



Education Resources
Executive Director **Tony McDaid**
Hamilton Grammar School
Head Teacher: **Graeme Sives**

Dear Parent/Carer,

I write to bring down the curtain on what has been another challenging year for all school communities and to salute the resilience of our families and staff over the course of the obstacles faced in 2021. It has not been easy for any of us but together we have made progress and maintained strong relationships in our new, hybrid world of in-person and online working.

As the end of term approaches, I am pleased to report that the SQA Prelim diet for S4, 5 and 6 was completed as planned. Very small numbers of individual students completed them over the course of this week with a similar number after the year due to isolation schedules. Consequently, this should not be a source of worry to any family over the holiday period and pupils will be in a good place at the start of term. Completing the diet is excellent news and puts us in a very strong position regardless of what may happen later in the session with regard to potential SQA assessment and certification contingency decisions. Colleagues are in the midst of marking exam scripts as I write this so I have no knowledge of how the students have performed in general terms but it does seem to be the case that pupils appreciate the importance of these Prelims to a greater degree than in previous years. My thanks to you at home for reinforcing that message. One of our more experienced invigilators remarked to me that pupil conduct was impeccable throughout and that levels of concentration and application were to be commended. It is unfortunate that it takes a pandemic to stress the importance of Prelims but we'll take whatever we can get on that issue.

I think this would echo the thoughts of staff if they reflected on the overall experience of the last two sessions. Pupils have had a lot to contend with in and out of school, many of our standard procedures have been altered and, while this may have kept everyone as safe as we could, there is no escaping the fact that school life in general is a bit less comfortable and enjoyable for everyone and has been for some time now. The overwhelming majority of pupils have handled this with breezy cheerfulness that does them great credit but we know that some of our families find the current circumstances particularly demanding and difficult to manage. We are sensitive to this and continue to assist with all of the supports and agencies at our disposal to get through these hard yards.

It has been positive to note some green shoots of recovery in terms of the restoration of clubs, sports and musical activities, particularly those with a Christmas slant at this time of year. Little by little we have been edging back towards the usual rhythms of life in a busy, buzzy school. My Christmas wish for all of us is that this recovery is not lost in the early weeks of 2022. Our young people need some light to minimise the extended period of shade we have all endured and the resumption of school events and competitions is a big part of that.

On behalf of all at HGS I send best wishes for a healthy and happy Christmas to everyone and special high hopes that 2022 sees the resumption of our full calendar of events for students and families.

A' the Best,

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