



Letter from Matthew Bartlett, Head Master

Wednesday 1st April 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Learning and Teaching

We are now into our second week of remote learning and I wanted to write to update you about our plans for teaching and learning after the Easter break. I am writing one letter rather than different letters to different year groups as I think it is important we all know what we are doing and can understand how this all fits together. So if you are a parent of an older pupil, don't just skip to that part of the letter!

- Can I thank everyone for their real sense of community in working together in this way and we have appreciated all the feedback which we have received from parents and pupils. You will be aware that we surveyed pupils in S1-S3 to find out about their experiences in order to refine what is being offered. 242 pupils replied to the survey and the average time spent per day on school work was five hours or more.
- We are very mindful that families will be impacted differently by the coronavirus, with perhaps ill family members, a number of people accessing a computer or device and parents having their own work to do as well as trying to monitor their child's progress. This causes stresses and anxieties and the main issue raised by pupils is that there is too much work. We have discussed this with staff and everyone understands the importance of being flexible whilst still setting high standards.
- A small number of pupils reported some issues with accessing certain subjects. If you have problems with access to Schoology or certain areas within it or are finding functionality a problem, please contact Mr Cluckie JCluckie@staloyusius.org

We break for Easter on Friday 3rd April and I would encourage everyone to treat this as a rest from school work. I have also asked staff to ensure they take this break. The last two weeks have been exceptionally demanding on everyone: parents, pupils and teachers alike. Time spent as a family will be important and although we will not be able to physically live out the Easter story through attendance on Good Friday, Easter Saturday and Sunday, I think it is important we find time to be with God, to reflect prayerfully and perhaps join some of the services taking place online.

Our service for key workers will continue to be available through Easter with the exception of Good Friday and Easter Bank Holiday Monday. Thank you to everyone who keeps this going for the children and their parents who rely on this provision.

I had promised to outline what will be happening after Easter so that families and young people can prepare for some changes to approach based on our experience so far. I have no doubt that further changes will take place as we continually seek to refine what we are offering.



Learning for pupils in S1, S2 and S3 from Monday 20th April

Pupils in S1 to S3 will continue in their current classes and will receive lessons via Schoology. We are aiming to complete the teaching of all courses by Monday 4th May.

We will not run a traditional exam diet. However, pupils will be asked to show a product of their learning, to be submitted between Mon 4 May and Wed 13 May. This product of learning will vary from subject to subject but is designed to keep pupils focussed on their learning from now until then. It could be an on-line assessment, an essay, a brief project, or something else that would be meaningful and would demonstrate that pupils have continued to engage with their learning. Further details will be released to pupils through Schoology.

How will teachers keep track of pupil learning?

From Monday 20th April, all pupils will be asked to submit a weekly piece of work for teacher review. This will allow teachers to check that pupils are keeping up to date with learning on-line and are understanding their work. Where there are concerns about pupils not submitting work, parents will be contacted.

Pupils are invited to contact their teachers via Schoology if they are unsure of their work or require further support.

What about virtual teaching or face-time?

We are currently investigating on-line platforms such as MS Teams which may be useful for teacher-class contact or for running subject 'clinics' at specific times. We need to make sure we have all safeguards in place and are closely monitoring the advice being issued to schools. Current advice from Education Scotland and School Leaders Scotland suggests that teachers should not be using these platforms to communicate with pupils/classes. We will update parents when we have more information about these developments. We anticipate being able to write to you just before return to learning after the Easter break.

We have also decided not to offer live timetabled lessons as we are conscious that not all families can guarantee access to IT devices for all their children at scheduled times. In addition, the flexibility afforded by non-timetabled lessons allows pupils to work on their lessons at a time of their choosing.

Monday 18th May onwards

We are planning for all pupils to start the new timetable on Monday 18th May. S1 will start their S2 courses based on the choices they have made; S2 will start their eight National 5 courses; and S3 will continue with their National 5 studies. We will write to pupils and parents about this in due course.

Please stay in touch

If you have concerns about your child's learning, their ability to complete Schoology tasks, or your child is unwell and unable to keep-up with Schoology learning, please contact your child's Head of Year.

We are conscious that this is a time of uncertainty and that many families may be affected by disruption to their lives. Where issues emerge, please contact your child's Head of Year as it is important that we can continue to support our pupils and families as best we can. We do have access to counselling services and Mrs Erskine should be contacted if you feel there is a concern or need here.



Useful Contacts

Name	Position	Contact
Gail Hartshorne	Head of S1	GHartshorne@stalloysius.org
Graeme Smith	Head of S2	GSmith@stalloysius.org
Lizzie Sturrock	Head of S3	LSturrock@stalloysius.org
Mandy Sciallo	Head of Careers/UCAS	MSciallo@stalloysius.org
James Cluckie	Assistant Head (Teaching & Learning/ Schoology help)	JCluckie@stalloysius.org
Ryan Ferrie	Assistant Head (Pastoral)	RFerrie@stalloysius.org
John D Anderson	Depute Head (Academic)	JAnderson@stalloysius.org
Isabelle Erskine	Senior Depute Head (Pastoral)	IErskine@stalloysius.org
Matthew Bartlett	Head Master	MDBartlett@stalloysius.org

Learning for pupils in S4 and S5 from Monday 20th April

We are planning to start our new timetable on Monday 20th April so that the current S4 begin courses chosen for S5, and the current S5 begin courses chosen for S6.

We will publish a list of all Higher, Advanced Higher and relevant National 5 courses that will run on Schoology from Monday 20th April. Pupils must sign-up for the courses they opted for when completing their option choices. Heads of Department will review the list of course participants to ensure it matches with the information we have from the option forms.

We would normally start the new timetable in June. Starting the process in April will allow our pupils to make a good start to their S5/6 courses. It is therefore essential that pupils sign-up to the courses they intend to study in S5/6 as, when we resume 'normal' teaching, a significant volume of material will have been covered through on-line learning.

Can pupils study more subjects on-line than they opted for S5/6?

Where pupils are undecided over their choices for next year (e.g. they have chosen 5 subjects for S5 study but are undecided between their 5th choice and a 6th subject they have in mind) we would strongly advise that pupils sign-up to the additional course on Schoology too. This will ensure that, when normal teaching resumes, they will not have a significant amount of catch-up to do.

Once SQA results are published on the 4th of August, the college would normally host a parent/pupil meeting with staff to discuss any timetable changes. This allows pupils to formalise their course of study for S5 or S6. We may be in a position to do this as usual, but if not we will arrange telephone/team consultations.

Preparing for UCAS

Current S5 pupils have been invited to sign-up to use our new University application programme, Unifrog. Throughout April and May, a number of prompts will be given from Mrs Sciallo to ensure that pupils intending to go to University are following the Unifrog on-line instructions for researching courses, assessing entry requirements, and preparing personal statements. So far 82 students have signed up, please encourage your son/daughter to do so if they haven't yet engaged with this.



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We have also decided not to offer live timetabled lessons as we are conscious that not all families can guarantee access to IT devices for all their children at scheduled times. In addition, the flexibility afforded by non-timetabled lessons allows pupils to work on their lessons at a time of their choosing.

Estimated grades

At the time of writing, we are still awaiting guidance from the SQA about estimated grades. As soon as we receive an update, we will write to pupils and parents to inform them of how this process will work in St Aloysius' College.

Please stay in touch

If you have concerns about your son/daughter's learning, their ability to complete Schoology tasks, or if they are unwell and unable to keep-up with Schoology learning, please contact their head of year. Mrs Freer (current head of S4) will continue to support pupils as they move onto S5 learning on Monday 20th April. Likewise, Mrs Piggot (current head of S5) will continue to support pupils as they move onto S6 learning. We do have access to counselling services and Mrs Erskine should be contacted if you feel there is a concern or need here.

Useful Contacts

Name	Position	Contact
Ruth Freer	Head of S4	RFreer@stalloysius.org
Rosemary Piggot	Head of S5	RPiggot@stalloysius.org
Elizabeth Lawrie	Head of S6	ELawrie@stalloysius.org
Mandy Sciallo	Head of Careers/UCAS	MSciallo@stalloysius.org
James Cluckie	Assistant Head (Teaching & Learning/ Schoology help)	JCluckie@stalloysius.org
Ryan Ferrie	Assistant Head (Pastoral)	RFerrie@stalloysius.org
John D Anderson	Depute Head (Academic)	JDAnderson@stalloysius.org
Isabelle Erskine	Senior Depute Head (Pastoral)	IErskine@stalloysius.org



Matthew Bartlett	Head Master	MDBartlett@staloyisius.org
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Pupils in S6

Although formal learning for courses has now stopped as would have always been the case regardless of school closure, we will continue to support our pupils as they prepare for their next steps in their journey post school. Mrs Sciallo, Head of Careers, is available for advice regarding all matters relating to careers and University/college applications. The pastoral team (Mrs Erskine, Mr Ferrie and Miss Lawrie) are available for advice regarding any other matters.

Estimated grades

At the time of writing, we are still awaiting guidance from the SQA about estimated grades. As soon as we receive an update, we will write to pupils and parents to inform them of how this process will work in St Aloysius' College. We had expected guidance at the start of the week, but this is still not forthcoming. We will inform you as soon as we are updated on this vital matter.

I hope what is shared above is helpful and I have valued the positive comments shared about communications. However please do keep getting in touch as we are all missing the human interaction on which the best schools thrive. I will be writing again at the end of the week with some reflections for Easter and an invitation to engage in some questions for the Head Master.

As always, I hope you are all keeping well and safe and I am counting the days when I can be back at the door of 45 Hill Street welcoming you to school...

Kindest regards,

Matthew Bartlett

Head Master

