

Renfrewshire Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers

To: Renfrewshire Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers

On: 02 June 2020

Report by Head of Schools

Reopening of Schools and Early Learning Centres

1. Background

- 1.1. All schools and early learning centres were closed on 20 March 2020 as a result of restrictions put in place in order to respond to the coronavirus pandemic.
- 1.2. Although most buildings have been closed, learning has continued from home with staff engaging remotely with children and young people. In addition, emergency childcare provision has been established for the children of key workers and vulnerable families.
- 1.3. On 21 May 2020, the first minister published a road map for recovery which indicated the intention to reopen schools and early learning centres. Provided the country continues to make progress in dealing with COVID-19, schools will reopen from 11 August 2020 through a blended approach of learning at home and in school. Early learning centres will start to reopen in June and throughout the summer.
- 1.4. The national guidance proposes that staff will return to school buildings prior to the end of the current session in June 2020. This would allow time to ensure schools are ready to receive children and young people and that all appropriate measures have been put in place to protect the health and wellbeing of both children and staff. In addition, staff will have the opportunity to plan for implementing blended learning approaches which will be required.
- 1.5. There will also be an opportunity for small groups of children to have access to school in June in order to ensure effective transition into primary 1 and secondary 1.
- 1.6. Planning will be underpinned by an evidence-based framework taking account of national guidance as well as enabling establishments to devise their own individual recovery plans, based on the specific circumstances they operate within.

- 1.7. It is recognised that significant discussion and engagement will be required in order to ensure support is in place for childcare requirements for staff and for those who are unable to return to school buildings due to underlying health conditions.
- 1.8. The experience of a broad range of services and partners will be required, including professional organisations, in order to ensure effective planning and implementation.
- 1.9. An extensive parental survey has been undertaken with hundreds of responses received and responded to. This has provided extremely helpful understanding of the priorities of families at this time.
- 1.10. The experiences of neighbouring local authorities across the West Partnership alongside case studies from other countries such as Denmark will allow best practice to be shared and developed in our own context.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that JNC notes the content of this report and agrees that there should be full engagement with JNC related to the planning for reopening of schools and early learning centres.