

Dear Parent/Carer,

It is with excitement and anticipation that we look forward to the phased return of more pupils into secondary schools from 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021. The announcement this week of this phased return has led to detailed planning beginning. When we have final guidance from the Scottish Government, we will issue schedules, timetables and logistical information to parents/carers and pupils next week. I would commend the commitment of our young people, parents/carers and staff in how we have worked together in delivering remote learning successfully this term. Although we would always say that in-person learning is preferable, there is no doubt our young people have continued to progress in their studies, and these efforts will pay dividends for pupils when they return to in-school experiences.

As we now move towards a blended learning model between 15<sup>th</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, our young people will experience a combination of in-school and remote learning. This approach is welcome, and gives great opportunity for teachers and pupils to work together in school, move learning even further forward, and complement this learning with further activity for pupils to complete at home. Although the requirement for 2 metre physical distancing between young people will see arrangements in schools change, I look forward to seeing our pupils back in the building, given the many benefits these in-school experiences will bring, both in learning, but also in terms of wellbeing and enjoyment for young people.

The key messages from Tuesday's announcement included:

- secondary school pupils will return to spend some time in school from 15 March until the Easter break.
- pupils in the senior phase (S4-6) – who are taking national qualifications, will have priority for face to face lessons in school.
- although S4-6 pupils will have priority, all secondary pupils will receive some in-school education each week up to the Easter break

Parents/carers will also have noted the First Minister's statement this week noting that there is a clear expectation that all secondary school pupils will be back in school on a full time basis following the Easter holidays. If this is confirmed by the Scottish Government in weeks to come, we will look forward to seeing all our young people back in school.

In the meantime, I hope everyone is keeping and coping as well as possible. I will be in touch next week to give detail on the phased return.

Yours faithfully,

Iain Livingstone