

Education Services - Schools and early years centre's advice on Coronavirus

We continue to monitor the situation and are following national guidance from the Scottish Government.

School closures

Following the advice issued by the Scottish Government, all schools and council-run early year's centres will close at the end of the school day on Friday 20 March.

Currently, there is not a date set for schools to re-open and parents and carers should not assume they will reopen before the summer holidays.

Schools and early year's centres will only be closed for as long as the scientific and clinical advice recommends.

Exams

You will know by now that the 2020 exam diet has been cancelled. Inevitably, this means there will be some uncertainty for our young people who were preparing for exams.

Teachers, who know your children best as learners, will be doing everything possible to ensure they get their best possible qualification.

Part of the normal preparation for completing a course includes completing coursework, assignments and folios. Teachers will collate all the necessary evidence to support their professional judgement.

There is no need for your child to be in school to complete work. Teachers have worked with the majority of our pupils over a number of years and have a range of evidence to draw on and make a professional judgement. Everything they need is available to them in school at this stage.

Certification will be based on predicted attainment, coursework and assessment throughout the year. Certification will NOT be based solely on prelim performance.

I would ask you not to contact schools for information as professional judgement and estimates are not yet complete. Equally, there is no process for appealing the

professional judgement on estimates, but the SQA have indicated that their post-results service will be free of charge this year.

Childcare provision for critical key workers?

The overall national objective at present is to slow the spread of Coronavirus. For that reason all schools will be closed from Friday 20th March. At the same time there is a need for critical services to continue to operate. This service is for children in families where all adults in the household are designated as keyworkers. At this stage key workers include:

- NHS: all staff including primary care; pharmacy and dentistry
- Health and social care staff
- Emergency services staff, including those at Glasgow Prestwick Airport
- Key staff working at National Air Traffic Service, Prestwick (NATS)
- Staff who work in prisons
- South Ayrshire Council staff designated as critical service providers
- Education staff providing child care for other key workers

The definition of key workers may change as the spread of the virus progresses. At the start of the week beginning 23rd March, parents who are in the above categories and who require childcare are asked to take their children to their existing school or childcare provider.

Transport will not be provided, and unless you are entitled to a free school meal, you should provide a packed lunch.

The service at a local school will only be for the coming week. During this week parents are asked to complete a registration form and apply to one of the list of providers. The service provider will contact you to confirm a place by the end of the week.

The situation is changing on a daily basis and we will respond to changing circumstances over the coming days and weeks.

Are private-run nurseries closing?

Parents should contact their private-run nursery for more information.

Can I still send my child to a childminder?

As long as your child and everyone living at home does not have any symptoms of Covid-19, and your childminder does not have these symptoms, then yes.

Please follow government and health advice as this may change over time.

Should my parents look after my children?

It depends on their age and their health. Anyone over 70 years old, pregnant women or anyone under 70 with an underlying health condition i.e. anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds, should reduce social contact and stay at home for 12 weeks.

If your parent falls under the above at risk categories, you should follow the advice given by the government and NHS.

What support is there for pupils entitled to free school meals?

We recognise this a challenging time for many. The health and wellbeing of local families is our priority and we understand the concern these changes will cause.

While schools are closed all pupils entitled to a free school meal and clothing grant will continue to have access to food at lunchtime.

We are working on an alternative to free school meals that will support families during this period of school closures. Packed lunches will be available in every school in South Ayrshire between 12 and 1pm. The location for the availability of lunches will be reviewed as required.

Even though school is closed, there's no need to go hungry at lunchtime. If you are entitled to a free school meal in South Ayrshire and are able to come along, make sure you pick up your free packed lunch.

Education maintenance allowance?

Education Maintenance allowance (EMA) payments will continue for young people. Our staff are working at home and will ensure this continues.

Will I have to teach my child at home?

Parents and carers will support their child's learning.

Each school is making arrangements for online and paper-based learning so children and young people can continue with their education during this period of school and early year's centres closures. Your school will inform you of their specific arrangements.

Parents will be kept informed through their school and your school will advise you how they will keep in touch with you in due course.

How will my child receive coursework?

Each school is making arrangements for online and paper-based learning so children and young people can continue with their education during this period of school and nursery closures. Your school will inform you of their specific arrangements.

I don't have internet access or Wi-Fi. How can my child receive course work?

Alternative provisions will be put in place to ensure children and young people who don't have internet access or wi-fi will still receive course work. This is likely to be through printed materials, such as worksheets, taken home by children and young people this week or delivered to their home.

What if you or your child has health issues or needs additional support?

We recognise this a challenging time for many. The health and wellbeing of our local communities is our priority and we understand the concern these changes will cause.

We are working through the emerging guidance on supporting families who need it most. Please be assured that we will update you on what support is available as quickly as we can.

In the interim, if you face a situation where you become unwell and do not have alternative childcare arrangements, please speak with your school directly for advice and guidance.

What should I do if I or someone in my family contracts Coronavirus?

If you have the symptoms consistent with coronavirus, namely a new continuous cough and/or a fever/high temperature, however mild, stay at home for 7 days from the day your symptoms started. You do not need to call NHS24 or your GP unless your symptoms do not get better or your health condition changes significantly.

If you live with others, all other members of the household should stay at home for 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day illness began in the first person. Detailed stay at home advice can be found at [NHS Inform](#).

The following groups should reduce social contact and stay at home for 12 weeks: Anyone over 70 years old, Pregnant women or anyone under 70 with an underlying health condition i.e. anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds.

To reduce the spread of illness, follow the Catch it, Bin it, Kill it advice as well as washing your hands often with soap and water regularly or use an alcohol based hand rub.