



Director of Children's Services: Helen Budge

Children's Services

Hayfield House

Hayfield Lane

Lerwick

Shetland

ZE1 0QD

All Parents and Carers

Telephone: 01595 744000

If calling please ask for

Helen Budge

Direct Dial: 01595 74 4064

Our Ref: HB/kk/S40-37/corr/20/003

Date: 26 June 2020

Your Ref:

Dear Parents and Carers

Further Information to all Parents and Carers – Children and Young People returning to Schools and Early Learning and Childcare Settings, August 2020

On Friday 5 June, I wrote to you with information about the Scottish Government's plans for schools and Early Learning and Childcare settings to reopen for children and young people on Tuesday 11 August. This was to be a blended model of delivery, involving a combination of face-to-face teaching in school and remote learning at home, owing to the two metre physical distancing requirement and the need to reduce the number of children attending school at any one time.

However, on Tuesday 23 June, Mr. John Swinney, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, announced that, providing coronavirus continues to be suppressed, and it is safe to do so, all local authorities in Scotland should prepare for children to be able to return to school full-time in August. The Deputy First Minister also confirmed that the blended learning model, which has been developed in Shetland over the last two months, is now a contingency that we may still need to enact.

This is a new planning assumption and Children's Services are currently reflecting carefully on the Scottish Government's announcement and seeking further clarification. Your children and young people's individual school(s) will share information with you about arrangements for the new session before end of term, on Friday 3 July 2020.

In relation to Early Learning and Childcare placements, we are writing to all families to confirm placements for 2020/21, based on the registration requests received during registration week in February. The letter will also provide details around the interim offer that will be in place in August.

Please be reassured that the safety of all our children and young people, and all school staff, remains our highest priority. We will continue to ensure that the appropriate health and safety measures are in place.

We also appreciate the length of time children and young people have been away from the school environment and we are working with all our schools to enable children to reconnect positively on their return. In short, children and young people's health and wellbeing is central to all our planning and will be a core feature of the curriculum when schools re-open in August.

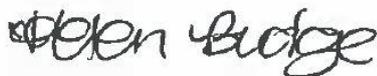
The Scottish Government will continue to review scientific and health advice ahead of schools reopening, and Children's Services will also continue to communicate with you in due course to confirm the model of education that will be in place from August.

Following Mr Swinney's recent statement in parliament ' We want to increase levels of digital inclusion' which included the announcement that a total of 70,000 devices plus connectivity will be made available across Scotland we need to understand the availability of connectivity and devices for our children and young people. Please find below a link to the survey - Access to Digital Learning from Home – a Parent Survey, which we would ask you complete for each child to support our application for IT devices for Shetland. I would be very grateful if you could take time to complete this for your children by Friday 3 July 2020. Thank you in advance for this.

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/DCKCSP/>

Thank you again for all that you are continuing to do, supporting your children's remote learning, and we really appreciate your patience as we plan carefully for the reopening of schools in August.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen Budge". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Helen Budge
Director of Children's Services