



26th March 2021

Term 3 newsletter – week no. 12

Dear Parent / Carer,

As we approach the final week of term, I want to reiterate my sincere thanks to our entire school community in what has been an extremely challenging set of circumstances.

My heartfelt thanks go to my colleagues for their hard work and determination to do the best for our young people.

To our young people and their families, your patience, perseverance, support and positive outlook has been welcomed at every point on this journey. With this in mind, I wish you a safe, healthy and enjoyable Easter break.

This final newsletter of the term (barring any significant announcements from Scottish Government) offers the following information:

Our planned approach to SQA assessments

Prior to finalising our Senior Phase assessment timeline, we have consulted with staff, young people and parents and plan to support validated assessment arrangements with the following key principles at the heart of our approach:

- Gather evidence at a time that gives young people the best chance to succeed
- Have a plan that avoids over-assessment on any given day
- Offer you clear communication as to when assessments will take place
- Ensure learning and teaching of course content continues for as long as possible

The following timeline serves to illustrate some of the detail:

w/b 19 th April	w/b 26 th April	w/b 3 rd May	w/b 10 th May	w/b 17 th May	w/b 24 th May
First week back after Easter break. No assessment <i>With the exception of some practical assessments (these will be communicated before the end of this term)</i>	Learning and Teaching continues Some departments may choose to have practice assessments. <i>These offer low-predictive value evidence and, more importantly, will offer feedback to support young people's continued development of knowledge. This will be coordinated at whole school level to prevent too much assessment from taking place.</i>		All course delivery is completed by Tuesday 18 th May Six days of Formal Assessments (one day per column) with two catch up days blocked at the end of the second week	All course delivery is completed by Tuesday 18 th May Six days of Formal Assessments (one day per column) with two catch up days blocked at the end of the second week	

During weeks beginning 26th April, 3rd May and 10th May we will operate an assessment model based on a timetable schematic to ensure our young people are not overburdened with assessment during this period.

We will communicate the specific dates of each individual assessment no later than Wednesday 21st April so that young people and their families can plan their revision for the following 5 weeks.

As noted last week, Mr Stewart (SQA Coordinator) and I would like to invite you to a Parent/Carer and Young People Presentation and Question & Answer session in relation to our plans for gathering assessment. The date and time of the session is:

Wednesday 31st March, 6pm via Zoom

Please click on the following link to access the meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89685710061?pwd=WkdNTORwSG9PZWxKbzY4Qk9FU1I2QT09>

For those who cannot make it at that time, we plan to record our presentation and upload it to our website.

Reporting

Senior Phase Tracking Report 3 will be issued on Thursday 1st April.

Our return after the Easter break

The Scottish Government have announced that, after the Easter break, all young people will return to school at the same time with no requirement for physical distancing. There is however a continuing expectation that face coverings will be worn in all areas of the school for all S1 – S6 young people and staff.

I will keep you updated if there are any changes to the above arrangement as soon as possible.

Uniform

On our return to the school building after the Easter break, young people will revert to **full school uniform**. If any families require support to ensure young people return in uniform, please contact the relevant Guidance teacher before the end of this term.

Easter School (S4 – S6 Pupils)

Easter school applications are now closed. On Tuesday 30th March, a confirmation email will be sent to our young people who applied, to indicate which sessions they have secured a space in.

P7-S1 Primary Roadshow sessions

We are delighted to report that we hosted three very successful Primary Roadshow sessions over the past week as we continue preparations to welcome our new S1 pupils in August 2021. The roadshows took place virtually this session, over Zoom, due to the COVID-19 restrictions in place at present. Presentations from Mr Millar, Mr Stewart, our School Captains, PT's Guidance, PT Supporting Learners and an S1 pupil were further enhanced by the showcasing of our talented young people via Drama and Musical performances.

We were delighted to see so many parents / carers and young people involved on each of the evenings. Special thanks go to our incoming S1 pupils for the sensible and challenging questions posed to our Harris Academy staff and pupil volunteers on each of the evenings.

We look forward to the Induction Days in June and to meeting families, hopefully in person, very soon.

Dates for your Diary (Term 4)

The following are key dates for next term. Those noted in **blue** are rearranged or additional dates.

April

Monday 19th School returns for all staff and all pupils
Thursday 22nd Parent Council meeting

May

Monday 3rd May Day holiday for young people and staff
Thursday 6th In-service Day – *school closed to young people*
Monday 31st Victoria Day holiday for young people and staff

June

Tuesday 1st Additional Inservice day for all secondary schools – school closed to young people
Wednesday 2nd Additional Inservice day for all secondary schools – school closed to young people
Monday 7th Change of timetable for all year groups
Thursday 17th P7/S1 Transition Day 1
Friday 18th P7/S1 Transition day 2

With best wishes to you and your loved ones,



Barry Millar
Head Teacher