



**Email from Matthew Bartlett, Head Master**

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020

Dear Parent/Carers

Many of you will have heard the announcements made by the First Minister today. In addition to this we received at 12.30pm., the first strategic framework aimed to bring about the reopening of schools. I want to share with you immediately what lies ahead and perhaps answer as much as I am able, some of the immediate questions which you may have.

Naturally we receive planning documents which will not form part of general media reporting and they give a much more detailed and accurate information stream. Equally we are included in consultations and national groups. What follows is a very early synthesis of those recommendations.

All guidance recognises the lead in time needed for reopening and makes abundantly clear that everything is based on scientific and medical evidence confirming things can be done in a way consistent to preventing a flare up of the R rate and based on the fact that there are complementary public health measures in place. This means that whilst dates will appear in the press, they have yet to be confirmed as definite by the Scottish government and that they could change due to a decrease or increase in infections. You should not at this point take the dates to be anything other than indicative.

However the government has stated the following, indicated in *italics* by what follows:

- *The government has indicated a return to school date of 11<sup>th</sup> August.* This is earlier than St Aloysius' was due to return. **We will clearly consider the practicalities of this and let you know as soon as possible of any revised date of return.**
- *Staff will return at some point during June subject to public health guidance.* **This will give us time to prepare fully and safely for the new term and will I know be welcomed by colleagues who like all of us prefer a face to face mode of working**
- *Support for children at key transition points (P1 and S1 are specifically mentioned):* this might include in school experience in late June. **We will be considering how to provide this safely for our new students or students transitioning from Junior into Senior School .**
- *Existing Critical childcare* will need to continue throughout May, June and the summer break for key worker children. **We had already planned to provide this.**
- *Consistency in provision for those preparing for qualifications in 2020/21.* The government has urged all schools to review the evidence base to support assessment and certification presumably in case of a second wave of cases. **The College is already undertaking this based on the positive experience of using evidence in the process of estimating grades this year**
- *A blended learning model.* **The College will clearly build on learnings and detailed feedback on remote learning but will be aiming to return as many year groups as possible and for as much of any given week as possible. There is very significant work already in progress to put the appropriate risk assessments to be ready to go in August.**



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The guidance is clear that there cannot be a 'one size fits all approach' to implementation across all educational settings. The approach being adopted is a 'maximalist' one ie: consistent with health and wellbeing of pupils and staff and a quality learning environment that as many pupils return to some extent at the earliest date possible.

The variety of evidence, not least with respect to transmission by children of the virus means that there is significant flexibility built into the guidance.

Rest assured that this has my primary attention and the input from all my colleagues on the leadership teams. I realise that there may well be more questions than answers at present but I am aiming to regularly update you on progress towards the day we are all waiting for, when we can once more open the doors at 45 Hill Street.

Kind regards

**Matthew Bartlett**

**Head Master**



**ST ALOYSIUS'  
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**GREAT THINGS HAPPEN IN THE GREEN BLAZER**