

2nd July 2020

Ref: AR

Stranraer Academy

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Head Teacher: Miss A Reid

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Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope my final message of this term finds you, your family, friends and loved ones safe and well.

On Tuesday 30th June, our Director of Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning, Dr Gillian Brydson, wrote to parents/carers providing information on a number of key issues, which apply to all schools across Dumfries and Galloway. This is based on the statement made to the Scottish Parliament on Tuesday 23rd June by the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, Mr John Swinney, which outlined the possibility of a “conditional return” to school for all young people in August. The condition for return is as follows: **if the coronavirus situation continues to decline as it is at present, then all young people may return to Stranraer Academy, as normal, on Wednesday 12th August, to resume full time education.**

Let us hope and pray that over the next six weeks, which takes us to Wednesday August 12th, this will be the case, and we can look forward to all young people returning to Stranraer Academy. We have missed them all. Obviously, the Scottish Government will continue to monitor the situation and issue advice and direction to Local Authorities, in terms of how to proceed, nearer the time of return.

As such, we will keep you informed through the usual channels: School App and Website, School Twitter, Text message and by letter. All the necessary information will come your way towards the end of July.

In the event that the conditions are not met, the school has a *Contingency Plan* for a phased return and the information in this letter provides all of the details parents/carers and young people require regarding our plans to return to Stranraer Academy on a phased basis on Wednesday 12th August should we be required to do so.

Returning to Stranraer Academy in August – The Phased Return Timetable Model

Due to the circumstances in which we find ourselves, a 2-metre social distancing protocol will be operational in our school. As such, the number of young people we can have in classrooms has been reduced:

- ✚ Subjects such as English, Mathematics, French and Social Subjects can take up to 14 young people (usually, 30 young people can be accommodated in these classrooms);
- ✚ Practical subjects such as Science, Art and Design, Technical, Home Economics and Business Education can take between 8 and 13 depending on the size of the classroom/laboratory (usually, 20 young people can be accommodated in these classrooms);
- ✚ As a consequence of this, the school can only have 50% of the total school roll in the building on any day;
- ✚ We have therefore divided the school roll by House Group into two cohorts of approximately 50%;
- ✚ Each cohort will attend school on different days;
- ✚ Cohort A: Young People in Dunskey and Inch Houses;
- ✚ Cohort B: Young People in Glenapp and Logan Houses;
- ✚ Each cohort will attend school for three days one week and two days the next week, giving a total of 5 consecutive school days over two weeks;
- ✚ Please note that this will help to ensure that siblings are in school on the same days.
- ✚ Attached you will find information for August. As the situation is fluid, and therefore subject to change, I have not issued the rota for September, suffice to say that it will be the same arrangement as August unless Scottish Government advice tells us something different.

For the purposes of our new timetable, week beginning August 10th will be Week One.

	In School Learning	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	Wk beg 10 th August	INSET Day 1 For Staff Only	INSET Day 2 For Staff Only	Cohort A: Dunskey/Inch	Cohort B: Glenapp/Logan	Cohort B: Glenapp/Logan
Week 2	Wk beg 17 th August	Cohort B: Glenapp/Logan	Cohort B: Glenapp/Logan	Cohort B: Glenapp/Logan	Cohort A: Dunskey/Inch	Cohort A: Dunskey/Inch
Week 3	Wk beg 24 th August	Cohort A: Dunskey/Inch	Cohort A: Dunskey/Inch	Cohort A: Dunskey/Inch	Cohort B: Glenapp/Logan	Cohort B: Glenapp/Logan
Week 4	Wk beg 31 st August	Cohort B: Glenapp/Logan	Cohort B: Glenapp/Logan	Cohort B: Glenapp/Logan	Cohort A: Dunskey/Inch	Cohort A: Dunskey/Inch

First Day Arrangements

- ✚ Will be issued to all young people week beginning Monday 3rd August.

Individual Pupil Timetables

- ✚ Will be issued again to all young people on their first day of return to Stranraer Academy.

Week Beginning Monday 10th August 2020

- ✚ On Wednesday 12th August the young people in Cohort A (Dunskey and Inch Houses) will attend Stranraer Academy;
- ✚ The young people in Cohort B (Glenapp/Logan Houses) will take part in online learning at home;
- ✚ On Thursday 13th and Friday 14th August the young people in Cohort B (Glenapp and Logan Houses) will attend Stranraer Academy;
- ✚ The young people in Cohort A (Dunskey and Inch Houses) will take part in online learning at home;

Timing of the School Day – Period Timings

- ✚ The school day will begin each day at 9.00am and end at 3.25pm as normal.

Returning to Stranraer Academy

- ✚ The staff will be delighted to see our young people and welcome them back to Stranraer Academy from Wednesday 12th August. We have all missed them.
- ✚ Returning to school for our young people after such a long period of time will not be easy. As such, the health and well-being of all young people is a key priority and all of the support mechanisms which we offer at Stranraer Academy are already taking place and underway.
- ✚ The physical layout of the building will be similar but there are notable differences to accommodate social distancing. Classrooms are set up to take 14 young people, practical rooms to take 10, approximately.
- ✚ Other large areas in the school; the two PE gyms, Assembly Hall, Queen's Hall, Conference Room and library are being set up to take up to 30 young people.
- ✚ The corridors have also been altered to create two distinct walkways in each using hazard tape. Young people will walk in single file, respecting social distancing protocols to and from classes.

- ✚ Many new signs have been put up throughout the school reminding young people and staff of their responsibilities regarding personal hygiene during this pandemic.
- ✚ Hand sanitisers have been installed in every classroom. Young people will hand sanitise prior to taking their seat in class. This will be done each time a young person enters a classroom.

What to Bring

- ✚ Young people should bring a school bag to school to carry their belongings in such as:
 - o Pens, pencils, rulers, calculators, phones
 - o Packed lunch (in a disposable bag)
 - o Water bottle (in a disposable bottle)

Please note: None of these items may be shared or loaned to another pupil

- ✚ Young people will be issued with jotters from each subject
- ✚ Course work will be completed through a combination of work in jotters and on line

What to Wear

- ✚ All young people attending Stranraer Academy will be expected to wear their full school uniform.
- ✚ The uniform provides our young people with a sense of belonging and pride. At this particular time, it re-establishes a return to the norm for our young people, which is absolutely crucial.
- ✚ On the days when our young people have PE on their new timetables, they may attend school wearing their school PE kit. Because of the coronavirus situation, social distancing protocols reduce movement and reduce capacity of the building; therefore using the PE changing rooms is not possible.

Lunchtime Arrangements

- ✚ Lunchtime takes place each day from 1.00 - 1.40pm.
- ✚ Because of the coronavirus situation, lunchtime will operate on a much different model to what our young people have been used to in the past
- ✚ May I ask parents/carers for their support in encouraging their children to respect the new lunchtime rules and procedures?

No young person has permission to leave the school grounds at lunchtime.

- ✚ As such, all young people will now have two options at lunchtime:
- ✚ bring a packed lunch or place their lunch order at the canteen.
- ✚ Further information regarding pre-ordering lunches will be issued week beginning Monday 3rd August.
- ✚ For lunch, young people may use the extensive school campus, the canteen and the Street Area – **but may not under any circumstances leave the school grounds at lunchtime.**
- ✚ May I ask parents/carers to encourage their child(ren) to dispose of their lunch bags responsibly? This is particularly important in the situation in which we find ourselves.

Learning at Home

- ✚ A new model of education referred to a 'blended learning' will be deployed, where young people learn through a combination of in school face to face learning and at home on line learning
- ✚ We will be issuing young people, parents/carers with a booklet explaining how blended learning will operate in Stranraer Academy.
- ✚ On the days when young people are not in Stranraer Academy, they will be learning at home. This will likely include a combination of the following:
 - ✓ working on course work directed by their class teacher as a follow up to face to face teaching;
 - ✓ completing on line learning tasks directed by their class teacher
 - ✓ completing regular homework tasks as directed by their class teacher
 - ✓ working independently on revision/study tasks

Travelling To and From Stranraer Academy

Contract Buses

- ✚ Dumfries and Galloway Council are working hard to ensure that as many pupils as possible, who are entitled to transport, can get to school. Work on this is continuing over the summer and more information will be given as it becomes available.
- ✚ Where new transport applications have been granted, for example for our new S1 pupils, a letter will be issued by Education HQ to advise parents/carers of this during the summer.

- ✚ This letter will also be issued to parents/carers whose children are already entitled to transport.
- ✚ This letter will explain to parents/carers that because of COVID-19 Dumfries and Galloway Council are not yet in a position to offer clarity in terms of transport to school and what it may look like in practice, given that buses are operating at around 20% capacity.
- ✚ Dumfries and Galloway Council will continue to work with transport providers throughout the summer to establish a revised level of capacity as far as is possible and within agreed safety protocols.
- ✚ Education HQ will make contact with parents/carers in early August to confirm the position.
- ✚ On behalf of Dumfries and Galloway Council, may I ask parents/carers to be patient in what is a very challenging time for everyone?

Parents bringing children to school by car

- ✚ We are anticipating a significant increase in the number of parents/carers making their own arrangements – in the short term – to bring their child(ren) to school by car.
- ✚ This may lead to severe congestion in and around the school. Therefore, we ask parents/carers to consider the following:
 - ✓ The bus bays is designed for the use of contract buses only - it is not a drop off point and should not be considered as such.
 - ✓ Parents/carers, therefore, are strongly advised to drop their children off at a suitable and safe location close to the school (a so-called “park and stride” point) which allows children to walk the remaining short journey to school.
 - ✓ We are aware that many parents/carers already do this, which avoids additional congestion in and around the school and McMaster’s Road, in particular.
 - ✓ Similarly, at the end of the school day, parents/carers should not arrange to collect their children from inside the school grounds.

Please note:

I am sure all of our parents/carers and young people will appreciate the situation in which we find ourselves, with the Coronavirus pandemic, is an ever-changing one.

As such, the information which you have just read through may be subject to change. At the time of writing, - Tuesday 30th June – the information is up to date and accurate.

However, there are six weeks from now until the beginning of the new school year in August and we must be flexible and adaptable to any change(s) to the current situation, which may affect our arrangements.

Needless to say, we will keep parents/carers and young people fully informed should our plans and procedures require to be updated. Once again thank you for your support and cooperation.

And Finally...

On behalf of all the staff in Stranraer Academy, may I thank all of our parents/carers and young people for their support, encouragement and cooperation since we entered these unprecedented times on Friday 20th March. It has not been an easy 15 weeks for any of us. However, we can hope and pray that as the situation begins to show signs of recovery, then the Scottish Government may continue to ease some of the lockdown conditions which, I am sure, would be welcomed by all of us.

Throughout this time, as a staff, we have missed the daily contact with all the young people and are looking forward to their return on the 12th of August.

For our young people whose SQA Examinations were cancelled this year, we share your disappointment and your hope for a deserved set of excellent results in August.

For our new S1: we hope you enjoyed your Virtual Induction Week and half-day in-school experience. All of the staff in Stranraer Academy are looking forward to welcoming you officially on Wednesday 12th August.

To all of our young people, parents/carers: have a lovely summer break and we look forward to continuing to work with you all in school year 2020/21.

Best wishes,



Alicia Reid
Head Teacher
On behalf of all the staff of Stranraer Academy