

EE38. Children's Services – Update on Re-opening Plans for School and Early Years Establishments

The Emergency Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided an update on Children's Services re-opening plans taking account of Scottish Government guidance and detailed the key changes that had been made to the guidance since the previous report was agreed by the Emergency Executive on 7 July 2020.

A number of recent updates had been announced by the Scottish Government which required school and ELC establishments re-opening plans to be amended. The key changes included:

- no requirement for physical distancing between any children and young people in primary and secondary settings;
- requirement for ELC settings to group children into "bubbles" of up to a maximum of 8 had been removed;
- no requirement for physical distancing between pupils whilst on school transport;
- drivers would require appropriate PPE or to maintain physical distancing;
- week commencing Monday 10 August 2020 flexibility would be allowed to facilitate "phased returns", but all pupils should resume full time education by 18 August 2020;

In order to reduce the risks associated with cross contamination and minimise large gatherings of pupils it was proposed to initially provide a slightly limited school meals offer via "grab bags" for pupils from the start of the new term. This service would be adopted by a number of local authorities and was recognised within the new national guidance. This would be reviewed in September 2020.

In order to give parents sufficient notice of the emergency critical childcare service ending the Director of Children's Services, under delegated authority, made the decision to end the provision on Wednesday 5 August 2020. This end date also ensured that cleaning staff had 2 days to undertake a full clean of those establishments which had been used ahead of staff returning on Monday 10 August 2020.

It was proposed that primary, secondary and special schools re-opening was:

- Phase 1 from Wednesday 12 August – Friday 14 August 2020 - soft start in line with report agreed on 7 July 2020;
- Phase 2 from Monday 17 August 2020 - full return of all children.

Decision

The Emergency Executive:-

- (1) **noted the arrangements outlined in sections 4.2 and 4.3 of the report regarding the re-opening plans for early learning and**

childcare establishments and all primary, secondary and additional support needs schools;

- (2) noted the arrangements outlined in section 4.1 (iv) of the report regarding school meal provision;**
- (3) endorsed the decision made by the Director of Children's Services regarding the cessation of emergency critical childcare on Wednesday 5 August 2020 as detailed in section 4.1 (v) of the report, and**
- (4) requested a report from officers setting out monitoring arrangements and contingency measures (further to those previously agreed) to be presented at a future meeting. Safety and recovery are the main priorities and the Director must ensure all schools follow the prescribed guidance without deviation and local interpretations.**