

**Education Resources
Executive Director Tony McDaid
Head Teacher Kevin Boyd
Strathaven Academy**

Our ref: KB/CD
Your ref:
If calling ask for: Mr Boyd
Phone: 01357 524040
Date: 18 February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Senior Phase Return to School – 22 February 2021

On Tuesday, 16 February 2021 the Scottish Government announced that from Monday, 22 February, small groups of Senior Phase learners currently studying certificated qualifications would be allowed to attend school to take part in learning which cannot be undertaken remotely.

Monday, 22 February is not a full time return to school. The default arrangement for all learners is a remote/learning at home offer. Learners will be invited in to the school building on prearranged days/times to engage in specific tasks as directed by the school. Further detail about how this will be managed is covered in the *Timetable Information* section which follows.

Health and Safety

The school already has in place robust infection control measures such as enhanced cleaning regimes, access to hand sanitisers on entry and exit and within classrooms, the appropriate use of face coverings, 2m distancing between staff, and between staff and pupils where possible. In addition, as part of the phased return to school for Senior Phase Learners, all learners in secondary school buildings and on school transport will now be expected to adhere to strict 2m physical distancing between other learners. We would like to remind learners of the need to follow all the relevant guidance.

Learners will be reminded about compliance with the existing safety procedures in place including the wearing of face coverings within senior phase classes, in busy communal areas within school and when visiting local shops out with school grounds. Please also remember face coverings are required for all pupils on designated school transport. Learners will also be advised of the additional enhanced precautions in respect of 2m physical distancing including seating arrangements in classrooms.

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Lunch time Arrangements

If pupils require to remain in school over lunchtime a packed lunch can be eaten in the street area or food can be ordered from the cafeteria using the App.

Any pupil using a food outlet in Strathaven should follow the rules in place for wider society, for example wearing a face covering when entering a shop. On return to school learners will be asked to adhere to strict hand hygiene and must not bring any purchased food items back into the school building. Any learners eligible to means tested free school meals will continue to receive payment.

Transport

From Monday, 22 February 2021 2m physical distancing applies on secondary school transport. This will significantly reduce the capacity of vehicles. Where pupils may be attending on a part day basis, if more convenient then other arrangements can be made with parents or via public transport.

School contract transport will operate normal start of day drop-off and end of day pick-ups. Pupils must sanitise hands before entering and on leaving a bus, wear a face covering and maintain 2 metre distance from other pupils and the driver.

Lateral Flow Device (LFD) Testing

As part of the phased return to school all learners who attend school to take part in learning which cannot be undertaken remotely will have access to twice weekly at-home testing using lateral flow devices (LFDs). Testing is voluntary and no learner will be excluded from taking part in face to face learning if they do not wish to test. However, we would encourage senior phase learners to participate to contribute to the wellbeing of the school community.

We have already provided a letter with more information on Lateral Testing including a consent form, which must be completed and returned to the school before providing the home-based testing kit. Key information has also been shared in year group Google Classrooms and via our online platforms.

Timetable Information

To facilitate strict 2m physical distancing in the school building and on school transport, learners will be invited in to the school building on prearranged days/times to take part in learning which cannot be undertaken remotely.

Our ***Return of Senior Phase pupils for practical subjects*** document provides detailed information and the planned timetable for W/C 22nd February. This timetable will be reviewed, updated and then shared with the school community on a weekly basis. Teachers will post information in Google Classrooms to ensure pupils know which session/s they should attend. If any pupil is unable to attend their scheduled session, please contact the school office.

Thank you once again for supporting staff and our young people. My thanks to all staff who have shown a significant degree of flexibility and resilience in a period of extreme uncertainty. We are very much looking forward to having some of our young people back in the building next week.

Take care and stay safe.

Kevin Boyd
HEAD TEACHER