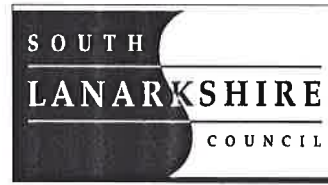




Hamilton Grammar School  
**Head Teacher: Graeme Sives**



Education Resources  
**Executive Director Tony McDaid**

**Our Ref: GS/CC**  
**Your Ref:**  
**If calling ask for:**  
**Phone No: 016898 285777**  
**Date: 11 August 2021**

Dear Parent/Carer,

I trust that the summer holiday has provided a suitable chance for you and your family to relax and recharge ahead of the new session and that you have all enjoyed a healthy and much needed break.

Recent adjustments to national guidelines would seem to suggest that we are on the last lap in terms of the more intrusive mitigations in and around school and the current plan is for a further review at the end of September. We will discuss the details of the practical arrangements in person with all pupils on Monday when they return and Year Heads have already shared via Google Classroom but the general rule of thumb from the Government is to continue as we were before the summer for this initial block of time over August and September. This means the protocols for hand hygiene, movement, mask wearing, ventilation, eating, and distancing remain unchanged. There are welcome positive moves in terms of PE, Music, Drama and other practical areas that have been compromised over the past session and pupils can look forward to the full range of experiences again. We are not yet able to move away from online meetings and offer full access to school for visitors but I would expect this to be revisited at the end of September when our younger members of staff and older students will have the benefit of vaccination. Similarly, the pausing of educational excursions, the calendar of school events and clubs will remain in operation for some time and we await further instruction with regard to any resumption of in person parent evenings for the session. As has been the case over the past couple of sessions, we will react positively to whatever comes our way from national and local government and plan accordingly.

Please be assured that, while our Recovery Plan will seek to offer as much support as required to pupils and families particularly affected by aspects of the pandemic, we will also continue to work on advances in our teaching and learning approaches as we do every year. As you will have seen from the service provided while working from home, our staff are committed to developing their skills for the benefit of learners and there will be no pause to this work.

I have attached the Executive Director's general update for you in terms of an overview of the big picture. From a school perspective I would emphasise the ongoing need for pupils to get involved with the twice weekly testing programme if they have not already done so and for pupils to continue to support the safety of others by bringing and wearing their own mask. From an ecological point of view this will help hugely with regard to the school dispensing 500 single use masks a day.

As stated previously, details regarding the return have already been posted by Year Heads on the appropriate Google Classrooms and S1 specific instructions are being posted on the website. Doors will open at 8.30 am on Monday morning and pupils should enter through the following doors to access the one way system at the most advantageous point to head to an extended registration period:

- Door 1 S2 AND 3
- Door 2 S4
- Door 4 S5
- Door 5 S6
- Door 6 S1

I hope you find this information helpful and for our new S1 parents in particular, I hope this takes the sting out of what can be an anxious weekend.

Best Wishes for a successful year,

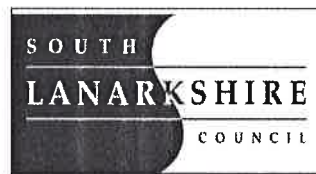
Yours sincerely



**Graeme Sives**  
Head Teacher

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Education Resources  
Executive Director Tony McDaid

Parent /Carer

Our ref: TMcD/DD  
Your ref:  
Phone Helpline:  
Date: August 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

### Information Update – Schools reopening in August 2021

Following the First Minister's announcement on Tuesday 3 August, I write to inform you of the health and safety arrangements for your child's return to school on Monday, 16 August 2021. I would wish to begin by saying how much we are looking forward to welcoming children and young people back to our schools and nurseries for the new session.

I understand fully that as parents/carers you will wish to know about the preventative measures we have taken and will continue to take to mitigate against the spread of the coronavirus. The good news is that there is some relaxation of the measures which can take place from the start of the new school session.

I can advise you that updated national guidance developed by the Scottish Government which is based on current scientific advice is now available: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on reducing the risks in schools - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2021/08/Coronavirus_COVID-19_guidance_on_reducing_the_risks_in_schools_-_gov.scot_(www.gov.scot).pdf). This will support a safe return to school for children, young people and staff.

The safety and wellbeing of children, young people and staff is paramount and our aim is to continue to provide a safe learning environment for everyone. I have also set out below some of the key changes that will occur in preparation for our schools and nursery classes re-opening in August.

#### Return dates

Teachers and staff return to school on Thursday, 12 and Friday, 13 August 2021. These are in-service days which provide time for staff to prepare in advance of children and pupils returning to school/nursery.

Children and young people return on **Monday, 16 August 2021** and your child's school will confirm start and finish times using the usual channels of communication.

#### Testing before schools re-open

All **staff and secondary aged pupils** are strongly encouraged to restart their twice-weekly at home Lateral Flow Device testing prior to the start of the new term and to enter their results, positive or negative, into the NHS portal. LFD test kits are available free from schools and local pharmacies.

#### Physical Distancing/Bubbles

Previous arrangements for creating smaller groups in schools commonly known as 'bubbles' are no longer required. However, we will continue to encourage appropriate physical distancing, where possible, to further minimise any risk. This means we will avoid bringing children and young people together in large groups and, for example, this means there will be no large assemblies for an initial period.

One metre physical distancing between adults, and between adults and children and young people, is still a requirement in the school estate. However, as schools already have physical distancing



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arrangements that work well and do not limit capacity, it is expected that staff will continue with the two metre distancing arrangements at the start of the term, where possible.

### **Self-isolation rules**

We welcome the changes to the self-isolation rules. The approach of requiring whole classes or groupings of pupils to self-isolate as close contacts is no longer necessary in normal circumstances. Therefore, there will no longer be a need to isolate whole groups of children and contact tracing will be undertaken by Test & Protect (T&P). If someone is identified by T&P as being a close contact the following new rules apply:-

- **Children aged 5 to 18 years** will not have to isolate for 10 days, so long as they remain asymptomatic and have a negative PCR.
- **Under 5's** will not have to isolate so long as they remain asymptomatic but there is no mandatory requirement for them to have a negative PCR.
- **Adults** who are double vaccinated and have a negative PCR will no longer have to isolate if they are a contact of a positive case.

### **Face-coverings**

Face coverings should continue to be worn by adults wherever they cannot keep a 2m distance from other adults and/or children and young people (unless exempt) :-

#### *Adults*

- All adults in communal areas of primary schools and early years establishments.
- Parents and other visitors including parents at drop-off and pick-up.
- Early Learning and Childcare staff do not need to wear face coverings when interacting with nursery children.

#### *Pupils*

- All pupils in secondary schools are expected to wear a face-covering during class and in communal areas.

#### *School transport*

- In line with the current arrangements for public transport, **only young people aged 12 and over and adults** are required to wear face-coverings on school transport. (previously aged 5 and above).

### **Safety measures to keep us all safe**

Health and safety sits at the heart of our plans, with risk assessments and infection prevention and control measures in place. Hand sanitisers will continue to be available at the entrances and in all appropriate areas across schools. Secondary schools will have hand sanitisers available in all classrooms and in primary schools all classrooms with sinks will enable children to handwash regularly.

Enhanced cleaning routines will continue to be implemented and there will be clear signage throughout school buildings to reinforce the infection prevention and control measures in place.

Parents/carers are still asked to avoid congregating at school gates and there are still some restrictions in place in the meantime on entering school buildings, which we realise is not easy, but schools across Scotland are being asked to maintain current arrangements for a while longer.

The Scottish Government will review the position again towards the end of September with an expectation that will be a further relaxation of other Covid-19 mitigation practices

**Vaccinations**

We are now seeing the vaccine offered to everyone aged 16 and over and, in line with JCVI guidance, it has also been offered to some young people from key groups who are aged between 12 to 15 years.

All 16-17 year olds can now get their COVID-19 vaccine appointment by text or email by registering here - <https://www.nhsinform.scot/vaccineregistration>.

**Thank you**

The past 18 months have been an unprecedented and challenging time for everyone. However, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for all you have done to support your child's learning during recent times.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony McDaid". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T' and 'M'.

Tony McDaid  
**Executive Director (Education Resources)**