

Addendum for Education and Communities Committee

March 9 2021 – opening of schools.

The First Minister confirmed on Tuesday 2 March 2021 the next phase of reopening education.

Primary Schools

Pupils in P4-7 will return to school on Monday 15 March, joining P1-3 pupils who are already back at school. All P4– P7 children who are entitled to a free school meal will now access this in school from Monday 15 March 2021.

Secondary Schools

From 15 March, all secondary pupils will receive some remote learning and some in-school teaching. Each school will decide how to safely balance remote and in-school learning, ensuring that everyone is safe and in-keeping with the 2m physical distancing required between learners and adults.

Priority for in school face to face lessons will be given to senior phase students (S4-S6) who are taking national qualifications. All of our secondary schools will offer approximately 50% of in school learning for the senior phase.

S1-S3 pupils will also have an opportunity to return to school for one day each week. Provision for key worker families and vulnerable learners will continue for all eligible pupils.

In order to make sure that schools can provide in school time each week for all learners it will be necessary for them to reconsider their current remote learning offer and make adaptations as required. A focus will continue to be on high quality provision but within the resources available.

The specific arrangements in place for Craigmarloch School will be communicated through the Head teacher in the coming days.

Transport

Pupils who travel by school transport will continue to be able to do so, although arrangements may need to be adapted.

School Meals

School meals will be available for all primary school pupils and secondary pupils when they are in school. Pro rata payments for free school meals for pupils who cannot attend school will remain in place.

Inset days

On 16 February, the First Minister announced that an additional two days will be set aside for teachers to engage with the assessment, moderation and quality assurance process required for awarding National Qualifications during this year. These two days are additional in-service days specifically for assessment, moderation and quality assurance purposes, and are therefore termed 'assessment support days'.

These days will be available to be used by all secondary schools and can be deployed at the discretion of the school or Local Authority as they see best, depending on the requirements of the Alternative Certification Model (ACM) that is replacing National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher exams in session 2020-21.

Regulation 5 of the Schools General (Scotland) Regulations 1975, as amended, requires schools to be open for a minimum of 190 days in a school year. However, Section 133 (4) of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 allows Scottish Ministers, on application; to modify this regulation providing they are satisfied that it would be unreasonable for Regulation 5 to apply, or to apply without modification. Education authorities need to apply for an exemption in order that relevant schools can close for the two additional in-service days by Friday 19 March.

The dates are currently being discussed with schools and the trade unions and will be communicated to parents and families as soon as practicable.