



Acting Head Teacher:
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12th March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer and Pupils (please share this information with your young people)

I hope this letter continues to find you and your loved ones safe and well.

Scottish Government Announcement on 2nd March 2021

As announced by the Scottish Government earlier last week, secondary pupils across the country will receive a mix of remote learning and in-school teaching from Monday 15th March.

Senior phase students (S4-S6) who are taking national qualifications will have priority for face-to-face lessons in school but we have also worked hard to establish a provision that will allow an opportunity of both remote and in-school learning for all pupils.

Pupil in-school attendance: 15th March – 1st April 2021

Please find below details of which year groups should attend on which days of the week for the period of 15th March – 1st April 2021:

Day	Year Groups
Monday	S5, S6
Tuesday	S5, S6
Wednesday	S3, S4
Thursday	S1, S2, S4
Friday	S4, S5, S6

Face Coverings

- Pupils and staff will be required to wear face coverings at all times whilst in the school building.
- Those who are exempt from wearing a face covering will be provided with a lanyard stating that they are exempt. This is to avoid pupils being repeatedly asked by staff about not wearing a mask.

Entering the building at the start of the day

- To avoid unnecessary movement around the building during the period from 15th March – 1st April the 10 minutes from registration in the morning has been added to period 1 and will be utilised by staff to read out daily updates.
- The school day will start at 8.55am.
- The doors to the school building will open at 8.45am and pupils are asked to enter as soon as they arrive after this time.
- Pupils should enter from the rear of the school building via the three doors that lead from the playground into the big hall.
- Once pupils are in the building they should make their way directly to their period 1 class even if it is before 8.55am. This will help with ensuring social distancing after entry into the building.

Classroom Routines

- To ensure strict 2m distancing, arrangements have been made to spread classes across multiple rooms and to increase the staff allocated accordingly.
- Pupils will be asked to enter classrooms on arrival to help avoid congestion in the corridors
- Teachers of S5/6 classes will inform pupils via google classroom by Friday 12th March of which room they should go to when they have that subject in school during the period from 15th March – 1st April.
- Teachers of S1-4 classes will inform pupils via google classroom by Tuesday 16th March of which room they should go to when they have that subject in school during the period from 15th March – 1st April.
- Pupils may be asked to sanitise their workstation. This will likely be done at the beginning of each period as it allows them to sanitise for their own use and helps them to be confident that it has been carried out effectively.

Timetables

- S1-6 pupils will follow their normal timetable on the days that they are in the school building.
- For S5/6 pupils – class teachers will set work on a Tuesday for them to complete by the Friday so that they know how to best use their time when they are not in school on a Wednesday and Thursday.
- For S4 pupils – class teachers will set work on a Friday for them to complete by the Wednesday so that they know how to best use their time when they are not in school on a Monday and Tuesday.
- For S1-3 pupils – class teachers will continue to upload work onto google classroom for them to engage with during the days that they are not in school.
- Due to the increased number of teachers that are required to support individual classes in school, we will no longer be utilising live google meets as part of our remote learning provision. We feel the chance for all our young people to reconnect with the school in the building before the holidays should take priority.

- Re-establishing face to face learning will result in staff having less opportunity to interact with young people during remote learning. We appreciate that this is not ideal but is in an attempt to maximise in-school learning.

Movement around the school

- Staff will release pupils from class gradually in a way that encourages social distancing.
- Pupils should make their way directly to their next class via the shortest route. Please note that this may include going outside the building.
- Pupils will be reminded of our current advice when moving around the building. Stay left in corridors/stairwells and use nearest entrance/exits.
- As pupils and staff are expected to wear face coverings at all times (unless exempt) this includes moving around the school and in toilets.

Interval

- Pupils are reminded that they should remain in the school grounds during morning interval.
- Pupils are encouraged to make sure that they have an appropriate outdoor jacket for poor weather as they will be asked to utilise outdoor space at intervals to support 2m distancing in the building.
- The requirement for strict 2m distancing in secondary schools can be relaxed when young people are outside. We know this is something that young people in general find very difficult so being outside will certainly help.
- The outdoor picnic tables are available for use. These should operate maximum four pupils per table.
- Pupils are able to purchase items from the lunch hall at interval but are then asked to make their way outside to support social distancing.

Lunch Time

- Lunch will be available to purchase in the main hall and pupils can then use the socially distanced tables and chairs to have their meal. Pupils are asked to make their way outside once they have finished their lunch.
- School meals will be available for those entitled to receive free school meals.
- Direct payments to parents/carers of pupils entitled to free school meals will continue until a full time return to school, anticipated on the 19th April, is achieved.
- Limited tables are available in the lunch hall so additional tables have been set out in the upper hall where young people can eat their packed lunch. If young people choose to go off-site for lunch they are reminded that they should observe current social distancing guidance when entering establishments within our local community. We would encourage young people who wish to visit local shops do so before school so that it limits the numbers going there at lunch time.

Uniform

- Full school uniform should be worn by pupils on their return to school. Pupils will however, be allowed to wear their jacket over this, since classroom temperatures may vary due to windows being open for increased ventilation.
- S1-S4 pupils who have PE on their timetable on the days that they are in school should wear PE Kit suitable for outdoors to school that day.
- S5/6 pupils will be contacted directly by PE staff via google classroom so that they know which days are practical or classroom based sessions.

Wet Weather

- Our default position to support social distancing will be to encourage our young people to utilise outside space during interval and lunch time.
- During wet weather, separate indoor areas will be available for individual year groups on the days that they are in school. This is outlined below. Young people are reminded that 2m social distancing should be observed in these spaces:

Year	Location
S1	Upper Assembly Hall
S2	Games Hall
S3	Games Hall
S4	Side Gym
S5	Games Hall
S6	Upper Assembly Hall

End of the day

- At the end of the day pupils should leave the school building via their closest exit.

Hub Provision

- The Hub will still be available for the children of Keyworkers families (where all adults in the household are Keyworkers) and for those whom we have identified as vulnerable.
- Those attending the Hub will continue to access it via the main front door, where they will be signed in and directed to their learning location.

Transport

- The Local Authority have made arrangements for pupils who travel by school transport to be able to continue to do so.
- Please note that masks should be worn on school transport (unless exempt) and that there has been an easing of social distancing on secondary school transport to one metre.

Lateral Flow Testing Programme

- S4-6 pupils who wish to take part in the Asymptomatic Testing Programme and are not yet signed up to do so are asked to complete the consent form that can be found in the following link:

<https://forms.gle/kLRJVAGfDVaSvNFG7>

- We have been informed by the Scottish Government that the programme will be extended to offer the opportunity for participation to S1-3 pupils from after the Spring Break. If your young person would like to take part in the testing programme and you are happy for them to do so, please complete the consent form in the link above.

Spring Study School

On the week beginning the 12th April 2021 (2nd week of the Easter Holidays) we will be offering Senior pupils the opportunity to attend Spring Study School. This will be a great opportunity for pupils working towards national qualifications and we will be sharing further information about study school to pupils and parents/carers in the next few weeks.

School Leavers

Based on the current information, the provisional leaving date for anyone leaving school this academic year is Friday 4th June 2021. For our S6 leavers in particular, this important stage is usually marked by events such as a Prom. With restrictions and guidelines changing all the time, we are unable to confirm any arrangements of this nature. However, we are working with House Teams to consider the ways we can mark this time for our young people.

Any pupils in S4-S6 progressing onto Higher Education (HNC Level Courses and above) at college or university should view the Student Award Agency Scotland (SAAS) information available on the HWB Google Classrooms. Pupils will be able to find out what funding they are entitled to for their further studies and how to apply. The resources include links to the YouTube channel, as well as links to the webinars which SAAS are running over the course of March. SAAS can also deal with personal enquiries via the chat facility on their website.

As pupils return to the building, we will be capturing post school plans for all leavers. For anyone struggling to navigate these options, we will make sure that they have the opportunity to meet with their Guidance Teacher or Career Advisers.

Thank you

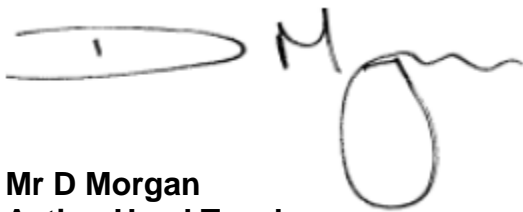
I appreciate that there is a lot of information contained in this letter and I am very grateful for you taking the time to read it.

If I can ask you to talk it over with your young person as it will help them to prepare for their return to school next week and to understand the restrictions and arrangements that we have put in place to keep everyone as safe as possible.

Please remember if there is anything at all that we can do for you, do not hesitate to ask.

I hope you and your family have a lovely weekend when it comes.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Morgan'. The 'D' is a simple oval shape with a vertical line through it. The 'M' is a simple, slightly irregular shape. The 'o' is a simple oval shape. There are some wavy lines to the right of the 'o'.

**Mr D Morgan
Acting Head Teacher
Hermitage Academy**