



9th September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope this finds you and your loved ones continuing to stay safe and well.

Following the return of children to school and nursery, you will be aware that there has been a considerable amount of staff absence across Midlothian schools and ELC settings. We are very grateful to our hard working staff team at St Andrew's, who have enabled us to manage this absence to date. It is however, important that we update and share our contingency plan should we get to the stage where we are no longer able to cover all classes. Our school contingency plans are now updated, reflecting scenarios that **may** occur as we continue to operate under current COVID restrictions and National Guidance for schools. All decisions taken in relation to the contingency plan will be made in close consultation with Midlothian Council.

The focus in developing these contingency plans has been to ensure that learning provision, both in-school and in-home, meets the needs of our pupils and that they are supported in a way that helps them to achieve their individual learning targets.

### **Contingency Planning for St Andrew's RC Primary School**

#### **Scenario 1**

Due to either a significant outbreak (confirmed by the Health and Protect Team) where the school has to close an **individual class**

**OR**

Due to there being insufficient staff and the school has to close an **individual class**

#### **At St Andrew's we will:**

- Follow all guidance and procedures as instructed by the Health and Protect Team and Midlothian Council.
- Communicate with parents and carers via our usual communication routes, ie: email, text and school website, keeping you up to date with the current situation and expected return dates to school.
- Whilst final updates are made to Google Classroom, activities for P1-7 will be provided via Learning Grids on the St Andrew's PS website. Activities for pupils in our Nursery and Complex Needs Provision will continue to be provided via SeeSaw.
- Reminders and updates to pupil log-on, usernames and passwords have been issued along with this letter for P2-7. Information for P1 pupils and those who are new to St Andrew's PS will follow once we have received confirmation from Digital Services.

- Parents and carers will be able to communicate with staff by emailing our school office: [Standrews.ps@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:Standrews.ps@midlothian.gov.uk) or calling on 0131 271 4670. Our office team will forward your message to the appropriate member of staff who will respond at the earliest opportunity.
- Staff will deliver ELC and P1-P4 lunches where required.

## Scenario 2

Due to a significant outbreak (confirmed by the Health and Protect Team) and there is a **FULL closure** of our school and nursery setting

**OR**

Due to there being insufficient staff, and there is a **FULL closure** of our school and nursery setting

**At St Andrew's we will:**

- Follow the same procedures as in Scenario 1 but **all classes will access learning online**.
- Communicate with parents and carers via our usual communication routes, ie: email, text and school website, keeping you up to date with the current situation and expected return dates to school

Wherever possible our intention is that our learners will be in school, however this is only possible where the pupil roll, physical capacity of buildings and staffing capacity is able to accommodate this. Our absolute priority continues to be the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff.

## Google Classroom and Digital Devices to Support Learning

Pupils from P2-7 will be familiar with the Google Classroom learning platform, which has been used successfully to deliver remote and live learning opportunities during previous lockdown periods. Following updates by Midlothian's Digital Learning Team – activities should be able to resume on Google Classroom in the near future. A separate communication will follow shortly with reminders of how to access your child's Google Classroom, along with hints and tips for completing and uploading tasks.

Should your child require the loan of a school Chrome Book, or other learning materials please contact our school office and we will be happy to arrange this.

## Early Learning and Childcare

Provision face to face learning, in our nursery, will be a priority due to the age and developmental needs of younger children and to support childcare.

In the event that there is insufficient staffing to maintain our pupil:staff ratio, it may be necessary to temporarily offer learners a reduced number of hours over the week. Please be assured that we will do our utmost to maintain our 1140 hour offer, and that parents and carers will be contacted directly to discuss any significant changes that we may have to make. All decisions will be taken in full consultation with Midlothian Council.

## Childcare

We understand that in the event of a contingency plan being implemented, this may pose a difficulty for some parents and carers in relation to their work commitments. We recommend therefore that you make your employer aware of the potential need for such arrangements, which will only be put into action when **absolutely** necessary. The exact arrangements for child care will depend on the individual circumstances requiring the contingency arrangements to be put in place.

## Free School Meals

If any contingency plans are put into practice, we will continue to provide BACS payments for those P5-7 families whose household income has been assessed and an award made in respect of Free School Meals. BACS does not include the universal provision in ELC and P1-4, however anyone else in need of support will also be able to apply for help to feed their children when they are not in school. The authority will always fulfil its duty to provide a free school meal.

Should contingency arrangements be required at any time we will of course ensure that parents, carers are fully informed of the arrangements, and that all necessary support is in place.

If you have any concerns or questions about any of the above information please do not hesitate to contact the school in the first instance.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

*Joanne Hunter*

Joanne Hunter  
Acting Leader of Learning

