

## Communication during COVID-19

Early learning and childcare (ELC) settings, schools and local authorities across Scotland are working on how they can best provide support for children's learning at home. Communicating with parents, families and Parent Councils about learning at home, school developments and keeping track of how children are coping with lockdown is challenging.

The personal circumstances and experiences that parents and families encounter during COVID-19 will vary across Scotland.

Some parents will have time and capacity to access learning online.

Other families will be trying to balance working at home and their child's learning at home.

Many families will have a parent(s) who are key workers and have very little opportunity to support their child's learning at home.

Having access to devices and data can also be a challenge for many households.

## Tips for communicating with parents and families

- In consultation with your staff and Parent Council, develop a clear plan for communicating with your parents and families.
- Give parents as much information in advance as possible.
- Monitor the engagement with learning at home approaches to assess what is working well and what needs to change.
- Don't forget to celebrate learning at home successes.
- Remind parents that although many ELC setting and school buildings are closed, staff are still working and available to help.
- Inform parents that they should contact staff if they do not have the necessary items eg paper and pens to complete learning at home activities.
- Reassure parents that it may not always be possible to have a set routine or schedule.
- Advise parents that learning at home can consist of a range of everyday activities and provide suggestions that families can do together.
- Reassure parents that they are not expected to be teachers but that engaging in their child's learning can make a real difference to how well they do.
- Encourage parents to have a conversation with their child about their experiences during the day and what they have learned.
- Inform parents about the approaches taken by the ELC setting or school to assess children's progress. Report back to parents.
- Keep parents informed of developments such as: plans for transition; role of the Parent Council during COVID-19.
- Annual report for parents - include a section outlining support to children, families and school communities during COVID-19 crisis.
- Reassure parents that teachers understand the range of challenges families will have encountered during COVID-19.
- When the time is right, engage parents and families in discussions around options for returning to school.
- Keep parents informed about the ELC setting or school's recovery plan.
- Encourage parents to be kind to themselves. These are challenging days. Parents shouldn't compare themselves to other families. Looking after their own and their family's health and wellbeing is important.
- Encourage parents to keep in contact with family, friends and the ELC setting/school.
- Encourage pupils to maintain their school friendships in whatever ways are possible - online, sending letters, speaking on the phone and socially distanced waves. These relationships can help with learning too!



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## Resources for parents and families

Parentzone Scotland [website](#):

Information and guidance for parents and families regarding [learning at home](#).

Support for parents and families who use [British Sign Language](#).

Supporting children with [additional support needs](#).

Supporting the [mental health](#) of children and young people.

Support for families for whom [English is an additional language](#) (EAL).

[Transitions](#) 2020.

Support for [Gaelic Medium Education](#).

Information for [parents who do not live together](#).

Information including ways to [protect yourself and others](#).

Educational [resources](#) for parents and families.

Staying safe [online](#).



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### Further information for Early Learning and Childcare Settings and Schools:

Engaging parents and families: A toolkit for practitioners -

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/engaging-parents-and-families-a-toolkit-for-practitioners/>

Learning at Home wakelet - <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/digilearn/remote/learning-at-home/>

Family Learning Wakelet - <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/digilearn/remote/family-learning/>

Parentzone Scotland website - <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-at-home/covid19/>

