

People Directorate

Depute Chief Executive and Director - People: Douglas Hutchison

County Buildings
Wellington Square
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Our Ref: AV/LD Your Ref

Date: 22 December 2020



Dear Parent / Carer

Following the First Minister's announcement on Saturday 19th December schools, early years centres and out of school care services will close at Christmas and re open on 6th January for staff, children of key workers and vulnerable children only. At present this will be until 18th January. A few services may open on different dates and they will keep you informed.

For the majority of children, the Christmas holiday will be extended and remote learning will be in place from 11th January. All parents can continue to use their existing childminder or any informal childcare arrangements they have in line with the Scottish government level 4 guidance.

Provision for children of key workers will be within the school or early years centre the child currently attends. Services will operate their normal hours. Vulnerable children and children of keyworkers in Early Years Centres will receive childcare in-line with their current pattern of attendance. Whilst we appreciate the challenges faced by families this service is not available for parents who are working from home, on leave, days off or where any member of the household is displaying symptoms.

The following key worker criteria will be applied:

Category 1 – Health and Care workers directly supporting COVID response; Health and Care workers supporting life-threatening emergency work, as well as critical front line primary and community care provision; Energy suppliers (small numbers identified as a top priority already); Staff providing childcare/learning for other staff

Keyworker provision will be provided where one adult is a category one key worker and other adults in the household are unable to work from home and there are no other childcare options.

Category 2 - All other Health and Care workers, and public sector workers providing emergency/critical welfare services (e.g. Fire, Police, Prisons, Social Workers, wider NHS staff, Home carers etc), as well as those supporting our Critical National Infrastructure (incl National Air Traffic Service, Prestwick (NATS)); without whom serious damage to the welfare of the people of Scotland could be caused. This will include key workers in food production and distribution and key council staff including key front-line staff in civil contingencies, bereavement and registration services, waste management etc.

Category 3 – All workers (private, public or third sector), without whom there could be a significant impact on Scotland (but where the response to COVID – 19, or the ability to perform essential tasks to keep the country running, would not be severely compromised). This includes key staff in construction, public transport services and essential retail.

Consideration will be given for childcare in category two and three only where all adults in the household are key workers, are unable to work from home and there are no other childcare options.

Parents who are eligible should apply online for the key worker provision by 30th December at [Keyworker Childcare Service - South Ayrshire Council \(south-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk). The school or centre will confirm eligibility as soon as they practically can. In the meantime, parents who have applied, can use the service as normal if they meet the criteria.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Douglas Hutchison'.

Douglas Hutchison
Depute Chief Executive and Director - People