

Our Ref:  
Your Ref:  
Contact: JM  
Tel: 01236 794890  
E-mail: enquiries@chrystonhigh.n-lanark.sch.uk  
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Education and Families  
Mr. Mitchell  
Head Teacher  
Chryston High School  
Lindsaybeg Road  
Chryston  
G69 9DL  
[www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk](http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk)

Dear Parent/Carer,

As always, I hope this letter finds you, your family and your loved ones safe and well. I am quite certain that you will have tuned in to or heard the First Minister's announcement earlier this afternoon. As expected, we are now working towards confirming our planning for small groups of young people in the senior phase to begin a phased return from Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February (based on 5-8% of the school roll which will be between 44 and 70 pupils at any given time in addition to those learners already registered for in-school learning). This will be arranged to complete agreed/identified practical work that is critical and where it is absolutely necessary for that learning to take place in-school.

As you will understand, there are a number of factors to clarify and consider and further guidance will come from Scottish Government and thereafter, NLC over the coming days. Our plans will be confirmed and communicated as relevant by Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February. Our initial offering from Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February, based on the guidance is likely to include those S4-S6 pupils engaged in the following subjects/courses:

- Admin & IT
- Art and Design
- Craft, Design, Graphics
- Computing
- Drama
- Practical Cookery
- Modern Languages
- Music
- Music Technology

Our confirmed communications will provide details of who should attend and when. We will also provide details of timings, school transport (which is likely to be as normal) and also entrance/exit information amongst other in-school plans such as interval and lunch arrangements taking into account health and safety and all mitigations required to keep everyone safe. Senior Phase pupils will adhere to social distancing measures whilst in school and therefore, class sizes will be significantly reduced in most cases to no more than 10 per room. Senior phase pupils (S4-S6) will require to wear face coverings as they did prior to lockdown unless exempt from doing so.

It may very well be the case that our plans will include a week A/week B approach and therefore follow a fortnightly timetable of classes and our initial thoughts are that senior phase pupils attending school will be in specific classes/courses for the duration of the school day rather than moving between classes and rooms to enhance/extend



critical practical learning time and also to ensure that we are again taking into account health and safety and all required mitigations. Depending on subjects being studied, some pupils may be in more than others and therefore our plans and timetable will take this into full consideration so that two courses/columns are not running at the same time. Some young people may not be in at all during this initial phase of our return.

Our digital learning offering will continue and we are not expecting any changes to that although it is worth being mindful that more teachers will be required to be in school, potentially more often to support and lead in-school learning and therefore we will continue to do our very best to negotiate online learning for all year groups, timely marking/feedback, and in-school learning for increased numbers of young people. Thanks in advance for your patience and understanding of that and thank you in advance to the staff team for doing their very best to provide on all fronts as well as they possibly can. We hope that this announcement today provides us all with a glimmer of light and allows us to move one step closer to our much preferred return to in-school learning again for all at the earliest opportunity but only when absolutely safe to do so.

If possible, I would very much like to factor in brief S4, S5 and S6 pupil drop ins via their year group Teams prior to the end of this week. I realise that there will be many questions and queries raised by the announcement today and I look forward to being able to communicate our plans by Friday.

Additionally, we will also communicate our approach to distributing 'at-home testing' for young people in the senior phase who will be attending school. This is to serve as an additional mitigation to help keep us all safe. Specific information about that will be communicated by Thursday. We recently offered to be a Scottish Government 'pilot' school for regular 'at home' staff testing and this has been ongoing successfully for a number of weeks now and therefore, we have a good understanding of the process and indeed the benefits of it.

Stay safe and take care. I look forward to communicating further with you again later this week.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mr. Mitchell', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr. Mitchell