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23rd February 2022

Hello,

Last week there was a further revision to the Guidance for schools and it included two changes that will make a significant difference to the experience of young people in schools.

Firstly, from next Monday 28th February, pupils and staff in secondary schools are no longer required to wear face coverings in classrooms. However, any young person or staff member who wishes to still wear a face covering in the classroom should be fully supported in doing so. I know that across the staff there are a range of views and each pupil and member of staff will be supported to take whatever approach they are comfortable with. However, they should continue to be worn by secondary school pupils and all adults in indoor communal areas- including corridors when moving from class to class. Please also note that there has been no change in the position on face coverings on dedicated school transport- it remains the case that pupils are required to wear face coverings on a bus or in a taxi.

The second change is that from the same date, the remaining restrictions on assemblies are now removed. For myself and my senior management colleagues this is a huge improvement as it allows us to meet pupils in their year groups and start to rebuild that sense of community that has been damaged by the limitations put on young people's educational experience. There will be assemblies every morning for the next few weeks and we would ask for your ongoing support in getting pupils into school in good time for these. The schedule is published in the daily bulletin that you can access on the school website.

I am aware that yesterday's announcement about the 21st March is likely to change some aspects of this again but for the next three weeks at least, what I have explained above is what is expected of all pupils. Please continue to ensure that your child has a mask in their bag each day.

Mikeysline Parental Sessions

We are pleased to be able to offer the two events below for parents. Approximately 80 parents have signed up for each event and we trust it will be worthwhile. Mikeysline have recently been in school working with PSE classes and the sessions were very well received by our young people. I hope and trust that these events will be similarly useful for parents.

- *Wednesday 9th March: Supporting Young People with Exam Stress, Anxiety & Panic Attacks (5-6pm)*
- *Wednesday 16th March: Teenage Behaviour & Self-Harm (5-6pm)*

We would be keen to offer other parental sessions and will work with the Parent Council to identify organisations and/or topics that we can make available to our parents. Unfortunately, due to ongoing restrictions these sessions will be online but we look forward to hosting these events in the school in the near future and starting to rebuild some of the community spirit that was such a strength of Culloden Academy.

Key Dates for the remainder of the term

- *Wednesday 2nd March S5/6 Parents Evening-* invitations emailed out Thursday 24th and bookings available from Friday 25th.
- *Friday 4th March-* S5 Choice of Course forms returned
- *Monday 7th-Wednesday 9th March-* Music SQA practical exams.

And finally,

As you will hopefully be aware from your young person we are in the process of reconfiguring our House systems to move to having 6 houses. This will lead to a reduction in caseload for each guidance teacher to approximately 200 pupils. We are working closely with pupils to manage any anxieties and have plans in place for our most vulnerable young people and for seniors who will be looking for references from us in the next year. If you have a specific query please do not hesitate to contact us at the generic email address and the most appropriate person will respond as soon as possible. Details of the new houses should be available by the end of March.

Best wishes,



Dr J Vance
Rector