



Your Ref:
Our Ref: ES/SP
Contact: Eleanor Sheppard
Location: Marischal College

Date: 7 May 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

You will be aware that The Scottish Government published, *Coronavirus (COVID-19): Framework for Decision Making – Overview of Public Engagement* on Thursday 21st May 2020. The framework provides guidance for local authorities and schools to allow a gradual and phased re-opening over the coming weeks and months and will be supplemented by additional guidance anticipated this week. The Council has been working over the last few weeks to consider potential scenarios and is now in a position to start firming up plans.

You will have heard much in the media of a blended offer of 'in school' and 'in home' learning with smaller groups of children attending school on a rotational basis. The service is currently working with Head Teachers to scope out what this will look like in order to ensure everyone's wellbeing and make the best use of 'in-school' learning time.

We have established a number of workstreams to support our Local Authority decision making and hope to be able to keep you up to date with our progress and decisions over the coming weeks through regular updates. The most important planning will take place at school level as each school building is quite different and will have to be assessed individually.

Currently, Head Teachers are working with their staff on a set of plans to implement a phased return to school in August 2020. This is a complex process and requires careful and detailed planning. In the coming weeks, schools will share with you their individual plans. Please be assured we are doing all we can in preparation for re-opening schools

In order to reduce contact, we are likely to see staggered arrival times, one-way systems and the use of different doors for groups of children and young people. Our cleaning regimes will be enhanced as they were immediately prior to school closures. It is also unlikely that shared resources will be used for some time.

I am very aware that you will have many questions and for the most part, we will be unable to answer several of them as we await the supplementary guidance. Please

be assured however, that the risk assessment process and consideration of how individual schools will be able to use school buildings is well underway and that we will do all we can to keep you informed of progress and decisions.

We have established a set of FAQs which we will routinely update as our planning progresses, these can be accessed on the Aberdeen City Council website through the following link:

<https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/coronavirus-covid-19/schools>

I realise that the 10 weeks have been a very unusual and challenging time for you and your family. On behalf of staff across the service I would like to say thank you. We all very quickly had to adapt to a very different operating environment and you have played a significant part in helping us do this. Please be assured that we will do all we can to make the transition back into school as safe as possible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Eleanor Sheppard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'E' and 'S'.

Eleanor Sheppard
Chief Education Officer