



Executive Director of
Education
Maureen McKenna

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Our Ref MMcK/SMcC
Date 4 March 2021

Your Ref

Parents/Carer – Secondary

Dear Parent/Carer

SECONDARY SCHOOL UPDATE – MARCH 2021

I promised I would write to families when we got confirmation of the date when secondary pupils can start to return to school.

The Scottish Government has announced that from Monday 15 March more secondary pupils will be allowed to return to school to continue their learning. This represents a total of 14 school days from 15th March until the Spring break.

However, the current 2 metre social distancing restrictions will still apply, so until the Spring break at least, young people will need to learn with a mixture of in-school and a continuation of remote learning due to space constraints.

Our secondary school staff are currently putting together plans that each school will communicate directly to families and young people but we will continue to prioritise senior phase (S4 to S6) so that they can concentrate on their SQA qualifications. More senior phase young people will be offered in-school learning and schools will plan for subjects where there is the greatest need for delivering parts of the course in school.

In line with the government announcement, S1 to S3 will have in-school learning for a planned amount of time for each week starting from Monday 15th March until the end of the term on the 1st April. We recognise that our S1 to S3 young people have not been in school for quite a while and so our focus will be on preparing them for the full-time return to school after the spring break (dependent on government guidance). Our schools will plan learning which will support them in getting used to being back in school and seeing staff and friends again. They will experience programmes of activity which will include subject learning in classes, personal and social education and outdoor learning/sport with a focus on recovery, resilience and reconnection.

Our school staff have been working exceptionally hard planning and supporting remote learning while providing in-school learning for children of keyworkers and providing learning for some S4 to S6 pupils. They are now being asked to change again. I know they will rise to the challenge and so I would ask you to work positively with your child's school and understand the different priorities they are trying to balance.

We are all looking forward to having the young people return to school full-time to follow a more normal timetable if the suppression and transmission of the virus continues to decline. Hopefully this will be after the spring break. Our schools are also hoping to run some additional study opportunities during the spring break for senior pupils and they will communicate this to you separately.

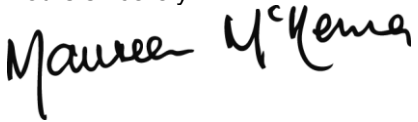
Our advice remains the same as when I last wrote to you – our young people should continue to focus on their learning and our school staff will focus on the recovery and reconnection plans to ensure that our young people have every opportunity to achieve their potential.

Schools are ready to welcome young people back with updated risk assessments and arrangements in place to keep everyone safe. This includes voluntary testing for all school staff and senior pupils. Your school will have sent separate details home to senior pupils with information and consent forms for testing. It also means that all pupils should be wearing face coverings on school transport and in school, unless exempt. We would not expect young people in our ASL schools to be wearing face coverings.

Your child's school will continue to be in touch with any updates and I want to take this opportunity again to thank all our families, children and young people for their continued support as we do all that we can to help suppress the virus.

You can find the latest Scottish Government advisory group information on the return to school here: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advisory-sub-group-on-education-and-childrens-issues---phased-return-to-in-person-learning-in-schools-and-elc-settings---next-steps/>

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maureen McKenna". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MAUREEN McKENNA
Executive Director of Education