

17th August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you are all well. I am writing with a quick update following our induction week and as we move into the full opening of the school.

Firstly can I say how great it has been to have young people back in the school. All of the staff have been delighted to welcome everyone back and we have all realised how much we had missed those day to day interactions, engaging our young people in learning, the smiles and the laughter. As you know the first week back involved a phased induction with two year groups in each day. This gave us an opportunity to introduce the pupils to the new ways of working and procedures we have put in place in line with the government guidance. It also meant we were able to test our new systems such as the one way system, cleaning routines and staggered breaks and lunches prior to the full return today. You will be pleased to know that the pupils have understood the need to do things differently to allow schools to reopen and have been great at following the new procedures. Thank you for your support in speaking to your children to underline the importance of this.

I'd like to share some useful reminders and further information.

Procedures should pupils, staff or household members display symptoms

Pupil or staff should NOT attend school if the following applies:

- **they are displaying any of the COVID 19 symptoms (a high temperature, a new continuous cough, a loss or change in sense of smell or taste)**
- **they are required to self- isolate for 14 days if a member of the household has tested positive or is displaying symptoms**
- **they have been contacted as part of the Test and Protect programme**
- **Medical advice states that they should not attend school**

Should this be the case please contact the school on **01307 492200** to let us know.

- Anyone who contacts the school to inform us a pupil, member of staff, or household member is displaying symptoms will be advised to seek testing and self- isolate.
- If a pupil displays symptoms while in school they should notify a member of staff. Should this happen and in line with the government guidance we have a designated room set up for that person to go to with appropriate PPE, ventilation and cleaning procedures in place.

- If it is a pupil under 16 parents or carers will be contacted and asked to pick up their child immediately. They will then be asked to contact their doctor and to arrange for COVID 19 testing
- If a pupil is over 16 and able to do so they will be asked to make their way home immediately and to contact their doctor and arrange for COVID 19 testing
- Where there is a sibling in the school parents and carers will be asked to pick them up in line with advice for households to self- isolate until testing has taken place.
- Advice for the rest of the household where a member of the household displays symptoms is the same as the national advice regarding requirements for self- isolation
- In any case where this may happen the school will work closely with the NHS Tayside Public Health Team
- If a pupil or member of staff tests positive they can return to school once they have completed the 10 day self- isolation period and feel better
- If they test negative they are able to return to school if they are feeling better and no one else in the household is unwell and displaying symptoms
- If a household member, rather than a pupil or member of staff displays symptoms all members of the household must self- isolate until either the person is tested and tests negative or the person tests positive and household members must then self- isolate for 14 days
- Any pupil or member of staff who tests positive will be contacted by the Contact Tracing Team who gather details of close contacts and any settings the person has been part of such as school. In the case of positive tests associated with a school the school will contact the Public Health Team. They are also automatically informed of all new positive cases. The Contact Team will speak to the pupil and/or parent if appropriate to identify close contacts then decide who needs to be contacted and make that contact.
- The Health Protection team will also contact the school at this point to provide any further advice or identify any further measures the school should take. They will also advise on how and who this information should be communicated to. As you would expect, should this be the case, the school will cooperate totally with the Health Team and carry out any action that is advised
- Should there be more than one confirmed positive case within a school setting the school will contact the Health protection team who convene a response team to risk assess the situation. They will provide advice and recommend actions that require to be taken by the school

Dropping off and picking up children at school by car

We need to keep everyone safe at school. We have a large number of pupils who travel to school by school bus and have dedicated parking bays for the school buses so that pupils can exit and board the buses safely. **If you are dropping off your children by car please do not park in these bays at the front of the school even if only for a short time.** We would ask to avoid congestion in the school car park that you drop your children off away from the campus and allow them to walk onto the campus. If you have to enter the campus to drop them off please park in the car park bays away from the bus bays. Thank you for your attention to this and helping us keep all of our young people as safe as possible.

Arriving at School

Please remember that pupils will not be able to enter the school before 8:40am every morning. This is to avoid pupils congregating in the Atrium and café area prior to going to class. On arrival after 8:40am pupils go directly to class. We would be grateful if you could remind your children of this requirement. Thank you for your support with this.

Parents and Carers accessing the school

A reminder that the Scottish Government guidance for reopening schools requires us to limit the number of adults accessing the school as much as possible. Should you require to speak to a member of staff about your child please contact the school by phone or email and we will then contact you as soon as possible by phone or to arrange a meeting. Obviously you can enter the school and go to reception should you need to contact your child in an emergency. We know that sometimes parents come to the school to leave off something their child has forgotten. Please try and limit this as much as possible or arrange to meet your child outside the school. Should this not be possible we have introduced a safe hand over system at reception.

Alton Towers Residential Trip

Following recently issued Scottish Government advice unfortunately we will have to cancel our planned trip to Alton Towers. The guidance continues to advise against residential school excursions due to the virus. We will contact parents to let you know about the refund process. This can take some time but we will do all we can to make the refunds as soon as possible.

S2 Outward Bound Residential

As above, the national guidance means that we have had to cancel this planned experience. Again we will refund any payments that have been made as soon as possible. We have been working with the providers to plan an alternative school and local based experience for our S3 pupils towards the end of September. This will meet the requirements of the guidance and be rigorously risk assessed. Watch this space for more details on this exciting opportunity for our S3 pupils.

Ski Trip 2021

Although the Government Guidance on residential trips covers the Autumn term we have also made the decision to cancel the ski trip that was planned for January 2021. With so many unknowns it makes sense to make an early decision on this. We will contact parents regarding arrangements for refunds soon.

SQA Results

Many of you will be aware that the Scottish Government took the decision to reverse any downgrades as a result of the SQA moderation process of the refined estimates that schools submitted at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. This was a welcome decision for some of our pupils who had been left disappointed at not achieving the grades they deserved last session in some of their subjects. Any pupil who had an upgrade as a result of the SQA moderation process will keep that higher grade. We will be contacting all of our pupils who were impacted by this to let them know. SQA will

also be sending out revised certificates to these pupils at the end of August. You will find more information about this at the SQA website.

Senior Phase Study Periods

In line with the Scottish Government reopening advice schools should continue to look at alternative ways for learning to be delivered out with the school, particularly in the Senior Phase. A number of our pupils in S5/S6 have study periods as part of their curriculum. This year, because of changes to our curriculum S4 also have one study period. We are making a change to the timetable which means period 3 and period 5 on a Friday will swap around. This means that the S4 study period will be on a Friday Period 5. As this is the last period of the day S4 pupils can study at a place of their choosing including home study for that one period. Should they be unable to study at home for that period we will have designated areas available in the school. Some pupils in S5 and S6 will have more than one study period. Again, they can study during these periods at a place of their choosing which could include home study. If they are unable to study at home during study periods we will make areas available within the school.

College Courses

College courses chosen by pupils in S4/S5 and S6 are due to begin from week beginning 31st of August which will mean for most of our pupils their first day at college will be Friday 4th Sept. Due to this late start pupils who attend college on a Friday should only attend school for periods 3 and 4 until 4th September as those pupils who have selected college courses do not have timetabled classes in school during periods 1,2 and 5. If you need more information about this please contact your child's Pupil Care and Support teacher.

Contact Details

Given the current situation it is really important that we have up to date contact details for all of our parents and carers. If there has been a change in your home, work or mobile telephone numbers please email the school office with details of the changes: ForfarAcademy@angusschools.org.uk