

C-19 Education Recovery Group

Minutes of meeting, Monday 22 July 2020

Attendees

- John Swinney MSP, *Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills (Chair)*
- Councillor McCabe, *Children and Young People spokesperson, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities – CoSLA (Co-Chair)*
- Graeme Logan, *Director of Learning, Scottish Government*
- Sam Anson *Deputy Director of Improvement, Attainment & Wellbeing, Scottish Government*
- Andy Drought, *Deputy Director of Workforce, Infrastructure and Reform, Scottish Government*
- Sheena Devlin, *Executive Director, Perth & Kinross Council (ADES)*
- Joanna Murphy, *Chair, National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFS)*
- Greg Dempster, *General Secretary, Association of Headteachers and Deputies in Scotland (AHDS)*
- Elizabeth Morrison, *Deputy Director, Scottish Government*
- Jim Thewliss, *General Secretary, School Leaders Scotland (SLS)*
- Maree Todd, *Minister for Children and Young People*
- Denise Monteith, *SQA, standing in for Fiona Robertson*
- Pauline Stephen, *Director of Education, Registration and Professional Learning, standing in for Ken Muir*
- Gayle Goreman, *Chief Executive and Chief Inspector, Education Scotland*
- Alison Cumming, *Interim Director of Early Learning & Childcare, Scottish Government*
- Jane O'Donnell, *Head of Policy, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA)*
- Matthew Sweeney – *Policy Manager COSLA, standing in for Eddie Follan*
- Larry Flanagan, *General Secretary, Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS)*
- John Gallacher, *Regional Manager (UNISON)*
- Gillian Hamilton, *Strategic Director, Education Scotland*
- Maria Walker, *Strategic Director, Education Scotland*
- Frank Strang, *Deputy Director, Scottish Government*

Public Health Scotland

- Josie Murray, *Consultant Epidemiologist*
- Diane Stockton, *Social and System Recovery Programme Lead*

The meeting began with a focus on the current draft guidance for reopening schools full time in August. The anticipated areas for further discussion included physical distancing within secondary schools, school transport, funding and the timing of the return to school.

Group members provided feedback on the draft guidance. While there was acknowledgement that the iterations were moving in the right direction, there were some areas highlighted by members for further discussion.

The challenge of the need for additional services was highlighted in terms of funding as well as the practicalities of procuring and implementing these. There was also an ask for further development within the guidance on open plan classrooms, and a request for greater clarity on distancing between senior pupils and capacity within schools, as well as timetabling. It was noted that there had been engagement with a group with significant experience of timetabling to assist with guidance development.

There was a discussion around the date by which there should be a full return to school.

It was highlighted that the shelf life of the guidance, and the required frequency of update once it has been released and as the position evolves, should be considered. This - aligned to the publishing of further information, such as the scientific evidence papers released last week - should help to build confidence.

It was noted that there will be a Parliamentary statement on the 23rd July which will begin to provide information around areas of the science, parts of the guidance and funding to support the mitigations to allow the full time return to school in August.

Further work will now be undertaken which is informed by this discussion, with a final draft for consideration being made available to members later this week.

The group then were given an opportunity to discuss the surveillance, test and protect and outbreak management paper. It was noted that teachers could now be registered as key workers so they had rapid access to testing if symptomatic. An overview of the enhanced proposal for surveillance in schools was given, noting that further exploration is planned of the scale, feasibility and acceptability of the detailed elements. This will provide school specific data that will be actively monitored and available to provide reassurance on top of that already provided by the wider test and protect programme.

The group welcomed these steps and asked for further information relating to the logistics, practicalities and next steps in relation to surveillance, test and protect and outbreak management. It was noted that this will be discussed over the next few days and into early next week.

Action: To provide CERG Members with the next iteration of the guidance for reopening schools full time in August, on the 23 July.

Next meeting: Friday 24 July 2020