

Our ref: RB/LM

Your ref:

Date: 12 June 2020

**Education, Communities &
Organisational Development**

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Parents – Primary School

Dear Parent,

Further to my letter to you of Tuesday 02 June 2020, I am writing to provide further information about the planned re-opening of schools in Inverclyde in August 2020.

As we continue to follow the national guidance, head teachers of schools and early year's settings are putting arrangements in place to ensure that your children are able to return in August to a safe and secure environment.

On behalf of all of those in education services we would like to thank you and your children for your continued support and co-operation to make sure that the arrangements put in place during the closure of schools due to Covid-19 have been as successful as possible. Also thank you to the chairs of the parent councils and our youth council who have readily engaged in discussion and debate to represent the views of parents and pupils to guide our journey.

While this letter shares with you our planning for August, please be aware that the guidelines may change and that our planning may well have to change as a result. Your school will be in touch with you to keep you as up to date with plans as possible.

We will only open schools to pupils when it is safe to do so. Schools will need to ensure that pupils and staff follow the social and physical distancing guidelines and put in place arrangements for our young people that are safe and equitable.

Following the recent government announcement, our schools will open for pupils on Wednesday 12 August 2020. Schools will not be able to open for all pupils at the same time and will use a blended learning model for education. This means there will be a mixture of face-to-face teaching, home follow up tasks and use of computer platforms.

We appreciate that parents will be anxious about educational arrangements when considering their childcare needs. We will continue to provide childcare for critical workers who have no other options available to them. Thank you for filling in the recent survey we issued. Details will be provided as soon as we are able to.

All schools will open their playgrounds an hour before teaching starts and close them an hour after. This will allow for a staggered start and is intended to provide some support for parents who need to put in place critical childcare arrangements and those pupils arriving at school by bus. Your school will be in touch with further details about this.

All primary schools in Inverclyde will follow a consistent model and pupils will attend schools for 2 days each week. Where possible we will divide each year group or class into 2 groups (group A and B). This approach will help us to provide places for siblings on the same day.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Group A	Group A	Childcare only	Group B	Group B

To optimise teaching hours, all primary schools will be closed for direct teaching on a Wednesday. This means that teachers can undertake additional planning for remote learning and support the extension of the school day.

Schools work in different ways and there are some constraints with different types of buildings. We have worked hard to overcome any constraints to achieve as much consistency as possible. We were not able to achieve a consistent model across primary and secondary schools.

There will be special arrangements for the first week of term.

On the first day of term (Wednesday 12 August 2020) primary schools will open only to those pupils in P1 and those pupils who require extra support to start school.

On Thursday 13 August 2020 Group A will attend school and on Friday 14 August 2020 Group B will attend. The model in the table above will begin the week beginning Monday 17 August 2020.

Your child's school is currently working to allocate your child to a group. Siblings will be kept together and we will let you know transport arrangements as soon as we can. You will appreciate that there are a lot of logistics to be worked out but schools will take into account your child's friends as much as possible when allocating groups.

Because schools are coming back from the summer break earlier than anticipated, there is a need to put an extra in-service day into the 2020/21 school calendar. This will be on Friday 04 September 2020. Revised school term dates will be sent out.

Any arrangements put in place for the recovery of education during Covid-19 will always result in a compromise and undoubtedly, the arrangements put in place will not please everyone. However, the arrangements put in place give a consistency of provision across Inverclyde and best meets the needs of learners.

Over the coming weeks schools will communicate with you directly about the particular arrangements for your child. It is especially important that you keep your contact details up to date.

We will work through all of the issues associated with recovery from Covid-19 as quickly as we can and our planning must remain agile to deal with unforeseen events and changes.

Thank you once again for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,



Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development