

Covid-19: Information for parents and carers about daycare of children service closures



Scottish Government
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COSLA

Published 20 March 2020
Updated 27 March 2020

On 19 March 2020, the Deputy First Minister announced that all local authority schools and nurseries in Scotland would close from the end of the school day on Friday 20 March 2020, as part of the Scottish Government's response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, unless they are involved in the provision of emergency childcare.

This means that:

- **If your child is at a local authority nursery**, this closed from the end of the day on 20 March 2020 unless it is staying open to provide emergency childcare.
- **If your child is at a private nursery**, that may also have closed, or it might be changing the way it operates so that it is able to provide childcare for key workers.
- **If your child attends an out of school club**, it is likely to have closed, or is now providing childcare for key workers.
- **If your child is at a childminder**, the childminder may also have stopped operating, unless it is now providing critical childcare for key workers. Advice for childminders is that they limit the number of households for whom they provide childcare to a maximum of two, other than their own.

We understand that this will be a difficult time for your family. Parent Club Scotland (www.parentclub.scot) have a new hub containing guidance for families, to help them to adjust to new routines.

The Parent Club Scotland guidance will also have information on: home working, parental leave, and financial support.

Who will still be able to access early learning and childcare?

The Scottish Government and local authorities are working together to ensure key workers with no other option for childcare can request childcare to allow that allows them to continue to play their vital role in the national response to Covid-19.

We want to reduce the impact of the virus, keep children and families safe, and save lives. Only key workers who cannot fulfil their critical functions may qualify for critical childcare provision. *If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.*

More information about who is considered a key worker is on the next page. You can contact your local authority if you think you might qualify.

Local authorities will also be identifying children who may, due to individual or family circumstances, be more likely to require access to early learning and childcare.

Where can I get more information?

Your ELC setting will give you information about their closure or their new way of operating. Local authorities and ELC settings are working hard to think about how to support families in their communities.

Parent Club Scotland have a new hub to support families affected by these closures at www.parentclub.scot/coronavirus. This includes practical advice about money matters, and also ideas and tips from other parents about supporting your child at this time. You can follow Parent Club Scotland on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter to get the latest updates.

For more information about critical childcare for key workers, please go to www.gov.scot/keyworkerchildcare.

Who is a key worker?

Key workers help deliver essential services which support the vulnerable and aid local community resilience. Local authorities may have slightly different criteria to meet the needs of local communities. While decisions will be taken locally, we have issued guidance to local authorities that sets out the keyworkers we expect them to consider. Category 1 represents those providing the most essential services during our national Covid-19 response.

- **Category 1 keyworkers** include health and care workers directly supporting the Covid-19 response; health and care workers supporting life-threatening emergency work, as well as critical primary and community care provision; energy suppliers and staff providing childcare/learning for other category 1 staff.
- **Category 2 keyworkers** include all other health and care workers, and wider public sector workers providing emergency or critical welfare services. For example, fire, police, and prison services; social workers, and so on, without whom serious damage could be inflicted on the welfare of Scotland's people.
- **Category 3 keyworkers** are all other workers 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).

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