

Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)

January 2021

COVID- 19 Early learning closures - Information for parents and carers

[Parent Communication – Partner Providers Early Learning and Childcare Settings.](#)

[Parent Communication – Local Authority Early Learning and Childcare Settings.](#)

Ministers have now confirmed the following position for ELC and childcare from Boxing Day until at least 1 Feb:

- Childminders can stay open to all children and should operate in accordance with Level 4 guidance (or Level 3 in Island authorities)
- Nurseries and all other childcare providers should open only to key worker and vulnerable children
- Informal childcare can continue in accordance with Level 4 guidance (or Level 3 in Island authorities)

If you were identified as a key worker previously in the year and had a space at one of our HUB schools, you will receive a letter from us to confirm arrangements for your child(ren) from the date that your ELC setting is due to re-open, following the Christmas holidays. If you are a parent of a new child to one of our ELC settings or you have changed career and are now classed as a keyworker please apply for a place at seemis@argyll-bute.gov.uk

To be eligible for ELC during this period both parents/carers or if a lone parent must be classified as key workers as per Scottish Government criteria or the child has been identified by other agencies as requiring support; [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): school re-opening arrangements for January 2021 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

There may be instance where ELC setting(s) across Argyll and Bute may not be able to stay open because of either very low numbers or no children identified as keyworker/vulnerable. Where this is the case we are working with the settings to best place children at another setting. If this affects you please contact Education: Early Years directly, earlyyears@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Parents/Carers of children eligible for a free school meal will receive an automatic payment to their bank account which will cover the period up until the 1st February 2021.

Blended placement

ELC blended placements that are currently allowed for **keyworker/vulnerable** children are noted below, however this should not occur during one day e.g. morning indoor nursery - childminder afternoon. Blended placements must have an individual and relevant risk assessment in place.

- One indoor nursery and outdoor nursery
- One indoor nursery and Childminder
- One Outdoor nursery and Childminder

Your child's setting will be in touch with you in the normal way in relation to home learning arrangements from the 11th January.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding in these changing times.

Communication Links for Families

Information to support parents includes:

- A [Parent Club COVID-19 internet microsite](#), which contains advice on working from home whilst caring for children, advice on helping children with remote and blended learning as well as links to advice and support resources for parents of children with additional support needs.
- Education Scotland's [Parentzone Scotland](#) website includes advice for parents, families and practitioners on supporting children and young people's learning during COVID-19.
- Education Scotland's [Scotland Learns](#) initiative provides newsletters and online resources for teachers and for parents/carers.