

Our Ref: JC/KM

10 March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

The Scottish Government has now published updated guidance on the next phase of the return to school which will take place from Monday 15 March.

Arrangements from 15 March

In the period from Monday 15 March until Thursday 1 April (the last day of school before the Easter break), there will be a combination of in-school learning and remote learning for all S1-S6 pupils.

All young people in secondary schools will receive some in-school education each week from 15 March until the Easter break, wherever possible.

Senior phase learners who are taking national qualifications will have priority for face-to-face learning and teaching in school.

Each school will make its own arrangements for this period of phased return, and will contact parents/carers to inform them when each pupil should attend.

For pupils who are not in school, remote learning will continue, although it will be different from current practice given that schools will have to provide face-to-face learning to a larger group of pupils.

Schools will inform some senior phase school learners, such as those studying Foundation Apprenticeships, that they may start a limited return to colleges for essential practical coursework.

A number of important changes will be made to the arrangements in all secondary schools to manage risk:

- Movement of young people and staff in secondary schools will be minimised as far as possible.
- Face coverings must now be worn at all times by staff and young people in secondary schools; including S1-S3 learners (not just the senior phase) in classrooms, in communal areas and when moving about the school, where no individual exemptions apply.

- The requirement for 2 metre distancing in secondary schools will be relaxed when young people are outdoors for the purpose of outdoor activities and learning. Schools will maximise opportunities for outdoor learning.
- The requirement for 2 metre distancing for secondary pupils on dedicated school busses will be relaxed, subject to maintaining appropriate distancing, for example wherever possible for each passenger to sit on their own.

Provision will continue for the children of key workers and vulnerable young people until all young people return to school full time.

School meals, including free school meals, will be available for pupils attending school. Arrangements for direct payment to parents/carers of pupils eligible for and claiming free school meals will continue until the end of the Easter break.

Arrangements After the Easter Break

All pupils are expected to return to full-time schooling after Easter, on Monday 19 April, subject to continued suppression of the virus and scientific advice that the requirement for physical distancing between young people can be removed.

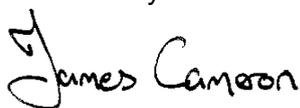
The offer of twice-weekly at-home lateral flow testing will be extended to all secondary pupils after the Easter break. Subject to sufficient supplies being available, schools will offer S1-3 pupils testing kits before Easter. Further details will be given to parents/carers by each school.

In order to support the re-opening of schools, it is important that all pupils follow all of the arrangements that schools have put in place. Schools will remind all pupils of these arrangements when they return to school.

Parents/carers can also play their part by avoiding contact with other parents, children and young people at the school gates, on the way to school and after school.

Our schools are looking forward to welcoming pupils back on a phased basis from Monday 15 March until the Easter break, and, subject to continued suppression of the virus, on a full-time basis after the holiday.

Yours sincerely



James Cameron
Head of Education (Learning, Policy & Resources)