The Formentera Department of Education reports that the island’s early-childhood learning centres, or *escoletes*, welcomed 102 children back to classrooms today for the 2020-2021 school year. Thirty-three professionals, including instructors and support staff, are responsible for the 24 one to three year olds at Escoleta des Camí Vell and the 78 children from infants to age three at Escoleta de Sa Miranda. Both schools employ additional cooking and cleaning staff.

Culture consellera Susana Labrador applauded workers’ efforts in view of “the extremely complicated situation we’re all enduring”. She said that “spirit, passion and professionalism all go into making our escoletes as safe as possible during the pandemic”, and highlighted the importance of making the centres “warm and fun places for kids as well”.

New entry points
Staff at Sa Miranda have set up five separate entrances and children will enter classrooms by age group. Children at Es Camí Vell will use one of two entrances when they arrive, and pick-up and drop-offs are staggered to minimise crowding.

Safety and hygiene measures
Instructors will keep themselves and others safe by wearing masks and following other health measures, and classrooms and toys will be cleaned once a day. “Bubble groups” will ensure that children from different classes don’t mix or share spaces.

School hours and services
The school day, including early-morning arrivals, normal class time and cafeteria service, goes from 7.30am to 2.30pm. Organisational and logistical difficulties mean that nap time will no longer be offered.

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Department of Communications
Consell de Formentera