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Friday 3 July 2020

NOTE FOR ALL CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

To all registered childcare providers,

Reopening of Services from 15 July

We appreciate that the last three months of closure, delivery of critical childcare and the planning for sector recovery has been extremely challenging for everyone involved in the childcare sector. We recognise the huge amount of work that has gone into supporting children and families over this period, and are extremely grateful for your input into this.

Many of you will be considering how you will approach reopening of services and your plans for service provision in the coming months. You will be thinking about how to apply recent guidance and public health measures in your own settings to ensure safe reopening when you are ready to do so. You will also be working with families, local authorities and other partners to establish funded and unfunded childcare offers, and considering the impact on your business model. As we go through the process of planning for reopening, and as the scientific and public health advice develops, it is important that you as providers are clear of the expectations for your services.

The Scottish Government and COSLA have developed joint communication for all Local Authorities on the ELC expansion, support for childcare providers and our plans for updating existing guidance and publishing further guidance. This will be considered by COSLA Group Leaders early next week and published on the Joint Delivery Board Scottish Government website. In advance of this communication being published I wanted to write to you specifically on the guidance for the reopening of ELC settings. The guidance, that was published on 15 June, will continue to apply when settings reopen on 15 July. Recent announcements on physical distancing in social settings does not affect guidance for ELC and childcare services at present. We've been clear that physical distancing is not feasible or developmentally appropriate for young children in ELC settings, and a range of other public health measure have been put in place to reduce risks of transmission. As the scientific and public health advice develops, we will continue to review the guidance. Guidance for ELC for childcare will be reviewed alongside updated guidance for schools, and if further changes are required, based on evidence update will be issued at the end of July.