

C-19 Education Recovery Group
Minutes of meeting, Thursday 8 October 2020

Attendees

- John Swinney MSP, *Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills (Chair)*
- Councillor Stephen McCabe, *Children and Young People spokesperson, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)*
- Sam Anson, *Deputy Director, Scottish Government*
- Alison Cumming, *Deputy Director, Scottish Government*
- Greg Dempster, *General Secretary, Association of Headteachers and Deputies in Scotland (AHDS)*
- Sheena Devlin, *Executive Director, Perth & Kinross Council (ADES)*
- Andrew Drought, *Deputy Director for Workforce, Infrastructure & Reform, Scottish Government*
- Larry Flanagan, *General Secretary, Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS)*
- Eddie Follan, *Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)*
- John Gallacher, *Regional Manager (UNISON)*
- Gayle Gorman, *Chief Executive and Chief Inspector, Education Scotland*
- Gillian Hamilton, *Strategic Director, Education Scotland*
- Carrie Lindsay, *President, Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES)*
- Graeme Logan, *Director of Learning, Scottish Government*
- Ken Muir, *Chief Executive, General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)*
- Karen Reid, *Perth and Kinross Council, Director of Education*
- Fiona Robertson, *Chief Executive, SQA*
- Diane Stockton, *Public Health Scotland*
- Frank Strang, *Deputy Director, Scottish Government*
- Jim Thewliss, *General Secretary, School Leaders Scotland (SLS)*
- Marie Todd MSP, *Minister for Children and Young People*
- Maria Walker, *Strategic Director, Education Scotland*
- Margaret Wilson, *Chair, National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFS)*
- Mick Wilson, *Deputy Director, Scottish Government*

Welcome:

The Deputy First Minister welcomed the group and updated them on the previous day's substantial amount of information shared with Parliament. This included an update on wider societal restrictions due to COVID-19, outlining that continuing full-time in-school learning remains a priority.

The announcement on the approach to the 2021 exam diet was also raised, with key headlines shared with the group.

Weekly feedback/ongoing monitoring :

There was a routine update on the case management data, summarised as showing similar patterns in school communities as in wider society. Colleagues were reminded that the October break in four local authorities this week will affect data.

It was raised that further action may be required to support schools in ensuring that the guidance for a safe reopening of schools is followed, recognising that the adherence to rules may be inconsistent across different sectors or parts of society.

Guidance updates

The guidance around ventilation in schools has been strengthened, with input from PHS, and HSE. This will involve local authorities working closely with schools to provide expertise and assess the air flow in individual settings.

Officials, with support from clinical colleagues, have been working with partners to bring guidance up to date for previously-shielding members of the school community now that we are further into the school year. Further updates are to be provided on this work.

Officials are also working with clinical colleagues and other partners to update guidance for school staff working with ASN pupils, where physical distancing cannot practically be maintained.

Outbreak management

There was wide recognition that Incident Management Teams (IMTs) are increasingly able to respond well to outbreaks or cases within school settings. While there are varying approaches across different settings, it was agreed that every case is a unique scenario, and therefore mitigating measures should be considered and decided in relation to each set of circumstances.

It was also recognised that there is a significant impact on the workload of school leaders and local authority and IMT staff where they are responding to cases or outbreaks.

Next meeting: 22 October 2020