

C-19 Education Recovery Group

Minutes of meeting, Thursday 29 October 2020

Attendees

- John Swinney MSP, *Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills (Chair)*
- Councillor Stephen McCabe, *Children and Young People spokesperson, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)*
- Fiona Robertson, *Chief Executive, SQA*
- Graeme Logan, *Director of Learning, Scottish Government*
- Sam Anson, *Deputy Director, Scottish Government*
- Alison Cumming, *Interim Director for Early Learning and Childcare, Scottish Government*
- Andrew Drought, *Deputy Director for Workforce, Infrastructure & Reform, Scottish Government*
- Sheena Devlin, *Executive Director, Perth & Kinross Council (ADES)*
- Larry Flanagan, *General Secretary, Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS)*
- Greg Dempster, *General Secretary, Association of Headteachers and Deputies in Scotland (AHDS)*
- Gillian Hamilton,
- Hazel Bartels, *Head of Curriculum unit, Scottish Government*
- Eddie Follan, *Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)*
- Matthew Sweeney, *Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)*
- John Gallacher, *Regional Manager (UNISON)*
- Gayle Gorman, *Chief Executive and Chief Inspector, Education Scotland*
- Carrie Lindsay, *President, Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES)*
- Ken Muir, *Chief Executive, General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)*
- Karen Reid, *Perth and Kinross Council, Director of Education*
- Jim Thewliss, *General Secretary, School Leaders Scotland (SLS)*
- Gary Sutton, *Statistician, Scottish Government*
- Jane Brumpton, *Chief Executive, Early Years Scotland*
- Janie McManus, *Strategic Director, Education Scotland*
- Margaret Wilson, *Chair, National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFS)*

Apologies:

- Mick Wilson, *Deputy Director, Scottish Government*
- Gillian Hamilton, *Strategic Director, Education Scotland*

Welcome:

The DFM welcomed the group to the 30th meeting of the CERG.

Ongoing monitoring:

There was a regular update on the management information data, with reference to the weekly infographic and dashboard. It was commented that longer-term time-trends would add further benefit to such data (NB post-meeting comment: some of this is available on slide 8 of the data pack, which provides a visual on the total number of COVID-19 cases among children and a comparison across the population.

Member Feedback:

It was noted that feedback from a recent GCTS event gave a good overview as to the issues faced by teachers. Issues facing senior leaders in schools were highlighted and the increasing sustained pressure being felt, along with capacity in public health teams. Concerns raised about lack of physical distancing by teachers in staff rooms and corridors

In the Early Learning and Childcare setting a query was raised around the best practice for mask wearing due to the continued demands in that environment when using reusable masks.

It was agreed that the list of feedback issues should be reviewed, with transparency around the actions that are being taken to address the points along with consideration of whether addressing them rests with CERG or in more operational settings.

Schools Guidance:

The members were all thanked for their contributions in the development of the guidance which is due to be published 30 October. Comments included:

- Ensure there is clarity that when implementing any enhanced mitigations relevant to the Covid level in a Local Authority, this should be in addition to mitigations already in place in previous levels.
- Ensure that the schools guidance aligns clearly and comprehensively to the national Strategic Framework.
- Clarity on some of the points around previously shielding teachers was requested and the fit notes for those impacted.
- Expectations for those traversing local authority boundaries (and potentially protection levels) when travelling between home and school.
- Consensus in wanting schools to remain safe, open and welcoming, and agreement that this should be reiterated in communications.
- The tight timing of publication of the guidance, the need for / challenges of urgent implementation.

Early Learning and Childcare Guidance

The Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) guidance has been considered at the ELC work stream level. The three guidance documents, covering ELC, school age childcare and childminding services, will be published on 30 October.

Parental Engagement

There was general agreement that the Parental Engagement paper was good in terms of the content, however it needs to focus on the good practice and how to keep parental engagement in the C-19 period rather than some of the more general information included.

Actions:

- Review the list of feedback issues and provide updates on how these have been taken forward.
- Clarity around shielding within the guidance will be further reviewed.
- Comments around the Parental Engagement Paper are to be considered and a sharper version of the paper will be developed.

Next meeting: 5 November 2020