for key workers to complete for a place in their child's own school for the childcare provision. This childcare provision will be in place until 8 January and will continue as a learning provision from 11 January.

The link for this is - [Key worker childcare arrangements in nurseries and schools – January 2021](#)

Further information on the process for granting places for children of key workers is noted on the form which can be accessed through Moray Council website and social media platforms. You should assume that a place has been granted if you have met the criteria on the form. However, headteachers may request further information from you on 5 January 2021.

When schools return on 5 January, they will contact parents/carers of vulnerable children to confirm whether they should attend school from 6 January. Families who feel they fall into this category may speak to their school regarding any care, protection and safety concerns.

The expectation is that from 11 January, children of key workers and those more vulnerable will be supported to access remote learning within school buildings to ensure no loss of learning and that all other children and young people will access their curriculum from home.

Most families have been provided with devices to support remote learning but should your situation have changed and you now require a laptop, please contact your school on 5 January on the first instance where we will endeavour to support digital access.

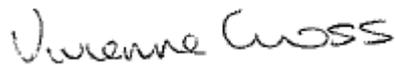
The length of this remote delivery has been provisionally set for a week but final decisions on the length of school building closure will be taken based on the prevalence of COVID-19 in the New Year.

Within our secondary schools, young people in the senior phase have been working towards a range of assessments to support the SQA estimates process and we await further guidance from Scottish Government and SQA regarding this. Secondary school staff have worked exceptionally hard to get a provisional plan in place following the announcement that National Qualification exams would not take place and we will continue to respond to changing expectations.

I realise that you are seeking as much certainty as possible on what the start of the new term may look like and we will continue to keep you informed as more detail emerges on longer term plans.

In the meantime, please be assured that we have a team working on making the necessary preparations to ensure a smooth start to the new term and will continue to keep schools and families updated.

Yours sincerely



Vivienne Cross
Head of Education (Chief Education Officer)

cc Denise Whitworth (Depute Chief Executive)