

Council's Education Convener welcomes a possible move back to school

The Education Convener and Vice-Convener in Edinburgh have welcomed the possible phased return of school pupils announced by The Scottish Government on Tuesday.

The First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, said to MSPs that the government is determined to get children back to school, "even if that means adults living with restrictions for longer".

From 22 February there are plans for a full-time return to school for all Primary 1 to 3 pupils and a part time return for older secondary pupils so that they can complete in-school practical work which is necessary to complete national qualification courses. But at the beginning of this reintroduction, there will be no more than around 5 to 8% of secondary school pupils in school buildings at any one time.

These measures will be confirmed by the government on 16 February 2021.

Cllr Ian Perry, Education, Children and Families Convener for The City of Edinburgh Council, said: "I know many families across the city will be pleased to hear that a [phased return to schooling](#) will be in place by the end of the month. Our teaching staff are doing a tremendous amount of great work with home learning but we all know there's no better place for our children than being back in school with their peers and

learning face to face.

“Our schools will now work really hard to put plans in place so P1 to P3 pupils and some senior phase pupils can return on February 22 which will hopefully be confirmed by the Scottish Government in two weeks time. In the meantime home learning will continue and we hope to be to welcome more pupils back to school in the coming months as long as the virus continues to be suppressed.”

Cllr Alison Dickie, Education, Children and Families Vice Convener for The City of Edinburgh Council, said: “These are extremely challenging times for families and no one can underestimate the impact the pandemic has had especially for those struggling at home. Everyone’s mental health and wellbeing is really important so it’s welcome that early years, childcare and P1 to P3 pupils will be back in school where they belong in a few weeks time.

“Supporting the children who need it most is vital and I’m glad they will continue to attend their schools as we all work together to get through this. With the number of positive cases coming down in Edinburgh and the rollout of the vaccination programme we hope even more pupils will be able to come back to school when it is safe to do so. We will continue to follow the latest Scottish Government and health advice in ensuring our schools continue to be safe learning and teaching environments for all our young people and teaching staff.”