

4 June 2020

SNCT 20/76

Arrangements for Re-opening Schools August 2020

CORONAVIRUS (COVID – 19)

Dear Colleagues

The [Strategic Framework for the Reopening of Schools and ELC Provision](#) confirms that the start date of the new term is standardised to 11 August 2020 on an exceptional basis for the purposes of managing COVID-19. This requires LNCTs to take decisions regarding the following issues.

1. Early return and leave dates

Where Teachers and Music Instructors have additional working days due to a change in the start date for session 2020/21 LNCTs should come to an agreement to ensure these days are recovered by adjusting term dates. In view of the expected requirement for preparations for reopening in August to continue throughout June 2020, LNCTs are strongly advised to make this adjustment in the following session.

This is to ensure each school year provides the contractual commitment to 195 working days and 40 annual leave days.

There should be no detriment in the number of days' holiday over a two-year period as a result of any adjustment agreed. There should also be no reduction in the number of days worked, whether in provision of in-school or in-home learning, or the number of days of education received by children and young people, over the same period.

2. Realignment of Session 2020/21

Other than the change to the start date for Session 2020/21 the Strategic Framework makes no further provision for the alteration of dates. LNCTs will continue to determine the configuration of the pupil day, in-service days, annual leave days and days of school closure.

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However, the SNCT, acknowledging that the start date of the new term is standardised to 11 August 2020, has agreed the following. It is acceptable, on the basis of local circumstances, for 11 August to be taken as an in-service day to allow final planning for pupils to return to school. However, the latest date by which pupils should return to school is 12 August. If more than one in-service day is required prior to welcoming pupils back, this should be taken on 10 August. The pattern of return should be agreed within LNCT in line-with the requirements of COVID-19 guidance [COVID-19 re-opening schools guide](#) and risk assessments.

3. Pre-Existing Holiday Arrangements or Commitments

Teachers and Music Instructors who have pre-booked holidays or other commitments that were arranged prior to confirmation of 11 August 2020 as the standardised start date for Session 2020/21 should be allowed to take the days of leave required without detriment.

It is imperative, however, that those affected in this manner discuss their holiday arrangements with their line manager by Monday 15 June, 2020, in order to inform workforce planning and in order that consideration can be given to how many staff , children and young people can safely be brought back into a facility at any one time in the period immediately following reopening of schools in August 2020.

4. Quarantine Arrangements

Teachers and Music Instructors who have pre-booked holidays arranged prior to the announcement of quarantine arrangements and who may be required to isolate after travelling abroad; will be required to work from home during any isolation period. There is no facility to agree additional annual leave beyond 11 August 2020.

Staff likely to be affected by quarantine arrangements should ensure that they discuss the potential situation with their line manager by Monday 15 June 2020.

It is appreciated that the position around travel is uncertain at this time and advice may change. Teacher and Music Instructors should ensure they follow Foreign Commonwealth advice regarding foreign travel. Further SNCT guidance may be issued in this regard in line with any changing advice.

Holiday and Quarantine Arrangements for other Associated Professionals

Other Associated Professionals covered by the SNCT agreements, not working within schools, will be required to discuss annual leave or quarantine arrangements with their line manager, which may include working from home, annual leave or unpaid leave.

5. Summer Retirals

Teachers and Associated Professionals who have already applied to retire at the beginning of the new Session should continue in employment until their retirement date. Their retirement date will be the date already agreed and submitted to

SPPA. If this date is, for example, 17 August 2020, the employee should not be required to come into school after the summer break. Employees and employers, therefore, do not need to provide any further information to the SPPA.

Yours sincerely

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Stephanie Walsh (Scottish Government)

Joint Secretaries

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