

# Harlaw Academy

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Head Teacher:  
Mr R McLaren

18 February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

## Headteacher Update

Despite these challenging times, I very much hope that you and your family have been able to enjoy the mid-term break. Despite the lack of change or break in our current normality I hope that, if nothing else, your children have managed to get a break from screen time and that the long weekend has allowed for some rest and recuperation. I write to update you on several key matters.

1. **Return to school – reopening for pupils**
2. **Partial return for practical activities**
3. **Remote learning**
4. **Asymptomatic testing for pupils**

### 1. Return to school – reopening for pupils

On Monday, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon confirmed that the school closures for all but a small number of pupils would continue. She went on to confirm that secondary schools would be allowed to invite up to 8% of the school population in to complete practical work in the senior phase years (S4-6) where this could not be undertaken at home. We have been working with colleagues in all departments to identify such pieces of work and I will talk more about this in section 2 of this letter.

Further to Ms McLellan's letter this week, and my last update, I can confirm we have postponed our Senior Phase assessment week until such time we can accommodate pupils back in school.

In the meantime, what is clear is that all pupils should continue to work from home on their remote learning offer unless specifically invited into school as part of the existing keyworker/vulnerable learners' arrangements or new senior phase in-school offer. The evidence teachers continue to gather may prove crucial in determining predicted grades.

### 2. Partial return for practical activities

We have asked Principal Teachers to work with classroom teachers to identify practical work which cannot be undertaken at home. The table below explains in which subjects and levels we will require to invite pupils into school.

Maths	No in school required at this time
English	No in school required at this time
Sciences	No in school required at this time
Social Subjects	No in school required at this time
<b>Creative Arts</b>	<b>Music - N4/5/H, Drama - N4/5/H, Art - N3/4/5</b>
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	<b>PE - N5/H, Hospitality - N4/5</b>
<b>Technologies</b>	<b>PCS woodwork - N4/5, Graph Com - N4, Business - N4.</b>
Languages	No in school required at this time
Wider achievement	No in school required at this time

In order to facilitate this, the affected classes will be split into smaller groups and be invited into school on a rota, as shown below. This has been carefully considered to ensure that we create small “bubbles” of learners. This, aligned with our other mitigations, will help to ensure we do everything we can to minimise the risk of virus transmission.

Week 1 22nd February									
Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
Subject	Level	Subject	Level	Subject	Level	Subject	Level	Subject	Level
		Woodwork	N4	Woodwork	N4	Woodwork	N4	Woodwork	N4
		Woodwork	N5	Woodwork	N5	Woodwork	N5	Woodwork	N5
		Business	N4	Business	N4	Business	N4	Business	N4
Week 2 1st March									
Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
Subject	Level	Subject	Level	Subject	Level	Subject	Level	Subject	Level
Graphics	N4	Woodwork	N5	Woodwork	N5	Woodwork	N5	Woodwork	N5
		Woodwork	N5	Woodwork	N5	Woodwork	N5	Woodwork	N5
Week 3 8th March									
Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
Subject	Level	Subject	Level	Subject	Level	Subject	Level	Subject	Level
Hospitality	N4/5	Hospitality	N4/5	Hospitality	N4/5	Hospitality	N4/5	Hospitality	N4/5
PE	H	PE	H	PE	H	PE	H	PE	H
Week 4 15th March									
Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
Subject	Level	Subject	Level	Subject	Level	Subject	Level	Subject	Level
Music	H/AH	Music	H/AH	Music	N4/5	Music	N4/5	Music	N4/5
Art	N3/4/5	Art	N3/4/5	Art	N3/4/5	Art	N3/4/5	Art	N3/4/5
Drama	H	Drama	N4/5	Drama	N4/5	Drama	N4/5	Drama	N4/5
PE	H	PE	H	PE	H	PE	N5	PE	N5
Week 5 22nd March									
Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
Subject	Level	Subject	Level	Subject	Level	Subject	Level	Subject	Level
Music	N4/5	Music	N4/5	Music	N4/5				
Drama	N4/5	Drama	N4/5	Drama	N4/5	Drama	N4/5		
PE	N5	PE	N5						

We will communicate with the individual groups of pupils in order to ensure they are fully aware of the time we would like them to attend. Please can I express the following expectations that we will need pupils to adhere to:

- All senior pupils will be invited to attend from 9am through to 1pm on the day(s) in question.
- They should arrive and muster in the small S1 playground, accessible from Albyn Lane.
- At all times pupils will be expected to wear a face mask unless medically exempt.
- At all times, pupils will have to maintain a 2m physical distance, this includes within the playground before the start of day.
- Pupils may bring a snack and/or bottle of water with them, breaks will be on an adhoc basis in class, pupils will not leave the classroom unless they require to visit the toilet.
- All pupils will be expected to return home for lunch.

### 3. **Remote learning**

For all pupils not in school, we will continue to offer our remote learning package. The expectation will be that pupils continue to engage with materials being set and seek support when required.

Please can I make you aware that when staff from Technologies, Expressive Arts and Health and Wellbeing are in school, the online offer will look a little different. Teachers will be unavailable to respond to requests for help in the same fashion.

### 4. **Asymptomatic testing for pupils**

As part of the package of COVID-19 mitigations in place in schools across Scotland, senior phase pupils who are required to be in school will have the opportunity to participate in the Schools/ELC Asymptomatic Testing Programme.

Information about this programme has been produced by NHS Test and Protect- please see below.

#### **Why is our school/setting participating in the programme?**

Along with the other protective measures which are in place to keep school communities safe, regular testing of staff and Senior Phase pupils who are in school will help to reduce risk of transmission.

By identifying asymptomatic individuals in school environments as early as possible and asking them and their close contacts to self-isolate, we minimise the likelihood of transmission of the virus.

#### **Who can take part?**

Regular testing is available to staff and Senior Phase pupils who are regularly coming into the school building/school campus.

#### **Does everyone have to take part?**

Testing is voluntary and no-one will be prevented from coming into school if they choose not to participate. However, we strongly encourage all school staff and Senior Phase Pupils who are attending school to participate in order to contribute to the wellbeing of the school community. Please note that staff and pupils who are working or learning from home will not be asked to participate.

#### **What will the testing involve?**

Schools will be provided with a supply of Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test kits by the Scottish Government and the UK Department of Health and Social Care. Schools will issue these test kits, free of charge, to identified staff and pupils for their use at home.

Each participating pupil will be given a supply of test kits to take home, together with the 'Instructions for Use'.

Pupils will be asked to test themselves at home, twice a week. It is recommended to administer the test on Wednesdays and Sundays, ideally in the morning or before school.

Guidance on conducting self-testing can be found in the 'Instructions for Use' leaflet which will be provided with the test kit. There is also a useful video showing participants how to administer the test here: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvaBZskxS7tzQYIVg7lwH5uxAD9UrSzGJ>

LFD tests do not require laboratory processing and provide a quick result in around 30 minutes. Once the test has been taken, pupils must log the test result – whether positive, negative, or void – online at [www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result](http://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result).

Please note,

- It is important to note that this regular testing is only for individuals without symptoms. Those with symptoms must continue to follow the usual guidance – i.e., they must self-isolate and book a PCR test at a test centre or via a home test kit at the earliest opportunity. People with symptoms must not rely on a negative LFD result to continue to attend school.

- A negative test result must not be taken as leave to relax or ignore physical distancing or other measures intended to reduce transmission – testing is an additional intervention which contributes to reducing risk.

**Further information about asymptomatic testing will be made available to pupils before they are invited into school**

I have said before, there is no doubt that the coming weeks and months will be challenging. Uncertainty breeds anxiety in us all. That said, we are starting to see some movement in terms of our fight against the virus and our ability to bring pupils back into school, albeit in small numbers.

Please can I take this opportunity to thank you again for your patience and trust through these demanding times.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ross McLaren". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R' and 'M'.

Mr R McLaren  
Headteacher