



Community Services: Education

Argyll House
Alexandra Parade
Dunoon PA23 8AJ

To: Heads of all Educational Establishments

Dear Colleague

Early closure of schools prior to holiday periods & special events

Closure prior to Holiday Periods

As you are aware, it has been the practice that schools close early on the day immediately preceding certain major holiday periods. The purpose of this circular is to clarify two issues.

- 1 Permission for early closures prior to holiday periods is given in accordance with this circular and should not be regarded as a matter falling within the discretion of Head Teachers/Campus Principals.
- 2 It is open to Head Teachers/Campus Principals to authorise early closures prior to the summer, Christmas and spring holiday periods. You should note, however, that there is no obligation on Head Teachers/Campus Principals to make such arrangements. Furthermore, such closures are contingent upon making transport arrangements which are satisfactory to parents and do not involve additional expenditure on the part of the authority. In any event, schools should not close earlier than 1300 hours on the day prior to the summer holiday period or 1430 hours on the days prior to the Christmas and spring holiday period. There should be no early closure prior to the October holiday.

Closure prior to Holiday Periods

The Head Teacher/Campus Principal may wish to close the school earlier than usual because of an evening event or other educational activity involving children and young people and/or staff. In such circumstances the Head Teacher/Campus Principal must take into account the inconvenience such closures create for many families and for other sections of the working community (e.g. transport staff, road crossing patrols etc.). The Head Teacher/Campus Principal must also balance the

educational loss involved against any educational gain to be secured from the event or activity. Any departure from normal hours of children and young people attendance should be regarded as exceptional.

Head Teacher/Campus Principals should notify the Education Department, School Services Support Manager, and parents in writing as far in advance of the event as possible and indicate the reasons for their decision. All appropriate agencies and staff of support services should also be notified from the school. Suitable arrangements have to be in place to safeguard the interests of children and young people entitled to free school transport.

Head Teachers/Campus Principals should maintain a record of all early closures. It should be noted that the discretion to early closure does not extend to half day closures which require specific approval from the Executive Director of Community Services.

I should be grateful if you would ensure that these arrangements are operated in your establishment.

Yours sincerely

Executive Director of Community Services

June 2017