

Weekly Update 21 August 2020

The Only Way is Up!

We would like to say a big thank you to all our young people for doing a great job of adapting to the new arrangements this week. Our one-way system is certainly making a positive difference in corridors and stairwells (a number of staff have commented on the positive impact on their daily step count!) and everyone is doing well in learning the new routes around the building and keeping their hands clean. We have written to young people in S6 and their parents about the new arrangements for study periods which take effect from Monday next week.



We would like to stress that young people should follow the government's guidance on physical distancing and stay 2m apart from each other wherever possible. We realise this may not be possible during all classes but want to emphasise that this does not mean that there is no point in following the guidance at other times. Health specialists advise that all mitigations which can be put in place will play a part in keeping us safe.

As we have said already, anyone who wishes to wear a face covering will be supported in doing so. Given current government guidance, the school is not able to insist on face coverings being worn in school but recommends that senior students especially consider this carefully in classes where physical distancing is not possible. All young people should be wearing a face covering on public transport and in local shops in line with government advice.

It's just great to be back together in school – we all have a part to play in ensuring that virus levels remain low so that we can stay together in school!



Parent Council Meeting – save the date!

The first Parent Council Meeting of this session will be held on Wednesday 16 September at 7pm. Due to current restrictions this will be a virtual meeting. Agenda and details of how to join will follow!

Practical Subjects

Current guidance means that there are some changes around what activities we are able to do in schools. Some aspects vary from school to school due to other considerations such as the design of facilities and guidance is still to be supplied in some subject areas such as FTT. Our Curriculum Leaders and their teams have been working hard on risk assessments and adaptations and we will share information as soon as it becomes available.

Communication with School

Could all parents please remember to include their young person's name, year group and house in communication with the school please. We are experiencing a very high volume of communication just now due to the current arrangements and it is an enormous help to our office staff if they can direct emails to the right person efficiently. Many thanks for your support.

Car Park

A reminder that the school car park must not be used to drop off or pick up young people at the beginning and end of the school day, unless in the case of illness or disability. We really need to ask for everyone's cooperation with this. It is dangerous to have young people cutting through a busy car park where many vehicles are manoeuvring and traffic backing up onto Milton Road is also creating a hazard. In addition, some of our young people with disabilities have been unable to access disabled parking spaces due to the actions of others. Thank you for your cooperation.

SQA

Following the statement from the Depute First Minister the SQA have now adjusted results to reflect estimates, except where the SQA awarded a higher result. If your young person's results have changes, you will be issued with a new certificate by SQA on Tuesday 8 September. At this stage, many young people have already been told their revised results by staff. If your young person has not yet had this information, they should email the appropriate subject teacher(s). If there are any difficulties, please contact the school office.

The SQA are conducting a survey on modifications to National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses. They would like to hear from parents and pupils as well. Before you undertake the survey, you should read the information in the technical consultation which provides information by subject on proposed changes. The survey closes on Monday 24th of August. The information on the proposed changes and the survey can be accessed here:

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/94837.html>

Drinking Water in School

Drinking water fountains for young people are currently out of use. The reason for this is that they must be disinfected and flushed following a long period out of use during lockdown and the contractor who services them is unable to attend until mid-September. We appreciate that this is not ideal! All other water in the school was fully tested and flushed by CEC before re-opening and classroom taps and handbasins are mains fed with water which is of drinking quality. Please provide your young person with a suitable water bottle.

Extreme Weather

Current guidance from both Scottish Government and City of Edinburgh Council is that young people should spend their breaks outside and there continue to be restrictions on gatherings of more than 50 people. Fresh air and ventilation are key and the virus can spread much more easily in large informal indoor gatherings. We absolutely understand that young people do not wish to be out in the rain, nor do we wish to see this - our number one priority, though, is to mitigate against any spread of the virus. Parents are advised to ensure young people come to school dressed for the day's weather with a waterproof coat. Further details will be shared as soon as possible. Umbrellas are set to make a comeback!

PE

Students who study National 5, Higher, Advanced Higher and the Sports Leader qualification should bring PE kit from Monday.

Book Drop

Calling all senior pupils! If you still have textbooks at home from any of your courses last year, could you please return them to school? Book will then be quarantined before being reissued to pupils for this session. If you are not following a course in the relevant department this year, you could give your books to your Key Adult who can leave them in the staff base. Thank you!