

**Date** 19 March 2020

**Your ref**

**Our ref** S&LL/AG/JR

Dear Parent/Carer,

Firstly, may I thank everyone for the tremendous support you have given to our schools and early years settings during these past few weeks. It has been a very challenging period for all our teaching staff who have shown great resilience in keeping our settings open during these very worrying times.

You will all be aware that the Scottish Government has announced that schools will close by the end of tomorrow, Friday 20 March 2020. We realise that this may cause some inconvenience but hope parents, carers and our young people will understand that the country is facing a set of unprecedented circumstances.

We are working on arrangements which may support some key workers with childcare from Monday 30 March. More details will be publicised on the Council website <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/coronavirus>.

Our teachers have been busy planning for school closures and a huge amount of work has gone into preparing online learning opportunities so pupils' learning and teaching can continue. Your child's school will have been in contact with you providing advice on resources and how your children can use these to help them over the coming weeks.

There will be a particular focus on pupils who would have been sitting exams to make sure their work is properly reflected in the evidence provided to the Scottish Qualifications Authority to ensure their efforts are recognised in the certification process.

Families of children from P4 to S6 who receive Free School Meals, and those in P1 to P3 who are entitled to clothing grants, will receive a fortnightly electronic payment during term time and the Easter Holidays equivalent to the cost of a school meal. Families of children in P1 to P3 who have an income-based entitlement to Free School Meals and a clothing grant will be contacted directly.

When we are informed that schools can re-open, we will follow Government and Health Protection Scotland advice. You can be assured that the health of your children and our staff is of paramount importance during this time.

Below is the link to the Coronavirus advice on the NHS Inform website:

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

I want to reassure you that the Council is doing all it can to protect and support our communities.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'AG', followed by a long horizontal flourish and a period.

**Andy Gray**

**Chief Education Officer**