

9 July 2020

Dear Ms Devlin

HM Inspectors of Education review of Perth and Kinross Council local authority phasing delivery plan

HM Inspectors of Education have carried out a desk top review of your local authority phasing delivery plan. HM Inspectors of Education acknowledge that you may have additional information or guidance not contained within the plan submitted.

In reviewing your plan, HM Inspectors of Education have considered the criteria set out in [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): strategic framework for reopening schools, early learning and childcare provision](#) and [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): reopening schools guide](#).

Your plan has set out clearly the following:

- That you have given due consideration to national guidance in relation to your local phasing delivery plan. As a result, your plan is comprehensive, accessible to staff and responsive to the changing nature of the Covid-19 current situation. It takes account of current scientific and public health advice and follows the phases of the Scottish Government route map.
- Guidance in relation to risk assessments, which is very clear. It takes account of individual contexts and children and young people requiring additional support. The plan emphasises the need that schools respond rapidly to the changing status of the virus either nationally or locally as a result of the 'Test and Protect' programme. It acknowledges the responsive, flexible and agile nature of plans. For example, schools may need to close or re-open quickly or respond to pupils and staff having to self-isolate.
- A guide for headteachers to the maximum number of people who can occupy each classroom area within a school. Additionally, you have advised staff to use spaces such as dining and assembly halls for teaching purposes to increase capacity, thus focusing on maximising in-school attendance. Through the individual school plans, with preferred models of attendance, support is being provided to a few individual establishments that require additional support to maximise attendance. Education services are working with these establishments to consider if more staffing, access to other buildings or support with transport might achieve a higher attendance model. It is noted that most local authority early learning and childcare (ELC) settings will be able to provide an offer of more than 600 hours and close to 1140 hours childcare.
- That workforce planning is well under way to ensure that the staffing required is available. The staff survey and mapping exercise takes account of staff requiring to work at home. It provides an overview of available staff for redeployment such as outreach, peripatetic and reduced class contact teachers. In addition, to considering which staff are at home, arrangements to support groups or classes during staff absence should be considered.
- Current plans indicate that almost all children in primary schools are expected to attend school for 40% of the week typically on a two day per week rota. In a few schools children

can attend full time. In your plan you state that secondary schools are adopting customised models of attendance, with the minimum expectation that young people will have a minimum of 40% in-school experiences and more where this is achievable. You note that other buildings may be used to increase face to face teaching and that this would incur additional costs.

- The health and wellbeing of pupils and staff is central to your planning. The need to reconnect and engage requires positive relationships to support learning. You recognise the need for children and young people to share their experiences and build their resilience. You also acknowledge that for some children and young people this has been a positive experience from where they are ready to continue learning at pace. For other this is not the case. Your plan builds very well on existing 'Getting It Right For Every Child' systems and processes taking account of the new vulnerabilities which may have developed during recent events.
- The plan was developed and agreed with a range of stakeholders, including parents and professional association representatives. You expect schools to communicate clearly and consistently with parents about their child's attendance and arrangements for blended learning. Two-way communication is emphasised as important with schools gathering questions, issues and concerns with parents. You have highlighted the importance of regular communication with children and families to allow them to voice any concerns and be involved in planning. This is particularly so for children, young people and families requiring additional support.
- The well-considered identification and support to children and families requiring digital devices and connectivity to access home learning. This includes those households with sufficient internet access but insufficient devices. Staff monitor online learning offering digital support where required.
- A high priority placed on children and families requiring additional support. The importance of reviewing Child's Plans and individualised educational programmes for children and young people following lockdown. Consideration is being given to providing additional teaching time and staff support for children and young people requiring additional support both in-school and with at-home learning. The needs of staff who work with children and young people with additional support needs will be assessed to ensure their safety. This includes appropriate Personal Protective Equipment is available as required.

- You have projected that the estimated additional costs incurred or projected to be incurred, as a result of COVID-19, up to 10 August 2020 as £2.442 million. This includes consideration of, for example, additional teaching and support staff costs, digital devices for learning at home and free school meals costs. The extension to free school meal payments until the October break will add another £250,000. Further detail, covering the period to December 2020, is yet to be confirmed. You are considering the costs of additional teachers, home to school transport and additional cleaning. You have suggested that this funding may be offset by relaxing the ELC grant condition, however, you highlight that in doing so this may impact on your ability to fulfil the commitment to providing 1140hrs of ELC provision in the future.

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