



**From mountain to sea**

**Update: Monday 25 May 2020**

Dear Parents and Carers,

Hello Everyone,

Last week you will have received a letter from Laurence Findlay, our Director of Education and Children’s Services, outlining the Scottish Government plan for schools moving towards partial re-opening. The main headlines are below, together with a copy of the schools’ roadmap.

- Phase 1 = Some teachers and other school staff will be returning to schools during June in order to plan and prepare for this new blended model of learning to be implemented from August (subject to public health guidance and risk assessment).
- Phase 3 = Schools will restart for pupils in Scotland on Tuesday 11 August 2020 (a standardised date across Scotland and one week earlier than planned start for Aberdeenshire).

We are awaiting guidance on when this week will be rescheduled for everyone.

- Even with this date, however, not all pupils will be able to return at the same time and a new blended model of schooling will be in place until the current situation is deemed medically safe. This will ensure adherence to safeguarding protocols such as appropriate physical distancing and therefore comprise part-time in-school learning and part-time in-home learning for almost all young people.

**Scottish Government COVID-19 Routemap**



	Lockdown	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
	<b>Lockdown restrictions:</b>	<b>As with previous phase but with the following changes:</b>	<b>As with previous phase but with the following changes:</b>	<b>As with previous phase but with the following changes:</b>	<b>As with previous phase but with the following changes:</b>
<b>Schools, childcare and other educational settings</b>	<p>Schools and childcare services closed.</p> <p>Measures in place to support home learning and to provide outreach services to vulnerable children.</p> <p>Critical childcare provision for key workers and vulnerable children provided through hubs, nurseries and childminding services.</p> <p>Universities and colleges closed – remote learning and research.</p>	<p>School staff return to schools.</p> <p>Increased number of children accessing critical childcare provision.</p> <p>Re-opening of child minding services and fully outdoor nursery provision.</p> <p>Transition support available to pupils starting P1 and S1 where possible.</p>	<p>On campus university lab research restarted subject to physical distancing.</p>	<p>Children return to school under a blended model of part-time in-school teaching and part-time in-home learning. Public health measures (including physical distancing) in place.</p> <p>Subject to the progress of the scientific evidence, schools are expected to open on this basis on 11 August.</p> <p>All childcare providers reopen subject to public health measures, with available capacity prioritised to support key worker childcare, early learning and childcare (ELC) entitlement and children in need.</p> <p>Universities and colleges phased return with blended model of remote learning and limited on campus learning where priority. Public health measures (including physical distancing) in place.</p>	<p>Schools and childcare provision, operating with any necessary precautions.</p> <p>College and university campuses open – including key student services with any necessary precautions.</p>



I understand that this information raises many more questions than answers about what 'School' may look like from August and the months going forward. Please be assured that TGS is committed to working with you and communicating our plans over the coming weeks.

In order to frame our plan, initial priorities will be to risk assess our building and grounds around physical distancing, the health and safety of our colleagues, how transport will work, cleaning regimes and timetabling to accommodate the new model. This requires input from a wide range of Council services and therefore will take time to coordinate and implement. Ultimately, Scottish Government medical advice and legislation will determine when we return on a full-time basis.

Much as School Colleagues have been working very hard on our new timetable for next session, you will understand from the above that we will not be able to implement it for quite some time in the future. When pupils return during August, they will be taught by those teachers who are able to do so and this, again, may differ from what was planned in the timetable. We are therefore currently not issuing new timetables to any year group. Where possible, new S3, S4, S5 & S6s are now being set-up in Microsoft Teams for their next session subjects and will have some indication of their teachers from this.

## **Primary 7 into S1 Transition update**

Hello to our soon-to-be Secondary 1 families! Hopefully, all Primary 7s have now had the chance to access the new P7/S1 'Transition blog' launched this week. We have had one or two small technical issues so please bear with us if you are waiting for these to be resolved 😊

This week our blog has included an introduction to some of our staff, key information about our School and a form for pupils to complete if they have any questions or are looking for advice. Over the coming weeks, new items and activities will be uploaded regularly introducing your child to their new School, our staff team and all the things they will need to familiarise themselves with. Next week a team of our current pupils at The Gordon Schools will be providing advice and support about moving to secondary school. It's often most helpful to speak to those who have experienced the move most recently to really get a "from the horse's mouth" perspective so please ask your child to keep their eye out for this update.

As mentioned in our recent parental letter, we are very much looking forward to welcoming your child to The Gordon Schools - as soon as this is possible. In the meantime, we will of course keep you updated and do encourage your young people to stay connected!

## **Reporting: Current S1 and S2**

On our TGS Calendar for this session, we had intended to issue Reports to current S1 and S2 families this term. I apologise, but this is no longer possible. Teachers do not have access to the reporting software from home and neither do all have access to pupil materials and records. We will endeavour to prioritise these year groups for an early report next session when we have regular access to the building and the necessary IT.

## Support from Education Scotland

Feel free to have a look at the first issue of the [Scotland Learns: Parents and Carers Newsletter](#) to see learning activities for Literacy and Numeracy, support on wellbeing and a focus on the theme of food. You will also find hints and tips, advice for engaging young people with autism in their learning and a creativity challenge.

## NESCol School College Links Update

NESCol intends to start issuing confirmation of allocated places from Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May although allocation of places on oversubscribed courses may be slightly delayed. Each pupil will receive an electronic offer letter with further information about their course from NESCol via their school in the two weeks after 25<sup>th</sup> May.

Where pupils have changed their plans for the next Academic Year, NESCol will accept late applications for School Links courses and Foundation Apprenticeships, although applications for oversubscribed courses will initially be added to waiting lists.

There will be no course delivery for School College Links courses or Foundation Apprenticeships prior to the summer break. However, for pupils who have secured places on School College Links Courses and Foundation Apprenticeships, it is anticipated that there will be an online Induction process which pupils should engage in to prepare them for any digital delivery that may be required after the summer break.

## Moving Learning Forwards

You will previously have received a separate communication around Moving Learning Forwards. Please contact TGS and request contact with your Guidance Teacher link if you need support around this.

If you have queries about Glow, Microsoft Teams, & Google Classroom and how learner's access these, please contact TGS and we can put you in touch with teachers who are happy and willing to contact you and talk you through it. Remember as well the links and support on our TGS website <http://gordonschools.aberdeenshire.sch.uk/> under the HOME LEARNING RESOURCES tab. There are Faculty tabs and a lot of activities under the GENERAL tab together with a clear statement around doing this responsibly.

The timeline below represents our current thinking. However, with the announcement and paperwork coming out nationally from Scottish Government on Thursday 21 May, then we may have to amend this as further guidance is issued and local Aberdeenshire discussions progress.

Current Timeline as it stands today!	
From 11 May	Faculties and subjects begin to open-up learning opportunities which will allow current <b>S4 and S5 pupils</b> to access learning at a higher level than they are currently accessing for the subjects they have chosen for session 2020/2021.

	Current <b>S1 and S6 pupils</b> continue to engage with Teams / website. <b>S2 &amp; S3 pupils</b> may wish to prioritise learning in those subjects which they are taking forwards in S3 and S4 next session.
31 May Monday 1 June	Official Leaving Date for all S6 and other eligible leavers from S4 and S5 Please remember to complete an on-line Leaver's Form via Microsoft Forms, available via the TGS website. Thank you.  Local Huntly Holiday: <b>no School today</b>
Tuesday 2 June onwards	<b>S1 become S2; S2 become S3; S3 become S4 &amp; S5 become S6.</b> All pupils will now be engaging with new learning for session 2020-21.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• scheduled learning activities for <b>new S2</b> for the coming week posted up <b>by a Monday lunchtime</b></li> <li>• scheduled learning activities for <b>new National level pupils</b> for the coming week posted up <b>by a Tuesday lunchtime</b></li> <li>• scheduled learning activities for <b>new S3</b> for the coming week posted up <b>by a Tuesday 1600</b></li> <li>• scheduled learning activities for <b>new Higher and Advanced Higher</b> for the coming week posted up <b>by a Wednesday lunchtime</b></li> <li>• on-line learning due to begin for those in S5/6 undertaking their Foundation Apprenticeships</li> </ul> <p><b>Depending upon further national and local advice</b>, there may be a pause in on-line home learning in June to allow all colleagues the chance to plan and set-up TGS for August.</p>
Monday 6 July	First day of the School <b>5-week*</b> summer holidays 😊
* The First Minister announced on 21-05-20 a consistent date for the whole of Scotland to return to schooling. The week's holiday that has been reduced will be scheduled to be taken at a future date, following local and national negotiations.	
Monday 10 August	Provisional TGS In-Service day for Staff Colleagues tbc
Tuesday 11 August	First day of TGS open for gradual phased return of pupils to classes. [This will happen in a way consistent with social distancing and current government medical advice at this time that meets our local needs]

## Free School Meal Entitlement

Please contact Aberdeenshire Council's Free School Meals and School Clothing Grants Team if you would like support or any further information around this or if you feel that due to a change in your circumstances you are now eligible:

<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/schools-covid-19/free-school-meals-covid-19/>

If you are not able to apply online, contact on the Team on [01467 533400](tel:01467533400). Email: [fsm@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:fsm@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) if payment does not reach you or if you have any other concerns.

## Support for families and pupils

Last week was Mental Health Awareness week. In times of crisis, it's never been more important to take care of our mental wellbeing and look out for others.

Here are a couple of links which might be helpful:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/your-mental-wellbeing/coronavirus-covid-19-your-mental-wellbeing>

<http://www.breathingspace.scot/>

PLEASE do ask if you feel you need support. We want to ensure that we can offer as much as is practically possible at this time. Our own Additional Support for Learning Department have put together the following resources:

Twitter @tgs\_asl

Facebook Asl Huntly

Blog <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/as/tgsasl/>

If you usually have a check in with our **Pupil Support Worker** and would like to continue with this, please contact TGS via phone or e-mail and we'll arrange that for you. Anyone who would like a call from their **Principal Teacher of Guidance**, please do likewise.

### Educational Psychology support resources:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/as/aberdeenshireeps/>

The Educational Psychology Service dedicated phone line for parents/carers and professionals who would like to talk through any education or wellbeing concerns about a child or young person. This is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9am to 3pm by calling 01779 403721. If parents would prefer a call-back they can email [eps@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:eps@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) with their name and number.

### Hub Child Care Support for Key Worker Families

The Huntly Cluster Hub School is **Gordon Primary School**.

Hub **opening hours** are:

07:30 to 18:45 Monday to Sunday (7 days per week, where there is a demand)

While this resource is available to all Category 1, 2 and 3 workers, in line with national social distancing advice, please use this as a last resort and we strongly recommend you keep your child at home, where at all possible.

If you are a key worker in any category and have not yet requested support with childcare and would like to, please complete the online form to apply - [link](#).

## SQA information and resources

To receive SQA Results by text or e-mail in advance of their SQA Certificate arriving, then learners must sign up at [www.mysqa.org.uk](http://www.mysqa.org.uk) before 5 pm on Tuesday 14 July 2020.  
[www.sqa.org.uk/2020nqlearners](http://www.sqa.org.uk/2020nqlearners)

## Finally...

Through these very uncertain times, on behalf of all my Colleagues, I'd like to thank you for your efforts in supporting home learning while trying to juggle all the other responsibilities you have. Next Monday, 1 June, is a local Huntly Cluster holiday, so if you can, please take some time to relax and feel the benefit! For those who do not have that luxury at the moment, thank you for keeping services running for the benefit of us all!

It's good that we are working cautiously back towards greater freedoms and opportunities, but we must always be mindful of the bigger health picture!

Take care, keep making healthy & happy choices and very best wishes for now,

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