

Colleagues,

We continue to work on the very significant task of planning for the re-opening of schools from 11 August.

This is progressing well, and in line with the national guidance, and a productive meeting was held with Headteachers on Thursday. We will continue to share regular updates with you, including over the summer holidays.

Preparing our schools

This week teams of staff from a range of services, including property and health and safety have been visiting every school, carrying out walk-rounds to identify any issues and discussing re-opening plans with Headteachers and risk assessments.

This has been extremely positive, with only minor issues identified so far. This is in no small part due to the consideration Headteachers and staff have already given towards the plans which will need to be put in place.

Additional signage is being put in place this week ahead of some staff returning.

Staff return

In line with individual school plans, Headteachers will have been in touch with staff who are required over the next two weeks to come in to school and work on preparing materials and facilities for August.

This is vital work to ensure we are ready for pupils returning after the summer holidays.

Childcare Hubs – transition to Summer Activity Hubs

Our current provision of Childcare Hubs will remain in place until the end of term, however from Monday 22 June these will move and be provided in secondary school venues.

This will provide a transitional period to support the young people using them as our Summer Activity Hubs will all be based in these venues from 1 July. It also enables preparations for August to start in the schools where hubs have been based to date.

SBC will be responsible for managing the Summer Activity Hubs. Our partners Live Borders will primarily be operating them on our behalf.

School transport

As we continue to develop our plans it has become apparent that we have a serious challenge in respect of school transport.

Almost 3,000 pupils normally travel on school transport every day, however based on the current two metre social distancing guidance, the capacity of existing provision would only be around 400 pupils.

Unfortunately, despite exploring various models, it is clear that we simply will not be able to provide school transport for all eligible pupils, even where pupils are not in school every day of the week.

Therefore, to help us develop the best plan possible, we are asking parents and carers whose children normally use school transport to complete a [short online survey](#) which explores various options, including more pupils walking or cycling to school, or parents transporting their children themselves.

We know that these options will not be available to everyone due to individual circumstances, but it is vital that we explore these now to understand where parents are able to play #yourpart in getting pupils back to school.

FAQs

We are developing FAQs for school staff and these will be available on the [staff section of the SBC website](#) early next week.

We know that you will have many questions and we will continue to provide regular updates over the coming weeks, including over the summer holidays, on all aspects of our plans.

Regards
Tracey Logan
Chief Executive