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Education Department
211 Main Street
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To All Parents / Carers

Dear Parents and Carers,

Schools Reopening August 2020

By now you will be well aware of the First Minister's announcement last Thursday that all schools in Scotland will reopen full time from August 11. This is great news for all our children and young people and like me, I am sure many of you will be both delighted and relieved. In East Renfrewshire we have agreed that the usual 2 in-service days at the start of the school session will be 10th – 11th August with all children and young people returning to school or nursery on Wednesday 12th August.

I know that the last five months have been particularly hard on our children and their families and although our staff responded very quickly to providing remote learning, this was not ideal and put pressure on parents to fulfil the role of educators as well as carers and for many, while working from home too. Therefore, it is with a great sigh of relief that the [scientific evidence](#) has confirmed that schools and nurseries can open fully and safely next week.

It has been an unpredictable time, giving rise to uncertainty and in many cases anxiety for pupils, parents and staff, but we will continue to do everything we can to ensure our schools reopen safely and smoothly and, for that to happen, we need to continue to rely on your help and support. As a country we have suppressed the virus enough to allow schools to reopen; however this reopening is contingent on the sustained suppression of the virus and to do so we all need to continue to follow the guidance set out by the Scottish Government.

Returning to full time education won't be business as usual. All of our schools have completed risk assessments and these will mean additional safety precautions in place in all schools and centres; these measures will be relayed to you by the head teacher as relevant to your child's school / setting and in some cases, your child's own particular needs. These include the need for good hand hygiene, physical distancing between adults and children, and adults and adults and as such we are asking that parents do not enter the school or its grounds (except by appointment), so pick up and drop off will be different. School transport will operate as normal but children and young people will be asked to take additional precautions, such as always sitting in the same seat, perhaps next to family members, wearing face coverings for those using public transport; and all will be asked to follow good hygiene habits on entry and exit and at regular intervals throughout the school day. Your school will give you all the details you need.



You can help us by preparing your child for their return to school, supporting them to look forward to coming back with confidence, while expecting things to be different. The National Parent Forum for Scotland (NPFSS) has produced some helpful [advice](#) which we would encourage you to consider, but your school / nursery will have the detail for their building and how the return will look and feel for your child. All of these arrangements will be kept under review and as such good communication will be vital - the school will want to hear from you and your children about how things are working, so I would encourage you to make contact with school staff or through your Parent Council / Parent Committee, so that dialogue remains open. Head Teachers and Class Teachers will of course be speaking and listening to the pupils and staff, but it is important we hear your views too.

We've all waited what feels like an indeterminately long time for this to arrive and we would not want to jeopardise children and young people returning to school at this stage. Therefore I encourage you to follow the national and local guidance, help us to get all our learners back and continue to suppress the virus to make sure we don't need to go through all of this again.

Kindest regards

Mhairi Shaw
Director of Education

