

[Home](#) > [News](#)

News

# Schools to re-open full-time

Published: **30 July 2020 15:16**Topic: [Public safety and emergencies](#), [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in Scotland](#), [Education](#)

Staff and pupils to return to classrooms in August.

Schools will re-open full-time from 11 August, following scientific evidence and advice that it is safe to do so.

New guidance, developed with the Education Recovery Group, has been published to support local authorities, teachers and parents to prepare for the new term and minimise the risks of COVID-19 transmission through the application of a number of infection mitigation measures.

Every school will carry out a risk assessment and put in place enhanced hygiene and cleaning arrangements.

In line with scientific advice received from the COVID-19 Advisory Sub-Group on Education and Children's Issues, primary pupils will not need to physically distance from each other.

The scientific advice also makes clear that distancing is not required for a safe return to secondary schools. However, as an additional precautionary measure, the guidance says that where possible secondary schools should take practical, proportionate steps to encourage distancing between young people, particularly in the senior phase, provided it does not introduce capacity constraints. This goes beyond the requirements of the scientific advice, and represents an additional measure to minimise risk.

School staff will need to physically distance from each other and, where possible, from children and young people who are not part of the same household. For the majority of staff in schools, personal protective equipment will not be necessary, but guidelines make clear the exceptions to this position.

In addition to Test and Protect – Scotland's test, trace, isolate, support strategy – a surveillance programme is being developed for schools, where regular testing and survey data will identify

symptoms and infections in the school population. This will allow regular reporting on incidences of infection and inform the ongoing development of guidance for schools.

Education Secretary John Swinney said:

“Ensuring the highest quality education for our young people, in a safe environment, is our absolute priority.

“I am pleased that scientific advice and progress in suppressing the virus has allowed us to decide that it is safe for children, young people and staff to return to school full-time.

“We have been clear that the return to school is not a return to normal. The virus remains a threat and schools will feel different for both pupils and staff.

“However, the scientific evidence suggests that the prevalence of the virus among young people is much lower than among the older population, and that young people are less likely to transmit it.

“This guidance we have published clearly sets out the approach that must be taken, including a number of specific risk-mitigation measures that will need to be introduced in all schools in order that they provide a safe environment for staff and pupils.

“Individual schools will carry out risk assessments on their estate, as they will know how to apply the guidance in a way that works best to ensure the safety of their setting.

“Scotland has an excellent programme of community surveillance. This allows us to monitor actively trends in the pandemic, both nationally and more locally. All schools will be supported to ensure they understand and apply Test and Protect, and this will be an important means of preventing any spread of the virus.

“We are also developing enhanced surveillance for schools. This information will help us to identify and understand the extent and patterns of infection in the school population and inform the ongoing development of guidance to schools and local authorities.

“We have worked with trades unions and other partners to ensure that all necessary support is provided to schools, including, where required, the provision of personal protective equipment.”

An additional £30 million will be allocated to local authorities to bring in even more additional teachers, building on the £45 million already announced. This £75 million will be enough to recruit approximately 1,400 extra teachers to support education recovery and accelerate progress in achieving excellence and equity for Scotland’s children.

On top of £20 million initial funding, a further £30 million will be made available as part of a £50 million education recovery fund for councils. This will support cleaning, facilities management, school transport and other practical issues that are critical to ensuring a safe return to schools.

Mr Swinney continued:

“Along with other previously announced commitments, today’s funding announcements mean we are making a total additional investment of £135 million to ensure that our children, young people and staff can be welcomed safely back into schools.

“This includes £75 million for additional teachers. That is enough for local authorities to recruit approximately 1,400 additional teachers into Scotland’s classrooms in the new school year, to support education recovery and accelerate progress with our aim of excellence and equity in Scottish education.”

Mr Swinney concluded:

“I very much hope that this approach will give confidence to our school communities that the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and staff is ensured as we welcome them back to school.”

Background

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance on preparing for the start of the new school term in August 2020](#)

As of 19 July 2020, 152 (0.8%) of a total 18,452 positive cases of COVID-19 were among people aged under 15. This is a rate of less than 20 per 100,000 of the population in that age group.

Today’s announcement brings the total funding to £135 million. Breakdown as follows:

- £45m for additional teachers
- £5m for additional support staff
- £3m for youth work
- £2m for The Promise
- £20m to cover initial additional costs that local authorities are expected to incur as they implement school re-opening
- A further £30m available to local authorities to meet further additional costs they may incur (announced today)
- A further £30m for additional teachers to help schools with accelerated learning recovery and resilience (announced today)

Practical advice and support for parents and carers across Scotland can be found on the [Parent Club](#) website.

---

## Contact

[Media enquiries](#)

---

### Was this helpful?

- Yes
- No
- Yes, but



[Accessibility](#) [Archive](#) [Contact](#) [Cookies](#) [Crown Copyright](#) [Jobs and vacancies](#) [Privacy](#)

---

### OGL

All content is available under the [Open Government Licence v3.0](#), except for graphic assets and where otherwise stated

© Crown Copyright

