

Our ref: RB/LM

Your ref:

Date: 17 March 2020

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Dear Parents,

In light of the move to the delay phase of managing the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, the Council continues to meet regularly and plan for the impact in Inverclyde. Please find below the most recent update on our plans for the near future. I must emphasise that these remain 'live' and under constant review and so are subject to change.

The Scottish Government and the NHS have confirmed that there is no need at this stage to close schools and early years' establishments and that this will be regularly reviewed. There are some individual schools across Scotland that have closed but this is on a case by case basis.

In order to prevent the spread of the virus pupils should not be sent to school if a member of the household has suspected symptoms, consistent with Covid-19 the most common of which are a new continuous cough and/or high temperature. Members of the household should stay at home for 14 days.

If pupils show obvious signs of illness the school will contact parents to come and collect their child.

The Council has reviewed the national guidance that has been issued, and has taken some early, precautionary decisions in relation to educational establishments. These precautionary decisions have been taken to protect our children and vulnerable young people, and will remain in place up to and including the school Easter holidays. They are detailed below:

### **School Trips**

Guidance has been issued that all overseas education trips for children under the age of 18 should be cancelled. Therefore all overseas trips taking place before the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020 will be cancelled.

Planned UK based trips will be individually risk assessed and your school will be in contact with any families affected by any cancellations. Please note that any trips before the Easter holiday are likely to be cancelled.

### **School / Establishment and Education Events**

There are a number of school / establishment events taking place in the coming weeks, leading to the Easter holidays. Our advice to schools is that these are now postponed or cancelled. This will include parents' evenings.

### **After school clubs**

We have advised schools that all after school clubs should now be cancelled for the foreseeable future. Breakfast clubs and afterschool childcare will run as normal. There may also be study sessions for pupils in the senior phase of secondary school – your school will issue advice or guidance on this.

### **Food Provision in schools / establishments**

There have been some recommendations in relation to the provision of food and food handling, particularly in relation to unwrapped food. As a further precautionary measure in the dinner hall environment, we are removing the self-service element of school meals and food will be served to pupils, minimising the numbers of people who handle food and again, reducing risk. Within early years' establishments lunches, snacks and drinks will be served directly to children. Please note that there may be changes to the menu options for your child.

### **SQA Examination Diet 2020**

As of the 16<sup>th</sup> of March, the SQA still plans to proceed with this year's exam diet. If this should change schools will communicate with parents of pupils in the Senior Phase with the plans that will need to be put in place.

### **Preparing for school closure**

Schools have been asked to make preparations in the case of school closure. Your child's school will be in contact with you directly about the arrangements that they are putting in place.

We would like to thank you in advance for your understanding in relation to these measures and for your continued co-operation and support in relation to the measures in place to effectively manage coronavirus (Covid-19) in our schools and establishments.

For any further information please access the Council website at [www.inverclyde.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/coronavirus)

Yours sincerely,



**Ruth Binks**  
**Corporate Director**  
**Education, Communities & Organisational Development**