



CULLODEN
ACADEMY

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Dear Parents/Carers,

It has been a pleasure to welcome your children back into the building this week, and we have been really impressed by their conduct and attitude. We are looking forward to next week when full-time education for all begins again and I thought it may be helpful to households this weekend if I clarify some of the changes we have brought in to make the school safer for pupils, staff and the community.

- 1) **Timetable.** This is the single biggest change we have made and it is to reduce movement around the school, to reduce the number of pupils that staff and other pupils come into close contact with in any given day and to reduce the teaching and learning time lost to current cleaning requirements. Your child will have a Week A and a Week B timetable and almost all lessons will be double blocks. This will result in an uneven distribution of some subjects in one week but when looked at over two weeks, nothing will have changed. A reminder of which week it is will be in the Daily Notices that all parents and pupils can see on the school website.
- 2) **Practical subjects.** Both Highland Council and Education Scotland are issuing advice about what activities we can and cannot do. As a school we will be following all safety advice in the initial stages. Our approach will be to pilot the recommended approach and thereafter see if we can improve the experience without losing any of the safety. Teachers will keep pupils well informed about these new expectations and the adjustments we can make in the coming weeks.
- 3) **Entry and exit points.** S1-3 are asked to enter the school through the main doors and S4-6 are asked to enter via the side door at PE or the door at the bottom of the main stairs. We have hand sanitiser available at these entrances and by spreading the year groups we can reduce congestion and support the social distancing that our older pupils are advised to practice and that many of our younger pupils also value. We also have hand-soap available in the toilets and many, many litres have been distributed to every classroom with a sink so that pupils have many opportunities to wash their hands throughout the day.
- 4) **One-way system.** For the first time in my time at Culloden, every corridor is now one way, there are markings on the floors and walls and clear signage on doors. This stops pupils being 'in each other's' faces' as they pass in the corridor or in a queue when there is a bottleneck on stairs etc. The unintended fitness bonus is that the phrase I have heard most often this week has been 'this is doing wonders for my step count.'
- 5) **Canteen.** Canteen staff are serving at multiple points around the social area to minimise queues. All food- hot and cold- is served in disposable containers meaning that pupils will not be using plates or cutlery. A major factor behind this is to maximise the number of pupils that we can feed whilst maintaining safe hygiene levels. The lack of seating in the canteen is to promote the idea that it is somewhere you consume your food before moving on to one of the social areas. This will be reviewed on a regular basis.

- 6) **Social times/benches.** We are keen that pupils relax outdoors while weather permits and have assigned different areas to different year groups with staff supervision as much as possible. It has been lovely to see pupils relaxing in the sunshine. We are now in the process of building more benches to improve the environment for young people.
- 7) **Reinforcement.** Although most have put on a brave face, I know many pupils are anxious about being in a busy building. So are staff. Please help us keep the learning experience as natural and focused as possible by regularly reinforcing the need for all young people to follow all hand-washing practices, to respect staff's need for 2 metres of social distancing and please, please if you have any thoughts that they might be displaying symptoms of COVID, keep them at home.
- 8) **Face masks.** As noted above, we follow the national advice and the national position at time of writing this is that face masks are not compulsory in school but anyone who wants to wear one can. The primary reasons for wearing masks is to prevent the spread of the virus and that is why staff really appreciate it when pupils do wear masks in school. Some activities only work safely if pupils do wear masks and once again I am asking for your support in making Culloden Academy a safe and productive learning environment.

I intend to work closely with our Junior Leadership Team, Senior Leadership Team and Senior Prefect Team to make sure that the pupil voice is heard in the planning of the coming months in Culloden Academy. I will also work with the Parent Council to ensure that the Parent perspective is heard. There will be changes in the coming weeks, there will be progress and retreats but what I can offer you all by way of reassurance this weekend is that the staff of Culloden Academy are committed to your child having the best learning experience possible.

Best wishes,



Dr J Vance