

24 June 2020



Dear Parents and Carers

You may be aware that John Swinney, Depute First Minister announced yesterday at the Scottish Parliament that all children and young people will return to school in August 2020. The Depute First Minister indicated that the Scottish Government's planning assumption is that all pupils will return only if it is safe to do so. He also indicated that this will be conditional and dependent upon scientific and health advice. Clearly, our schools are delighted at the prospect of welcoming all of our pupils back to school in August with the knowledge that it is safe to do so.

Midlothian Council's local delivery plans to deliver a blended learning model will remain in place as a contingency and essential preparation in case they are needed. We would like to assure you that all Midlothian schools have a robust blended learning plan ready to be implemented should that be the requirement.

We are now urgently considering the implications of this announcement on our plans for August. It is clear that final decision on a full return will not be confirmed until during the summer holidays. We are awaiting further specific guidance and will be in touch with you again as soon as we can. We continue to work on the assumption that staff will return to school on the 10 August 2020 and all pupils will return on the 12 August 2020.

We appreciate that this is a fast changing situation and you will be keen to know what this means for your child/children. As this change has to be achieved safely, it inevitably remains conditional and dependent upon ongoing scientific and health advice, therefore we are committed to continuing to share information with you as soon as we can, including during the summer holidays.

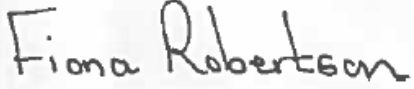
Midlothian Council's Early Learning and Childcare Team has developed a model which follows Scottish Government guidelines. Further information will be updated and sent out in a separate communication when we have further clarity from the Scottish Government. We would like to assure you that all Midlothian children and young people's health and safety is of the utmost importance to us. Therefore any changes that are made will stringently follow public health guidance. Our Educational Psychology service and the recovery curriculum will be available to support the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils on their return to school.

As we close our schools on what has been a very different academic session for all concerned I sincerely hope that as a society we continue to follow public health guidance and the positive progress made in recent weeks will continue to enable our staff and pupils to return to school in August. During the summer period, our support resources for parents, carers and professionals will continue to be available on the Educational Psychology Service website <https://mideps.edublogs.org>

If you have any questions during the summer break, please send them to education.services@midlothian.gov.uk

I wish to thank you all again for your support during this challenging time, and hope that we will be able to welcome your child/children back to school after the summer break.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fiona Robertson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Fiona Robertson
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