

18 March 2022

Education and Learning Directorate

The Bridge
Glasgow Road
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Dear Parent / Carer

Following the announcements made by the First Minister, we are starting to see some light at the end of the tunnel as some of the mitigations are being removed and a return to some normal activities, both within our schools and our wider communities. It is almost two years since the first Covid lockdown – our schools, young people and staff have had to adhere to many changes in how they operate during this time. Once again, I want to thank you all for your continued support that has helped keep our school communities safe.

As always, it is our priority to maintain in-person learning for all children and young people in our schools. I acknowledge how challenging the last two years has been for all, so I want our pupils to be in classrooms and learning again, wherever possible.

Although mitigations are being removed, this is against a backdrop of a significant number of positive COVID-19 cases within our staff and our pupils. Such high numbers of positive cases are very challenging for a number of our schools and early years settings.

Consequently, there may be occasions in the next few weeks that, as a direct result of staff unavailability, we may have to ask individual classes or year groups to move to remote learning for a very short time. Please be assured that we would only ask pupils to do this if the situation is unavoidable, because of health and safety concerns due to staff absences, and for as short as possible. Your Headteacher will try and communicate with you as soon as possible if this change to remote learning needs to be implemented and affects your child.

The next few weeks are very important ones in our school year, particularly with exams and school transitions. I am working with our Headteachers to ensure that we prioritise these important aspects of our young people's learning.

Following some difficult times over the past two years, our schools are places where our staff and young people are fully engaged in face-to-face learning. Although the current increase in positive cases is temporarily impacting some of our schools, like you, I hope that we can all return to normal teaching and learning soon and watch our school communities thrive.

Once again, I'd like to thank you for your continued support and understanding with this difficult situation.

Yours sincerely

**Gillian Brydson**

Director Skills, Education and Learning