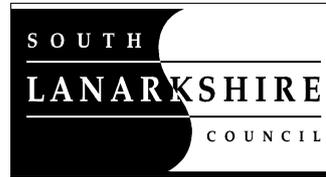




Hamilton Grammar School
Head Teacher: Graeme Sives



Education Resources
Executive Director Tony McDaid

Dear Parent/Carer,

8 March 2021

Schools received general guidance from Education Scotland last Thursday, following the First Minister's statement in Parliament on March 2nd. I attach the link for reference. <https://education.gov.scot/media/ozad4plo/guidance-for-in-school-and-remote-learning-03-03-2021.pdf> Further guidance is also being prepared by SLC.

Since receiving this document there have been two Hamilton area HT meetings; an SLC area HT reps meeting; a full SLC Secondary HT meeting and numerous HGS senior team meetings to consider our response on behalf of our families. A further full SLC Timetablers' meeting is taking place today. As such, **schools will not be in a position to share more detailed models, plans and instructions before close of play on Wednesday March 10th. We will use email, website and Twitter for this purpose.**

I therefore write today ahead of this official communication on Wednesday to update and share some of the general principles which influence and guide our thinking ahead of the return. It should be noted that this is not the full scale return of schools happening in England, nor is it the current successful model of remote learning being delivered across the country by teachers from their homes. It is a changed delivery model to accommodate several hundred pupils in school at the same time, all socially distant and masked. It is designed to get pupils back into their school environment again, amongst friends and teachers in a safe manner to prepare them for a full return after Easter. The Govt. calls it a period *to help schools continue to connect with learners, support their health and wellbeing and support the transition back to full time schooling*. The challenge for all schools is that it will have an impact on the current level of online learning as more teachers are drawn back into school to oversee socially distanced classroom formats with a maximum of 10 pupils per room. Our unique building constraints mean that some of our classroom capacities are as low as 5 and other rooms have everything in between. This is not the case with the modern designed schools across the SLC estate and means we will need proportionately more staff in the building, hampering the remote learning offer even further.

To balance this, we know that our first duty is to prioritise and support those senior phase pupils to complete SQA practical assessment work so, to facilitate the 2021 Alternative Certification Model, *the learning and teaching of critical practical work in relation to qualifications in 2021 that can only be carried out in school, should continue*.

This has been progressing very well and will continue as planned until the end of the month. These students will continue to have in school access each day. This will keep us on track for the learning and assessment already planned for the post Easter period. We will also provide in school access (probably from March 22nd) for those senior pupils who missed out on aspects of the Prelim diet before Christmas so that they have the same opportunity as their peers to demonstrate evidence of performance. Children of key workers and identified vulnerable individuals will also continue to be supported in school each day as they have been all the way through the lockdown. We will fit the return of other year groups around these priority cohorts, following the Govt. advice of *some in-school learning and continued remote learning for all S1-6 learners*. Alongside these external considerations, we continue to prepare the necessary health and safety updates to accommodate this limited return for our learners and staff from Monday March 15th.

Yours sincerely

G Sives
Head Teacher

Auchincampbell Road, Hamilton ML3 6PE Phone: 01698 285777 Fax: 01698 891949
Email: office@hamilton.s-lanark.sch.uk

