



To: All Parents

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Dear Parent

Travel to School in August

This letter sets out advice for parents about travel to school from August 2020.

The Council is planning for all children to return to school in August, however coronavirus remains in circulation and Highland Council is determined to do all it can to minimise the spread of infection whilst restrictions continue to be in place to prevent the spread of COVID 19.

As an alternative to public transport or using private vehicles, Highland Council is actively encouraging parents and carers to continue the walking, cycling and scooting that families have been enjoying during lockdown and choose an active form of travel for the school journey (where it is safe and appropriate). Given the length of lockdown and the restricted opportunity for young people to engage in physical exercise we are keen to promote health and wellbeing related activities. This will be a focus in school as well to support mental/physical health and wellbeing. Active travel to school can increase a child's concentration level by up to 4 hours.

Your choices will impact how our streets will look on the return to school. In line with keeping everyone safe the goal is to have quieter streets with less vehicles around schools to make the environment safer for all.

Parents are asked to provide guidance to their children about the importance of avoiding COVID infection. For example, children using bikes and scooters to get to school should not share these with any other children. On arriving at school children should proceed directly into the building and not spend time outside the school. Similarly, at leaving time children should be asked to proceed directly home.

If you have no alternative but to use your car to take your child(ren) to school, please be aware that routes to and from some schools may also be different due to changes made during the lockdown to enable physical distancing on pavements and on cycle routes. Parents or carers driving their children to school are therefore encouraged to plan their journey in advance to ensure that their chosen route is accessible. Highland Council urges you **not** to park/drop off at the school gates, please park-and-stride and find an

alternative safe and respectful location to park your vehicle. **For the safety of all - we do not advise parking at the school gate unless it is absolutely essential.**

During the period of Covid-19 restrictions, (with the exception of parents/carers of children with disabilities) it will not be possible to allow parents or carers beyond the entrance to the school building.

While the Council's intent is that school crossing patrollers are in place as would normally be the case, there may be circumstances where this is not possible e.g. due to staff shortages from staff shielding or other reasons. Where it is not possible for provision to be made, schools will ensure that notification goes to parents, and parents can then ensure safe transit of their children to school.

If your child is currently eligible for Home to School Transport, this service will continue to be provided. We are working with our Home to School Transport providers, to ensure that those pupils returning can do in a safe manner. The Council will issue further advice and guidance on Home to School transport prior to schools return.

The above is current as of 26 June. Please refer to the Highland Council website <https://www.highland.gov.uk/coronavirus> for the latest updates.

Yours faithfully



Brian Porter
Head of Resources