



**Education**

Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon

Tel: 01369 708508 Fax:

email – [maggie.jeffrey@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:maggie.jeffrey@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

[www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk)

Our Ref:

Date: 12/8/2024

Dear Parents/Carers and families,

Supporting school attendance

We hope you have enjoyed a restful and enjoyable break over summer and that our children, young people and families are ready for the return to school this week to begin a new session. We appreciate that whilst many pupils will be excited to return to school on Wednesday, there will be some who are feeling anxious or worried or who will struggle with the change in routine which the school day brings.

For those of you receiving this letter as a new P1 parent, or if you have moved to Argyll and Bute over the summer, we welcome you and hope that you and your child will soon feel settled and part of your school community. For new S1 pupils and parents, we know that this transition can feel both exciting and a little daunting. Our staff have worked hard to prepare your children for these transitions, and we hope that this has helped them to feel reassured and supported. Your child's new teacher(s) will be looking forward to getting to know them over the next few weeks and keeping you updated on their progress as they settle in.

It is important to us that all children and young people feel happy, safe and included at school. We would like to thank those of you who completed our parent and pupil attendance surveys last session. This gave us good insight into both what is working well, and what the barriers are to regular attendance. We have analysed all of the responses received and are in the process of sharing your experiences with Argyll and Bute's Children and Young People's Services network, where we will be discussing where we need to focus our support and what we can improve upon, to make a difference for those finding school attendance a challenge. We have also developed and are implementing training for staff across the education service to assist them in identifying the causes of non-attendance and supporting children, young people and families more effectively. We will write to you in the near future to keep you informed of the actions that we are taking in this regard and importantly, how you can access support.

Over the summer, Scotland made the United Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) a part of the law in this country. A central part of our vision is the recognition of, respect for, and promotion of children's rights. Many schools in Argyll and Bute have achieved a Rights Respecting Schools Award and this work will continue this session. Article 28 and 29 ensure children and young people have the right to education no matter who they are and that this education develops their personality and abilities as much as possible. Together, we need to support our children to access their right to education and the opportunities that regular attendance and engagement in their learning provide.

There are many things that families can do to help our children and young people make the most of what education can offer them. Ensuring learners have enough sleep, maintain healthy routines and

focus on what they enjoy about school prior to returning is always a useful start and a good way to maintain motivation as the school year progresses. It may seem that an odd day off school doesn't really matter, but when a child or young person is persistently absent, research tells us that this can impact on young people's levels of participation, attainment and ultimately their future opportunities.

We would ask that, where possible, term time holidays are avoided - whilst we appreciate the impact the cost of living is having on our families, the consequences of missing teaching time can be significant for all learners. As a gentle reminder, please find the school term dates for session 24-25 available here [School holidays 2024 - 2025 | Argyll and Bute Council \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](https://argyll-bute.gov.uk/school-holidays-2024-2025) which we hope will assist you in planning any family breaks for the coming year.

Your child's school will contact you and offer support if your child's attendance falls below 90%. This is part of our Maximising Attendance Policy and we hope gives families an opportunity to engage with school staff and request support, if required, at an early stage. Should you have concerns regarding your child's attendance, or any barriers to their wellbeing and engagement in school, we would encourage you to keep in contact with your child's key adult. We understand that speaking to school staff is not always easy for families, however, working together to identify what your child needs and to review the support we put in place is crucial to ensuring that we get it right for your child.

The Educational Psychology Service has also compiled a list of resources to support you and your child if they are finding it difficult to attend school regularly. These are available here: [Argyll and Bute Educational Psychology Service - Attendance \(google.com\)](https://argyll-bute.gov.uk/educational-psychology-service-attendance). If you would like any help in accessing further support, please do consider speaking to someone either at school or within our central education team.

We thank you for your ongoing commitment and support and we look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

Yours sincerely



Jennifer Crocket  
Chief Education Officer / Head of Education:  
Wellbeing, Inclusion & Achievement



Wendy Brownlie  
Head of Education: Performance &  
Improvement

