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Date: 11th March 2021



Education and Families
Mr. Mitchell
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Dear Parent/Carer,

As always, I hope this letter finds you, your family and your loved ones safe and well. I am now pleased to be able to share with you our confirmed arrangements for the next phase of our school return as set out quite unexpectedly by Scottish Government on 2nd March 2021.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming more young people back to school on a phased/blended approach and I am desperate to once again have more young people back in the building, to hear their laughter, chatter and excitement echoing through the corridors, classrooms and learning areas from Monday 15th March – it has indeed been very much missed. You will be aware that we are also counting the days down to our full return which we are confident will happen following the Spring/Easter holidays on Monday 19th April, although that is yet to be confirmed by Scottish Government.

Although the staff team will continue to strive to do their very best for your children, as always, these latest guidelines/expectations are incredibly complex and just as frustrating in some ways for us as I am sure they will be for you. We fully realise that they are likely to present our full community with an element of challenge, including you as our parents/families and our young people and staff. Of course, our preference is for all young people to return to school again but only when that is safe to do so. Again, we thank you in advance for your ongoing patience, support and understanding. In addition to this cover letter, you will have received a year group specific programme booklet. They have been attached to the email that has been sent alongside this letter, they are also posted/saved on your child's relevant year group Microsoft Team and they can also be viewed from our school website. Draft versions of the programmes were posted briefly this morning in their year group team for the purposes of assembly presentations only and final confirmed versions have now replaced them in PDF format – this is the version attached to the email that you also found this letter.

The Scottish Government priority group for returning to school is for those who are in the senior phase of their learning (S4-S6) and therefore they will spend considerably more time in the school between the dates of 15th March and 1st April, 2021.

All other pupils in younger year groups (BGE, S1-S3) will return to school to re-connect as much as possible between 15th March and 1st April. S1 – S3 will be allocated one day per week (three days in total throughout this short phase, prior to the expected full return following the Spring/Easter holidays on Monday 19th April (to be confirmed by Scottish Government)).

You will be aware that all young people in secondary school (S1-S6) must adhere to social distancing guidelines between 15th March and 1st April (2 metres in school/class and 1 metre on school transport/buses). You will also be aware that we must continue to facilitate small groups of young people in addition to our phased/blended programme, for example, those with parents who are both key workers in line with Scottish Government criteria. With this in mind, we politely ask for those parents/families support, as much as possible to consider/re-consider how vital a place is required between now and the Spring/Easter holidays – thank you in advance for your understanding and support of this.



All young people in secondary school (S1-S6) must also wear face coverings at all times in the building (exemptions apply) including when in class. We ask all young people to come to school with their own, appropriate face covering and that they put in on prior to entering the building.

Additionally, we are also continuing to distribute 'at-home testing' for young people in the senior phase (S4-S6). This is to serve as an additional mitigation to help keep us all safe. If you require specific information or assistance regarding LFD testing then please contact the school office at the earliest opportunity. It is likely that this will be extended to all young people (S1-S3 included) following the Spring/Easter holidays. More information about that will be communicated in due course.

Please take time to read through the year group specific Phased Arrangements Programme Booklet (emailed, posted on year group Microsoft Team and on our school website) with your son/daughter in advance of Monday 15th March to prepare as fully as possible for between March 15th and 1st April. All days young people are to attend school are full days (normal timings), there are no half days or am/pm splits. Below is a summary table of dates for in-school learning for each year group but please use this alongside the more extensive information found in the support/guide programme booklet:

Year Group	Days/Dates			
S1	Friday 19 th March	Friday 26 th March	Thursday 1 st April	
S2	Wednesday 17 th March	Wednesday 24 th March	Wednesday 31 st March	
S3	Monday 15 th March	Monday 22 nd March	Monday 29 th March	
S4	Monday 15 th March Wednesday 24 th March	Wednesday 17 th March Friday 26 th March	Friday 19 th March Monday 29 th March	Monday 22 nd March
S5/6	Tuesday 16 th March Tuesday 30 th March	Thursday 18 th March	Tuesday 23 rd March	Thursday 25 th March
S6 pupils TT for Private Study on any day (column specific) should not attend on these days but should engage in online/digital learning at home instead.				

The complexities around the planning and facilitation of this for such a short time (and within such a short time frame) is vast, to say the least, as you will understand. When young people are not in school learning, they will be supported in their learning at home as they have been during lockdown (digital/remote learning). With most staff teaching classes in school almost all of the time again, we will continue to strive to do our best to offer as high quality online learning as we possibly can under the circumstances but please remain mindful of the ask of school staff following the rather unexpected announcement from the First Minister last week. This is certainly not our preferred approach nor is it likely to be you or our young people's preferred approach, however we will of course, continue to do our very best for your sons/daughters, as always and we very much hope to be welcoming all young people back to school on Monday 19th April (tbc).

Once again, thank you for your ongoing support, patience and understanding – we really do appreciate it and we cannot wait to see more young people in school again from Monday.

Stay safe and take care. I look forward to communicating further with you again in due course.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. Mitchell