

Robert Naylor, Director of Children's Services

Tuesday 22 December 2020



Falkirk Council

Dear Parents and Carers,

Arrangements for January 2021

On Saturday 19th December the First Minister announced that there would be changes to the return to school in January 2021. Further guidance was issued to local authorities on the evening of Monday 21st December. These changes are in response to the continuing COVID 19 pandemic. The overall objective of the Scottish Government and Falkirk Council is to reduce the risk of transmission of the COVID virus in our Early Learning Settings and in our schools.

The Scottish Government expects that, with the exception of children and young people of key workers, young people will access remote learning from home from 11 January to 18 January 2021.

A smaller than usual number of children / young people are permitted access to nursery or to be taught in-school during this time, in the educational establishment that they would normally attend, should parents meet a set of identified criteria. This approach is aimed at supporting keyworkers to continue to attend work during the normal school day. This will commence from Thursday 7 January 2021.

Key worker Criteria

Parents are eligible to apply for a place where **all** of the following is the case:

- **Both** parents' employment meets the further criteria listed below.
- **Both** parents are unable to work from home.
- There are no other adults within your household who can provide supervision of children during the school day.

Places will be allocated **only where each parent meets one of the following criteria; and, where working from home is not possible. Please note that for key workers existing childcare arrangements can continue to be used.**

- Health and Care workers directly supporting COVID-19 response, and associated staff;
- Health and Care workers supporting life threatening emergency work, as well as critical primary and community care provision;
- all Early Learning and Childcare and school staff
- All other Health and Care workers, and wider public sector workers providing emergency/critical welfare services (for example: fire, police, prisons, social workers), as well as those supporting our Critical National

- Infrastructure, without whom serious damage to the welfare of the people of Scotland could be caused.
- Private, public or third sector employees without whom there could be a significant impact on infrastructure and energy supply

Applications

If you feel you meet the above eligibility Criteria please complete the attached application form and return to your child's ELC/ school setting. Ideally these should be returned to the ELC or School address or hand in by 10.30 on the 23rd December to assist planning and allocation processes.

During this period (7 – 15 January 2021) the opening hours for Early Learning Centres, nursery classes and primary schools will be 9 - 3pm. Secondary schools will operate their normal school days.

School transport will operate as normal.

Remote Learning

As per the Scottish Government's guidance and expectation, staff will provide online learning and live interactions for those accessing their learning from home from the 11th January.

Each ELC and school will communicate with their families about specific arrangements. Information is also available on the [Connected Falkirk Website](#)

If your child is to access nursery or school from 7th January 2021, please ensure that your family have followed the strict Tier 4 regulations as detailed by the Scottish Government from 26th December 2020 before returning your child to school. Parents and carers should also note that provision on the 7th & 8th January is for childcare, formal learning commences from the 11th January.

I hope this information is helpful to you. Your continued understanding and support is very much appreciated. Our collective endeavour to protect children and young people, ELC and school staff has served us well to date and I welcome your continued support as we manage this next phase of managing the changing COVID landscape.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Naylor