



## Lochardil Primary School

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Head Teacher: Mrs Audrey Kellacher

**emergency closure 0800 564 2272 school's pin number 04 2500**



Date: 22.05.2020

Dear Parent/Carers

You will be aware of the information shared yesterday (21.05.2020) during the First Minister Nicola Sturgeon's briefing where she outlined Scotland's plans to slowly come out of lockdown including information for schools and ELC settings re-opening. Highland Council has issued a press release in response to this along with a link to the government's road map, which can also be accessed on the Scottish government website, and there is a link on our Blog.

To be clear... for us learning has never stopped! We moved at rapid pace between in person to virtually learning and teaching. Our environment, our campus, was closed on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 as a safety measure by our Government to protect us and keep us as safe as possible from Coronavirus COVID-19. We are delighted to hear our school building will reopen for us all to learn together. As shared yesterday, this will be during June for our staff working in our school building and from 11<sup>th</sup> August 2020 for our pupils to begin phasing a return to what will be as it has been described 'a new normal', subject to scientific advice that it is safe to do so.

Our 'school' has continued throughout our school closure, with 100% of pupils registering albeit with varying levels of engagement, however with a strong sense of community and purpose, and staying safe and well.

As we move in to this next phase of careful consideration, planning and preparation to move forwards in light of this recent information, please be assured measures will be put in place to keep children and staff safe in accordance with national and local guidance, and we will work with you as much as possible in partnership as a community to ensure we continue to provide the best provision for our Lochardil learners. We will keep you updated and informed as possible with information from Highland Council regarding plans for how this next phase will look at Lochardil Primary and what exactly this will mean for your child i.e. a 'blended learning' approach with some time spent in school and some time spent continuing learning at home such as the virtual format we have established. As you will be aware this is an evolving process and we will keep you informed.

**Updates** - We continue to follow both Highland Council and Scottish Government advice, guidance and policy. We aim to keep you as informed as possible on matters arising and please feel reassured we are working hard on a number of key issues and a plan for opening our building and delivering the 'blended learning' approach to learning, teaching, attainment and achievement as mentioned above.

- **Reopening of schools** – Scot Gov. has announced staff will begin a return to school buildings during June to plan for a successful opening to pupils from 11<sup>th</sup> August, in what capacity and what this may look like is still to be decided, and we continue to prepare for this.

In a press release from Highland Council (21.05.2020) a number of points are stated –

- Schools will return on 11 August, one week earlier than planned for most pupils, while Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings will open over the summer. Which settings will be shared asap.
- An agreement reached between councils, professional associations and parent representatives means:
- schools will implement physical distancing measures, such as providing seating that is two metres apart and staggering arrival, departure and break times
- increased hand-washing or use of hand sanitisers, enhanced cleaning, robust protocols and ongoing risk assessments
- class sizes will be significantly reduced as a result of the new way of working, with most pupils spending around half their time in class and half learning at home. Time in school will increase further as soon as it is safe to do so
- teachers and other education staff will return in June – subject to appropriate safety assessments being completed – to prepare and plan for the new way of working and welcoming pupils back

- existing 'hubs' will continue to run to provide vulnerable children and those of key workers with childcare over the summer
- the school estate will be expanded where necessary and possible to increase the time children can spend with their teachers
- innovative use will be made of existing teachers and staff

"I will absolutely give an assurance that we will only open schools when it is safe to do so." Nicola Sturgeon, May 2020.

- Transitions – Highland Council have shared a transition pack with schools to work through. Included are some key questions to ask parents/ carers and our children so we will issue this as a Google Form asap. Support for those pupils moving in to P1 or S1 have been discussed independent of the other cohorts and more detailed plans for this will be shared as and when available nationally and locally.

- Register Daily - Priority job for all our pupils ELC- P7 to do daily (or on those days they attend if in ELC)!
- Out of School Care bookings and ELC allocation of funded hours for session 2020-2021- tbc
- Access to the school building - The school building is closed at present and no access is permitted at this time.
- Trip refunds – Lion King will be fully refunded as and when we gain access to school bank accounts and methods of repayment to families.

Loch Insh – Highland Council will inform us as soon as they have any further information as a result of their involvement to support parents/ carers with refunds.

If you find yourself in financial hardship please see Highland Council website for details of access to support during these times.

- Online learning experiences and activities – Thank you for all your effort, time and creativity with tasks. The level of engagement across the whole school is overall a positive picture and this is reassuring for when we return to the building. Reminder - please do not click 'hand in' for tasks if no work is submitted and is specifically asked for.
- Our parent/carer drop in sessions 'Let's Natter, You Matter' will start next Wednesday 10.15am-11am. The Meet code for this session will be shared in your child's Google Classroom if you wish to join.
- We would love to continue to collate examples of good news stories or photographs of anything you or your child is proud of during school closure. We are building up a collage of photos/ videos that represent our school values 'Love, Pride, Respect, Confidence and Responsibility' and our achievement adventures during continuing learning at home.

Contacting us during school closure –

**Email:** [lochardil.primary@highland.gov.uk](mailto:lochardil.primary@highland.gov.uk) or **Mobile tel. 07788 387590** Continue to check the school Blog and Twitter, and the Highland Council website for updates and information.

Please continue to adhere to the Scottish Government guidance during this time. We look forward to being with you all safely when we return in person. Protect yourself to protect your loved ones and others, and the loved ones of others safe and well from the virus.

Our Lochardil family is one we are proud to be part of. Our 'Happiness' films both 1 and 2 are now both available on our YouTube channel [www.https://youtu.be/12biicaBeQg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12biicaBeQg)

In the meantime, we will continue to provide learning, teaching and social connection virtually, and ensure fun and positive mental wellbeing is a priority. So as we near the end of Mental Health Awareness Week I want to remind ourselves of the theme for this week and always...Kindness. Continue to be kind to each other, and most importantly kind to yourselves. We got here together so far, so let's continue to trust each other to ensure together we will make the best decisions and choices for our children as they are the reason every one of us are connected and remain so.

Continued thanks for all you do to support our children and community. We will all aim to come back stronger and ready to enjoy and appreciate life as a Lochardilite that little bit more after this experience.

"When a team feels like a family, they go all out to love and serve one another." Perry Nobel

Have a lovely weekend, stay safe and well.

Audrey



Mrs A Kellacher  
Head Teacher