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Date: 24th August 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I would like to take this opportunity to update you on plans to reintroduce instrumental music tuition into schools. At the start of the new session, a decision was taken to delay the return of instrumental staff. This was to allow schools to organise the return of pupils and for pupils to settle being back in schools.

Following the release of Scottish Government guidance on 30th July, peripatetic working and travel for instrumental music teachers has been restricted. However, I am pleased to inform you, a plan is now in place which will enable the reintroduction of instrumental lessons for pupils. This will be on a limited basis of instrumental teachers being in only one school per day. Instrumental staff are working with schools; organising timetables to deliver face-to-face lessons. As I am sure you are aware, setting this up in all schools is challenging. We are currently working with Head Teachers and music subject leaders to finalise how and when learning can be delivered in each school. As the vast majority of our instrumental pupils have not had a face-to-face lesson with an instrumental teacher since March, resuming instrumental lessons must be our priority.

The instrumental music service is looking forward to welcoming back all of our pupils. I know how anxious some may feel about returning but, I would like to reassure everyone, we are pleased to have pupils back playing instruments in schools.

Under current Scottish Government restrictions, the playing of brass or wind instruments, in schools, by instrumental teachers and pupils is not permitted until further Scottish Government guidance is received. However, pupils who receive lessons on a brass or wind instrument will still receive a face-to-face lesson, but this will take the form of discussing pre-recorded material and/or lesson preparations and various learning options. Additionally, in discussion with their instrumental teacher, pupils will have the option to attend a live drop-in video session between 4 – 5pm most days. These will be delivered through Microsoft TEAMS where the instrumental teacher and pupil will be in their home.

From **Monday 31st August**, instrumental lessons will restart in secondary schools. This will ensure pupils studying SQA music are able to plan and prepare programmes for the practical element of the exam. This will be followed by the roll out of lessons in primary schools from **Monday 21st September**. Please note, primary pupils will continue to receive resources through Microsoft TEAMS until lessons restart on 21st September.

Throughout lockdown, instrumental staff continued to deliver resources to a large proportion of instrumental pupils who engaged with their instrumental teacher through Microsoft TEAMS. Although, not a replacement for face-to-face lessons, it allowed pupils to continue their learning.

Looking ahead, I would envisage this type of online delivery playing an important role in future learning for instrumental pupils.

Instrumental staff have now started to contact pupils through Microsoft TEAMS and/or email to inform them lessons will resume, face-to-face, from next week in initially in secondary schools. As a matter of urgency, if your child has not responded; setup TEAMS or not been contacted, please ask them to contact their instrumental teacher through TEAMS or GLOW email. The email address of your child's instrumental teacher can be found in the **information** section of the new music service app.

MUSIC SERVICE APP

We are excited to announce the launch of our new free music service app



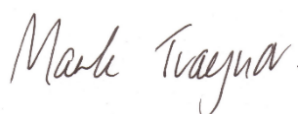
This will allow us to communicate with parents/carers/pupils in real time. It is important, parents/carers/pupils download the app to ensure you don't miss out on all information, news and notifications about the music service, authority ensembles and Saturday music centre.

HOW CAN YOU DOWNLOAD THE APP?

Click on this link <http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/article/10415/Renfrewshire-Instrumental-Music-Service> ; then open the 'App information leaflet' in the related document section and follow the set-up instructions.

Finally, can I take this opportunity to thank parents/carers and pupils for your support, understanding and patience over the last five months. There are still a number of challenges ahead but for now, we are looking forward to seeing everyone and pleased instrumental music lessons are back!

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch.



Mark Traynor
Music Development Officer