

St David's R.C. Primary and ELC Setting

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Midlothian



9th October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Following a very successful return of our children and young people to schools and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) facilities in August, it is now essential for us to finalise contingency arrangements in case they are required at any point in the future.

Our school Contingency Plans are now complete, which reflect scenarios that may occur as we continue to operate under COVID restrictions and National Guidance for schools.

I am sure you will understand that the exact circumstances that would necessitate the implementation of the Contingency Plan of a single school, a locality, or across the whole of Midlothian, and any such decisions would be taken jointly with the relevant partners eg NHS and Scottish Government. These plans have however been developed based on a requirement for full-time education for all learners with a blend of in-school and in-home learning where possible, with in-school learning being the main aspiration.

If a 'local lockdown' for schools is imposed by Scottish Government/ Health Protection Team (HPT) it also cannot be assumed that these contingency arrangements will be required, as it will depend on the extent or type of restrictions imposed.

The focus in developing these contingency plans has been to ensure that learning provision, both in-school and in-home, meets the needs of every pupil and that they are supported individually in a way that helps them to achieve their learning targets and prepare them for the future.

Our absolute priority continues to be the safety of our pupils and staff.

Contingency Planning for St David's RC Primary and ELC Setting:

SCENARIO 1

Due to an outbreak (confirmed by the HPT), the school has to close a class or stage or within the ELC setting part of the room (if only one cohort group affected).

OR

Due to there being insufficient staff, the school has to close a class or stage or within the ELC setting there being insufficient staff for the room or cohort group.

We will follow all guidance and procedures as instructed by the Health and Protect Team and Midlothian Council.



We will communicate with parents and carers via our usual communication routes, Groupcall (email/text communication) and Seesaw announcements. We will keep you up to date with the current situation and expected return dates to school. Families can continue to contact the school by telephone or email St-Davids.PS@midlothian.gov.uk.

During the closure of a class or ELC cohort, in-home learning activities will be provided for children. In the first instance, a week of learning can be accessed on our school website (<https://stdavidspg.mgfl.net/learning-from-home/>). Further learning activities will be shared on Seesaw. Learners are encouraged to share their in-home learning on Seesaw. Staff, where possible, will continue to comment and feedback on learners progress and next steps.

There will continue to be a provision of ELC and P1-P3 lunches where required. A survey will soon follow to confirm if you require a packed lunch to be delivered in the event of a class, stage or ELC cohort closure.

SCENARIO 2

Due to a significant outbreak (confirmed by the HPT), there is a FULL closure of the school and ELC setting.

OR

Due to there being insufficient staff, the whole school and ELC setting needs to close.

Should there be a need to close the school and ELC setting, we will follow all guidance and procedures as instructed by the Health and Protect Team (HPT) and Midlothian Council.

We will communicate with parents and carers via our usual communication routes, Groupcall (email/text communication) and Seesaw announcements. We will keep you up to date with the current situation and expected return dates to school.

If we are required to close the whole school and ELC setting, our contingency plan involves providing weekly, in-home learning activities for all classes and our ELC setting. In the first instance, a week of learning can be accessed on our school website (<https://stdavidspg.mgfl.net/learning-from-home/>). Further learning activities will be shared on Seesaw. Learners are encouraged to share their in-home learning on Seesaw. Staff, where possible, will continue to comment and feedback on learners progress and next steps.

There will continue to be a provision of ELC and P1-P3 lunches where required. A survey will soon follow to confirm if you require a packed lunch to be delivered in the event of a full school closure.

Accessing in-home learning activities

In the first instance, a week of learning can be accessed on our school website (<https://stdavidspg.mgfl.net/learning-from-home/>). Please upload learning completed to Seesaw to receive feedback about your child's progress.

Following this, all in-home learning activities will be posted daily on Seesaw, ensuring a breadth of experiences across the curriculum. Learners will be able to share their learning and receive feedback from a staff member via this online, secure platform. Staff will post a morning check in each day and remain online to support and assist with your child's learning. Where possible, our Support for Learning team will continue to offer activities and interventions for individual learners. This will follow the same format as our previous school closure (March to June 2020).



All learners should already be able to log in to Seesaw at home (using the Class app). If you do not have these details or require your child's username or password, please email us at St-Davids.PS@midlothian.gov.uk by return.

All families should also have access to Seesaw at home (using the Family app). If you are having difficulty accessing this or would like to add any other family members, please email us at St-Davids.PS@midlothian.gov.uk by return and include the email addresses which need added.

A number of families benefited from the loan of a device during recent school closures. A range of devices are currently being set up and prepared for this purpose. Families are encouraged to contact the school if they do not have access to a device or have no connectivity at home

Please email us at St-Davids.PS@midlothian.gov.uk if you are having any difficulty accessing in-home learning.

Wherever possible, children and young people will be in school, however this is only possible where the pupil roll, physical capacity of buildings and staffing capacity is able to accommodate this.

Provision of lunches for ELC and P1-P3 children

It would be our intention for school staff to deliver lunches to our ELC and P1- P3 children if we were required to implement our Contingency Plans for either scenario 1 or scenario 2. Children would receive a packed lunch delivered to their homes, Monday – Friday. A survey will soon follow to confirm if you require a packed lunch to be delivered in the event of a full school closure.

Blended Learning

Over and above the above scenarios, if the Scottish Government was to announce that social distancing measures needed to be put back in to place for young children, we may need to consider a blended learning experience, where children are in school part of the week, and learn at home for the rest of the week.

Digital Devices to Support Learning

The Scottish Government have supported our own efforts to ensure that all young people have access to a device and internet connectivity to access learning online. This includes access for every child in a household. If your family require support, or if your circumstances change at any time, please contact your school directly.

Enhanced Provisions

Provisions will try wherever possible to be open Monday to Friday as normal. Staff will be equipped with enhanced PPE as required to ensure that Midlothian Council can continue to support our most vulnerable children and young people. Where children that would have accessed an enhanced provision cannot be in setting, staff will be in regular contact with parents / carers and appropriate risk assessments will be undertaken to ensure the child's safety.

Early Learning and Childcare

Provision of ELC face to face, will be a priority due to the age and developmental needs of younger children and to support childcare.

This may be for a reduced number of hours over the week.



Childcare

We understand that in the event of a Contingency Plan being implemented, this may pose a difficulty for some parents and carers in relation to their work commitments. We recommend therefore that you make your employer aware of the potential need for such arrangements, which will only be put into action when absolutely necessary.

The exact arrangements will depend on the individual circumstances requiring the contingency arrangements to be put in place.

Whilst it is not currently a requirement, it may be that Scottish Government requires local authorities to provide critical childcare in the event of a further 'lockdown'. In order for us to be prepared for that, we will shortly be sending you a survey to support the school to know who are Category 1 key workers.

Free School Meals

If any Contingency Plans are put into practice, we will continue to provide BACS payments for those P4-7 families whose household income has been assessed and an award made in respect of Free School Meals. BACS does not include the universal provision in ELC and P1-3, however anyone else in need of support will also be able to apply for help to feed their children when they are not in school. The authority will always fulfil its duty to provide a free school meal.

Should contingency arrangements be required at any time we will of course ensure that parents/carers are fully informed of the arrangements, and that all necessary support is in place.

Educational Psychology Helpline

The Educational Psychology Helpline will cease on 29th October 2020 unless contingency plans are implemented.

If you have any concerns or questions about any of the above information please do not hesitate to contact the school in the first instance.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Gill McPherson
Head Teacher

