

Dear Parents,

I hope my email finds everyone well and enjoying these warm Summer months.

Following the First Minister's announcement yesterday to the Scottish Parliament, this email serves to provide you with an overview of the guidance issued by the Scottish Government with regards to the reopening of schools, and to provide an indication of what this will mean for Dollar Academy.

You will see below that this information has been presented in a Q and A format, and aims to answer many of the key questions we know that you will have as you begin to think about your child's return to school. We hope you find the information below useful. We will provide a fully detailed plan of what our return to school will look like at the end of next week (7 August 2020).

Kind regards,

Simon Burbury  
Deputy Rector

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Dollar, Scotland FK14 7DU  
++ 44 (0) 1259 742 511  
[www.dollaracademy.org.uk](http://www.dollaracademy.org.uk)

## **WHEN WILL DOLLAR ACADEMY BE STARTING BACK?**

All children in all year groups will return to school full time on **20 August 2020**. However, there will be some groups that will be returning to the school site before this date. For example, new pupils, pre-session timetabling for Form IV, V and VI, pre-season training for rugby and hockey, mental health ambassador training and CCF officer's orientation are all activities that will take place before the start of term. Further details of any school activity taking place before 20 August 2020 will be forwarded in due course.

## **WILL IT BE SAFE?**

### **How will the school keep everyone safe?**

The school will be following a range of government, professional association and health protection guidelines to keep children and staff safe. The school will be cleaned more often and everyone will be washing their hands much more regularly. Cleaning routines will be published on the school website before the start of term. Classrooms will be well ventilated and pupils will spend more time outdoors. Other precautions and mitigations will be put in place, and more details as to exactly what Dollar Academy is doing to keep everyone safe will follow in next week's update.

### **What can my child do to help keep themselves and everyone else safe?**

*All children and staff will be asked to follow these hygiene practices:*

- **frequent washing/sanitising of hands for 20 seconds and drying thoroughly, and always when entering/leaving a school building, before/after eating and after using the toilet.**
- **avoid touching their faces including mouth, eyes and nose.**
- **using a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze.**

### **What about physical distancing?**

In line with the Government's scientific advice, Prep and Junior school children will not need to distance themselves from each other. However, wherever possible, teachers, staff and other adults will stay 2 metres away from each other, and from the children. This may not apply to P1 and P2 children and some children with additional support needs, but measures will still be taken to keep them safe in school. The scientific advice is that physical distancing between young people in secondary schools is not required to ensure a safe return to schools. However, in the Senior school, we will be doing everything we can to encourage physical distancing while making sure everyone can come back to school full time. For example, staggered break times and one-way systems will be introduced, and children will be kept in specific class or year group 'bubbles'.

### **Will my child have to wear a face covering at school?**

No. Children will not be expected to wear face coverings or personal protective equipment at school. But any child or adult that has been advised or wants to wear a face covering or any PPE will be supported to do so.

### **Will they need to bring their own mask and sanitiser?**

Yes. All pupils will be asked to bring a mask, personal sanitiser, alcohol wipes and disposable gloves to school each day. Masks should not contain any logos or slogans. For your convenience, a School PPE Starter pack can be purchased [here](#) but feel free to source your own items. A pack of tissues may also prove useful. One of the key points in the guidance is that enhanced personal and respiratory hygiene must be practised. Everyone will be asked to sanitise their hands before entry into any school building.

### **What about their school clothes?**

School uniforms/clothing should be washed and cleaned as normal. As previously mentioned, pupils should wear their PE/Sports kit throughout the day on days when they have PE/Sport. Blazers, initially, will be optional. In addition, pupils will be required to keep their bags with them throughout the day.

### **What if there's an outbreak of coronavirus at school?**

All schools will be on the lookout for potential outbreaks. This means that if you or your child shows symptoms of coronavirus you should keep them at home and book a test immediately. Your family must then follow self-isolation guidelines. We have plans in place if there is an outbreak and Health Protection Scotland will prioritise school outbreaks through [Test and Protect](#).

### **What if there's an outbreak of coronavirus in our area?**

If there's a local outbreak of the virus which affects Dollar Academy, there will be a discussion between the school, the local council and local health protection teams, and they, as a group will decide what action needs to be taken. They might decide to temporarily close the school. If this happens your child will be provided with work to do at home, and learning will move online for a while.

### **What happens if coronavirus rates start to rise again?**

If at any point the evidence shows that it's not safe for children to be in school on a full-time basis, whether at a national or local level, steps will be taken to reduce the risks. This may mean that for a period of time, in some areas, measures such as a temporary 'blended learning' approach, where children spend part of the week learning from home, may be taken. Schools, local authorities and the Scottish Government will continue to monitor the

evidence and health advice closely. We believe that Dollar Academy is in an excellent position to be able to respond to this positively if such a scenario arises.

### **What should I do if my child has coronavirus symptoms?**

It is extremely important that you continue to look out for symptoms of the virus amongst your own family. The most common symptoms are:

- **new, continuous cough**
- **fever/high temperature (37.8C or greater)**
- **loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste**

Anyone with symptoms, or who has had contact with someone with symptoms, should not attend school. They should remain at home and book a test. Everyone in the household should self-isolate until they receive their test results. If the test is negative, everyone can stop isolating (and return to school). If the test is positive, they must isolate for 10 days and those in the household for 14 days. All pupils and staff will have their temperature taken on arrival at school each day, and again, any pupil or staff registering a temperature of 37.8C or higher will be asked to go home and be tested.

### **I have a holiday planned for the start of August; will my child need to quarantine?**

If you are travelling back to Scotland from a country that requires you to quarantine, you must do so, and your child must not come to school until the quarantine period is over. The latest list of countries from which travellers are required to quarantine for 14 days can be found [here](#).

### **What happens if my child needs to self-isolate for two weeks?**

If your child needs to self-isolate, their learning will continue through online resources, online communication and blended learning (using Teams and Firefly).

## **WHAT WILL THE SCHOOL DAY BE LIKE?**

### **Will my child's education be affected by all this?**

There are no planned changes to the academic curriculum, but school will not feel normal. There may be more learning taking place outdoors, and classrooms may be set-up differently to increase separation and aid distancing. Practical subjects may have specific and more controlled guidance measures and large gatherings like assemblies will not be able to take place. Some activities may not be able to take place initially.

### **Will my child's choice of subjects be affected?**

No, most pupils will have already picked their subjects for the new session and there will be an opportunity to review these choices as the start of the session.

### **What will happen at lunchtime?**

**All Prep and Junior pupils will be asked to bring a packed lunch, and, in the Senior school, this is to be encouraged.** We will be introducing a staggered break time to allow Senior pupils to access the dining hall in smaller groups. The dining hall will offer a reduced menu, with three hot meal choices available inside the dining hall and three cold choices available for collection from a marquee. **Pupils will not be able to go down-town at break-time or lunchtime for food**, in order to avoid large gatherings in and around local shops. However, we are working with local providers to enable them to sell and distribute popular lunch-time items on the school site. Form VI pupils will be allowed down-town, in small numbers, during their study periods. Any pupils going into local shops before and/or after school, should follow the rules in place, for example, wearing a face covering. More detailed information about lunchtime provision will follow in next week's update.

### **What's happening about exams?**

The Scottish Qualification Authority have planned a full timetable of exams for next year. [Visit their website](#) to learn more. This year's results will be available on Tuesday 4 August. A separate mailing to the parents of those pupils expecting results this year will go out on Monday 3 August.

### **What about co-curricular clubs?**

We aim to get our co-curricular programme up and running as soon as it is safe to do so. Some of our activities will be able to begin straight away, whilst others are more problematic. Further details about the co-curricular offering will follow in due course.

## **TRANSPORT TO AND FROM SCHOOL?**

### **How will my child get to and from school safely?**

If possible your child should travel to and from school on foot, while maintaining physical distance. You and your child should wash or sanitise your hands before and after travelling.

If your child uses public transport they should follow current guidelines and wear a face covering while they travel, if they are aged 5 or over. On public transport you can expect sections of the bus/coach to be cordoned off for use by pupils, within which, social distancing will not be required. With this in mind, there may be a reduced capacity on some public transport routes. You should check the capacity of your route/service and make contingency arrangements if necessary.

Our private school coaches and minibuses are treated as part of the school. Pupils on these private coaches will not need to socially distance and will not be required to wear a face covering, but there will be enhanced hygiene measures in place.

### **Will school drop offs and pick-ups be the same?**

There will be stage specific drop-off zones and staggered drop-off times for the start of the school day, which we will outline in more detail in next week's update. If your child is young and/or nervous about their first day at school, you will still be allowed to accompany them into the school, but you should not gather with other parents in the vicinity of the school and you should park away from the immediate vicinity of the school gates. We will also be aiming to establish a one-way system around the school to increase the flow of traffic.

## **I AM WORRIED ABOUT MY CHILD; WHAT SUPPORT IS THERE?**

### **My child is starting P1, F1, or is just new to Dollar - how can I help them?**

We are aiming to invite all new pupils and all of Form I to visit the school, meet their teacher/HOY/Form Tutor in person, and visit their Form Tutor Room/Classroom before 20 August 2020, so that they feel comfortable in knowing where to go when they arrive on their first day. More detail about this will follow in due course.

### **My child is worried about returning to school, how do I help?**

There are a number of web pages on how you can support your [teenager](#) or [younger children's](#) mental wellbeing if they are worried about returning to school. There is also a very useful page on helping them get used to [being around more people](#) again after such a long time. At school our initial focus for Form Tutors, Class Teachers and PSE lessons will be very much based around supporting their return to school life. However, if you have any specific concerns about your child's return to school please contact Miss Langley in the Senior School or Mrs Barbour in the Prep/Junior school via [rector@dollaracademy.org.uk](mailto:rector@dollaracademy.org.uk)