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Thursday 8 October 2020

## **NOTE FOR ALL CHILDCARE PROVIDERS**

To all registered childcare providers,

Yesterday, 7 October, the First Minister in a statement to Parliament announced that, following an increase in coronavirus (COVID-19) cases across Scotland and on the advice of her medical and scientific advisers, further measures were to be introduced across Scotland to slow the spread of COVID-19. The First Minister also announced further measures in the 'Central Belt' area of Scotland. Full details of these measures can be found [here](#).

The measures are intended to be in force for 16 days, from Friday 9 October at 6 pm to Sunday 25 October inclusive - in other words across the next two weeks and three weekends.

The First Minister emphasised that these measures are important to ensure the continued suppression of the virus. The First Minister was clear that these measures do not mean another lockdown in Scotland and that **schools and childcare will remain open**.

### **What does the announcement mean for the Childcare sector?**

The announcement by the First Minister has no effect on current childcare arrangements. Childcare providers should continue to operate in accordance with the current guidance.

Guidance can be found here –

- [Guidance](#) for early learning and childcare services
- [Guidance](#) for childminding services
- [Guidance](#) for out of school care services
- [Guidance](#) for fully outdoor childcare services

It is really important that providers continue to follow the public health measures in guidance which place child and staff safety and wellbeing at their heart. These are:

- enhanced hygiene and cleaning practice
- limiting children's contacts
- maximising the use of outdoor spaces

- physical distancing between adults in the setting including parents at drop-off and pick-up times
- active engagement with Test and Protect

We will be working with the Care Inspectorate, local authorities and sector representatives to review the suite of guidance for the childcare sector over the coming weeks, in line with the First Minister's comments yesterday. In the meantime, please continue to follow and apply the existing published guidance.

### **What to do if a child or staff member shows symptoms**

If a child develops symptoms of Covid-19 while in the setting, a ventilated space must be available for the child to wait in until they can be collected by their parent. Where space allows, you should prevent contact between any other children in the setting. Care must be taken however to ensure the appropriate levels of supervision of all children. Read the advice on [what to do if someone is symptomatic](#).

All staff and parents and carers should be advised that anyone (a child or a member of staff) with a high temperature, new continuous cough, loss of (or change in) sense of smell or taste, or who has had contact with a family/community member with symptoms should not attend or should be asked to return home, and be tested.

### **Test and protect**

Managers and staff must be aware of [Test and Protect](#) arrangements should someone become unwell. If a member of the staff team has symptoms, they must contact the NHS to arrange to be tested at 0800 028 2816 or [www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot). You can find more information on the COVID-19 Test and Protect [webpage](#).

All ELC settings are considered complex settings and cases will be prioritised and escalated to specialist local health protection teams.

All parents should be asked to mention childcare arrangements if contacted by or contacting the Test and Protect service.

If a parent/carer or staff member is contacted by a contact tracer and told to self-isolate for fourteen days, the person should leave the setting to self-isolate at home straight away and, if possible, wear a face covering on route and avoid public transport.

### **Staff reassurance**

Staff may feel anxious or worried at this time. It is important that staff feel safe while at work and the guidance we have in place which is firmly based on public health measures and safety should provide some reassurance to staff. The [Early Years Scotland Team ELC Wellbeing Hub](#) has lots of practical help and advice to help with wellbeing, stress, anxiety and much more.

## **Communication with parents**

It is important that we continue to reassure parents and carers that it is safe for their child to attend childcare but equally that they are high quality and nurturing environments. We would encourage you to continue to keep in touch with families. [Parent Club](#) is a fantastic resource that has lots of helpful information and advice.

Thank you again for everything you do for Scotland's children and families, particularly in these challenging times.

Alison Cumming  
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