

Email from Matthew Bartlett, Head Master

Thursday, 4th March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Further to my email earlier this week, the CLT have been planning the return to school for our pupils from S1-S6. We are of course delighted that light seems to be visible at the end of the tunnel and we are all keen to welcome our pupils back to face to face learning but it is crucially important that we continue to ensure the health and wellbeing of all of our community.

The new mitigations introduced by the government include 2m distancing within the school buildings and the wearing of face masks at all times by all pupils from S1-S6 and staff. We are very mindful that pupils will be excited to see friends coming out of lockdown, that young people understandably find social distancing difficult, and that we must avoid any congestion and minimise movement on site. Taking everything into consideration has been a very difficult process of maximising in-school learning, building in time for pupils to reconnect with the school environment, and be supported in their health and well-being and maintaining the 2m social distancing and safety in the buildings. These priorities are shared by all of us as well as being at the heart of the Government guidance received on Tuesday.

Therefore, from 15th March through to 1st April (i.e. until we break for Easter) the following arrangements will be in place:

All pupils in S4-S6:

Attend school on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday each week with full face to face teaching each day. On Wednesday morning they will engage in remote learning and be offered the opportunity to sign up for games at Millerston on Wednesday afternoon. A separate 'sign up' for games will be sent out next week

All pupils in S1-S3:

Attend school on Wednesday each week with a full face to face teaching day. Then **in addition to this pupils in each of the S1-S3 year groups will be based at Millerston one day a week** for Numeracy, Literacy, Health and Wellbeing support and Games. We believe this is absolutely essential for all young people to reintegrate them back into school and to assist with any learning needs that may have emerged during the lockdown period. It is in line with the best practice advocated by Education Scotland and also addresses a number of areas raised by our parents in their feedback to the parental survey. **Pupils will attend Millerston as follows: S3 Monday; S2 Tuesday and S1 Thursday in each week.** For **all other days** the sector leading **remote learning provision will continue** with a mix of synchronous and asynchronous lessons that has been so well received by pupils and parents.

The programme at Millerston will be delivered by our PE colleagues, Senior Leaders and other colleagues. I am part of that programme of teaching and look forward to personally welcoming back and teaching some of the pupils. Details for the Millerston day together with all other details will be sent to you next week.

There is a huge amount of detailed planning going on to make this all run as smoothly as possible and to ensure maximum safety mitigations are in place. All rooms are being remarked out with 2m distancing for pupils, corridors reconfigured with 2m markings and the timetable will be reconfigured in terms of rooms being used. We are using our bigger spaces for many classes and reducing movement between locations to ensure we can fully implement the safety measures that are appropriate. Mrs Erskine, Mr Cluckie and members of the leadership team are working on all the details which will follow along with the timings and other arrangements. We all felt however that you would want to know the overarching plans so that you can have clarity and perhaps ensure you have time to make your personal family arrangements.

The expectation at present is that we will return to normal provision i.e. all pupils back in school with 1m distancing from 19th April which is our return from the much needed Easter Holiday.

Our Junior School (KG-P7) returns in full on March 15th with the 'covid timetable' that ran from August to December with P7 remaining based in the Sports Building and all 'bubbles' being maintained.

School buses will run as normal from Monday 15th March

Parents are asked to drop off and pick up directly from Millerston on the relevant days and timings will be adjusted to allow for those pupils who have siblings in the Junior School

All other details will be shared with you next week to ensure that we have absolutely everything in place to ensure a very successful and permanent return to school for all our pupils. If there are any changes advised by the Government I will update you immediately.

Kindest regards as always

Matthew



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