

Date 17 March 2020

Your ref

Our ref AG/RC

Dear Head of Establishment,

You will appreciate the measures to counter the spread of the Coronavirus have been widened significantly. Advice from the Scottish Government and Health Protection Scotland continues to guide our response.

I realise this is a very worrying time for everyone but please be reassured that the Council is doing all it can to protect and support our communities.

I want to reassure you that the health and wellbeing of all our colleagues, pupils and service users is of paramount importance.

The updated national advice is that anyone living in the same household as a symptomatic person should self-isolate for 14 days. The most common symptoms are recent onset of a new continuous cough and/or high temperature.

Parents/carers of children and young people with underlying health conditions should seek advice from NHS Inform and consider self-isolation.

Everyone needs to continue to observe the recommended hygiene advice and avoid personal contact which includes not holding meetings unnecessarily.

All colleagues who are pregnant or over 70 years should make immediate plans to work from home and should stay in touch with their line manager until further notice.

If a colleague has an underlying health condition such as, heart disease, lung conditions, diabetes, high blood pressure and cancer, then they need to speak with their line manager. This is not an exhaustive list. Given the individuality of conditions, a determination needs to be taken on a case by case basis as to the level of risk and therefore the need to isolate and work from home.

All school trips, including day trips and residential events/experiences arranged up until the end of the session, should be cancelled. School transport will continue to operate.

School colleagues have already made arrangements to update SQA data for examination candidates including updating estimate grades. Teaching colleagues have made preparations for online learning opportunities and these arrangements should continue to be refined as a priority.

Communities and Families Directorate

Level 2.6 Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh EH8 8BG

Tel 0131 529 2217 Email Andy.gray@edinburgh.gov.uk

We are examining arrangements if a national decision is taken to close schools including arrangements for those entitled to Free School Meals. In the meantime schools remain open.

Below are the very latest links to the Coronavirus advice on the NHS Inform website and for educational settings which you may find helpful:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

Obviously, this is an extremely dynamic situation which is under constant review and we will update everyone should any advice change.

We appreciate this is an uncertain time for everyone but please be reassured that the Council is doing all it can to minimise any impact.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andy Gray', is positioned below the text 'Yours sincerely'.

Andy Gray

Chief Education Officer