

Letter from Lesley Brown, Chief Operating Officer (Education) to parents/carers in East Lothian Council following the First Minister's announcement yesterday:

Dear Parent / Carer,

Following the announcement by the First Minister yesterday about the phased reopening of schools, we know that you will have lots of questions about when and how our children and young people will return to schools across East Lothian.

In her statement, the First Minister reported that teachers and other staff will return to schools during June to prepare classrooms for the new term and a different model of learning. It was announced that schools will reopen from 11 August, however, to allow appropriate physical distancing, children would return to a blended model of part-time in-school and part-time at-home learning. I would highlight that 11 August is earlier than our planned date of 19 August for pupils to return to school after the summer holidays.

In East Lothian, our Education Service is considering the implications of this announcement and has already started to plan for the reopening of schools and early learning and childcare settings in August as outlined by the First Minister. We are reflecting on the yesterday's announcement and are awaiting guidance from the National Education Recovery Group next week which will help us determine and confirm more specific details of the arrangements which will be shared with you as soon as we can.

It was also announced that, where possible, there would be transition support for children going into primary 1 or moving from primary 7 to secondary school. In East Lothian, our schools already provide a range of transition opportunities and these have continued during the lockdown period with many schools providing distance creative and innovative transition activities. In the coming weeks, we will also consider those children who may benefit from further transition support.

During June and over the summer, we will continue to provide emergency childcare provision for the children of key workers and we will be in contact with parents and carers about the arrangements for this in due course.

I would like to thank all parents, carers, children and young people for their patience and understanding as we work through a very complex situation. I know this has been a difficult and uncertain time and we are committed to sharing further information with you as soon as we can.

Kind regards,

Lesley Brown

Lesley R. Brown | Chief Operating Officer (Education) – Education & Children's Services |