



## Parent Update 1 – Reopening January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

On Monday 4 January 2021 the First Minister outlined a need to take public health related measures to suppress the virus and protect the NHS. In addition, she shared some detail on the vaccination process. Part of the public health measures outlined is an extension to the previously outlined Remote Learning period. This means **the anticipated return to school and face-to-face learning for almost all students has been put back to at least Monday 1st February**. The viability of this February date will be reviewed on Monday 18th January and depending on virus related data there are three options

1. the period of Remote Learning could be extended
2. some students could be allowed to return to school on Monday 1st February
3. all students could be expected to return to school on Monday 1st February

I do note that the Government have stated that option 3 is what they are hoping for but this will be very much reliant on the infection rate coming down and the R value being around 1. It has been stressed by Public health that schools are still considered safe but that the current rate of community transmission being high means stricter controls are needed across all areas of life to permit schools eventually being allowed to open fully or partially.

Therefore, as outlined in earlier updates we will move to Remote Learning for almost all students from Monday 11th January 2021. Parents/carers should not hesitate to use our school email to raise questions/seek support around remote learning at home from that time. Please use – [penicuik\\_hs@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:penicuik_hs@midlothian.gov.uk)

We expect all our students to embrace the current remote Learning programme and will monitor levels of student participation and engagement. Our dedicated pupil contact team will swing into action from Wednesday 6 January – contacting and assessing vulnerable student needs and structuring plans to contact all families during this current lockdown. This may be by phone or email. If at any stage you feel that your child is failing to engage with material, is struggling emotionally or has any other issues please do not to hesitate to contact us via the email address above or call the office so you can be directed to the appropriate staff member. Under our newly defined external communication protocol we set a standard of returning a call initially within 24 hours with a turnaround of 5 working days to satisfy or respond to a request if it is not too complex. Please let us know directly if you feel that is not happening.

I can also confirm that BACS payments for those in receipt of a free school meal entitlement will continue.

Parents/carers, and students will be understandably concerned about the implications for SQA arrangements in school and the formal assessment arrangements which will need to be postponed. At this stage we would ask that all students in our Senior Phase engage fully

with the e-learning programme we put in place. This is the best approach while all schools await an update from SQA.

Finally, this will again be a period where we make extensive use of Group Call and our website/Twitter to communicate with our school community. Please so check the News section on our website regularly.

**Further communication from the Local Authority and a parental update on E- learning will follow in the next few days.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig Biddick', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kind regards

Craig Biddick  
Head Teacher

6 January 2021