



Education Resources
Executive Director **Tony McDaid**

Parents/Carers

Our ref: TMcD
Your ref:
Phone: 0303 123 1023
Date: 16 June 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope that you and your family are keeping safe and well.

In my letter of 4th June, I said I would keep you updated on our plans for a phased return of pupils to school in August.

In our discussions and meetings with both parents and staff over the last few weeks, we have been asked a number of questions on what is happening in terms of our schools reopening.

In this letter I have tried to set out what our schools have been working hard to achieve, including;

- assessing the capacity of our buildings;
- identifying those days children and young people can attend;
- working to ensure siblings attend their school on the same day; and
- organising school visits for P1 and S1 pupils.

Your views through our surveys are also helping to shape and influence our plans for pupils going back in August and your comments are coming in on school transport.

We continue to engage with staff, parents/carers, trade union partners, and our facility teams who are responsible for janitors, cleaners, catering staff and others to help prepare our schools for August.

Health and safety sits at the heart of our plans, with risk assessments and infection prevention and control measures being put in place. Hand sanitisers will be at the entrances and in all appropriate areas across schools. Secondary schools will have hand sanitisers available in all classrooms and in primary schools all classrooms with sinks will be able to handwash regularly. Additional cleaning routines will be implemented and there will be clear signage and rules on physical distancing throughout school buildings. We are also in regular contact with NHS Public Health Lanarkshire to ensure we are kept updated on the medical advice on personal safety and wellbeing.

While models of delivery have been identified, with full consideration given to public health advice, it is important to note that this will be dependent on a range of considerations. It is possible that some adaptation to the models outlined below may be necessary if there are further changes to national public health advice and guidance.

When will schools return?

All of our schools will re-open for pupils on Wednesday 12 August 2020.

Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton ML3 0AE Phone: 0303 123 1023
Text Phone: 01698 454039 Email: education@southlanarkshire.gov.uk



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**



**Healthy
Working
Lives**

Will teachers and staff be in before pupils to prepare for a safe return?

Tuesday, 11 August will be an in-service day to enable teachers to prepare for the new term as they normally do, so that they are familiar with the final arrangements for their schools and classrooms and are fully briefed on safety procedures.

Primary Schools

From August, our model will be for half the children to come into school on a Monday and Tuesday and the other half on a Thursday and Friday.

Wednesdays will be closed to pupils so that an enhanced clean can take place and to enable all teachers to have their contractual non-class contact time to support pupils with remote learning and prepare lessons.

When will I know the days my children will go back?

What I can tell you is that arrangements are being put in place to try and ensure all siblings at the same school will go back on the same days, wherever possible.

Further details on the days your children will attend will follow soon from your child's school and I ask for your patience on this matter as plans are finalised this week.

Secondary Schools

Each of our secondary schools has been working towards a model to maximise the amount of time in school for each young person. To ensure compliance with government guidance, and, use of classroom space, ways of reducing movement between classrooms have been assessed. These constraints mean new timetable designs have been developed in order to deliver five days of face to face, in-school teaching for pupils across each two-week period.

Will the opening be the same across all secondary schools?

Due to differing curricular models and the geography of South Lanarkshire, secondary schools within each local area (Cambuslang/Rutherglen, East Kilbride, Hamilton, Clydesdale) will offer a common model. The models allow for either a split week, or for a split day timetabled on a fortnightly basis.

However, individual schools have been able to customise the model to suit timetable and transport arrangements.

ASN Schools and Bases

ASN schools and bases have worked to the model of delivery appropriate to their sector (i.e. primary or secondary) and individual solutions have been considered for each school or base to best meet the needs of the children and young people.

It is recognised that health and wellbeing will be an important requirement for all children and young people as they return to school in August. Enhanced arrangements for those with additional support needs will be established in each school and early years establishments. This will further support children to make the move back to school in a safe, successful and positive way.

Early Learning

Like other Councils, we have had to pause on the full delivery of 1140 hours fully funded early learning and childcare given the current challenges that we face. Therefore, it is likely that there will be a reduced offer in many instances.

In August, we will offer a blended learning model for early years, which will be either half days or some full day placements. Further guidance from the Scottish Government will be published this week and this will help us to finalise our plans.

Private partner providers will be in touch with parents directly to offer details of the provision they are able to offer. We will work with our partners to support them where possible.

Blended learning

How will we support you with 'blended learning'?

Blended learning is the term used to describe both a mix of face to face learning in school and at home. There will be a level of remote support for children when they are not in school, but this will not necessarily be with their class teacher who will be in class teaching other groups of pupils. I would wish to reassure parents/carers that you are not expected to take on the role of offering a 'classroom experience' at home.

With smaller class sizes in almost all cases, teachers and support staff will have the opportunity to work more directly with children and be able to set both appropriate tasks for their age and stage and work that can be done at home.

I have also set out some answers to some of the most frequently asked questions below.

What will be the start and finish times?

Starting and finishing times may be staggered to allow children to arrive and leave safely at the end of the day. Schools will notify parents directly of specific times for your child as they are working valiantly to create new timetables for children and staff.

They will be in contact with you directly by Monday 22nd June to let you know.

What will be the position with transport to school?

At this stage, we are not in a position to offer clarity in what this will look like in practice given that buses are now operating with a capacity of 20% of passengers.

However, we are continuing to work in partnership with Strathclyde Passenger Transport, and travel contractors to understand and agree safe protocols, in line with government guidance, for children who come to school in buses and taxis.

We have asked for your views through a recent survey and I know many of you are thinking about whether you are able to bring your child to school. This would be welcomed.

I will keep you updated on this as soon as more information from transport providers is known.

What will this 'new normal' look like for schools?

In August our schools, classrooms and playrooms will look somewhat different to before, with fewer pupils in at the same time, outdoor and alternative classrooms established, enhanced hand hygiene and cleaning routines and clear signage and rules on physical distancing.

We have asked our schools to share with you some photos of what a classroom will look like and you may have seen some initial ideas on social media.

Next steps

As a Council we are moving ahead with our plans to provide children and young people with more access to digital learning at home and we hope to be in position to provide more chrome books for some families.

Thank you

Once again, my thanks go to you all for your support in recent months and for helping to shape our recovery plans as we prepare to open our schools in August.

All of our teachers and staff are very much looking forward to welcoming children and young people back into our schools and nurseries and are looking forward to seeing and hearing from them on a face to face basis.

I will continue to keep you updated prior to the new term beginning on the 12th August 2020.

Take care and keep safe.

Yours sincerely



Tony McDaid
Executive Director (Education Resources)

Footnote:

Helpful information for parents

- <https://www.parentclub.scot/>

https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/info/200228/health_and_medical_information/1863/coronaviruses_covid-19_advice/10

We have added the following resources for families and children on our website:

- [Supporting children in unsettling times](#)
- [Resources for children with additional support needs](#)
- [Keeping safe at home and online](#)
- [Parent Club Scotland](#)
- [Parentzone Scotland](#)
- [CALL Scotland](#)
- [Enquire](#)
- [National Parent Forum of Scotland \(NPFs\)](#)

Psychological Services COVID-19 helpline

Advice and support for school staff, professional, parents, carers and young people. Available Monday - Friday, 10am-3pm. (Leave a message)

Phone: 01698 455800

Email: enquiries@slcpsych.org.uk