



## **1. General Update**

### **Apologies**

Mr Kane extends his apologies and is currently off on paternity leave.

### **Health and Safety**

COVID mitigations remain as they have been for the entirety of this session.

- One way system
- Staggered Break/Lunch
- Face coverings to be worn when using school transport
- Face coverings to be worn when in the school building unless eating lunch
- Break/Lunch to be spent outdoors where possible (weather dependent)
- No unannounced visits from guests, including parents/carers
- Restrictions around extra-curricular activity

### **COVID Update**

The number of positive cases is averaging at around ten pupils per school week. Staff figures have fluctuated somewhat but in recent weeks have settled at around one or two per week. While all staff and pupil absences are always a concern, overall absence rates are lower than what is being encountered elsewhere. Staffing levels are stable.

### **Lateral Flow Testing**

The government changed the guidance we must follow when distributing test kits. Consent to participate is presumed when a young person or member of staff voluntarily takes kits. There is no longer a need to record the name of the recipient of each box of kits. The administrative burden has been reduced significantly as a result of this change. Kits are issued in classes on a need basis every fortnight. Kits can also be collected from the school office at any time. Uptake remains at around 60% of the total staff and pupil cohort.

### **Guidance on reporting positive cases and self-isolation**

East Ayrshire Council continue to share the latest self-isolation and positive result recording guidance via the school app.

### **Prelims**

At the time of writing, we are halfway through our prelim diet. The diet is running very well. In cases where pupils are absent, arrangements have been made to set a date/time when missed papers can be completed.

### **Options Process**

All Options Information has been shared with parents/carers. Interviews are ongoing for current S4 and S5 pupils and were completed in January for S2 and S3 pupils. Pastoral staff will make contact with parents/carers of those unable to take their first-choice subjects. As always, we anticipate a very high return in terms of first option success. Contact should be made by late February/early March.

## **P7 into S1 Transition Information**

Information has been shared with all parents/carers of those in P7. Transition events will take place against COVID guidance as it stands in April, May and June.

## **NET Ministries**

We welcome a team from NET back to school in late February/early March. The NET team will lead retreats for pupils in S1-S3.

## **School Sport**

At the time of writing, we have registered seven pupils to compete in the Scottish Schools Indoor Athletics Championship which takes place on February 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> at the Emirates arena in Glasgow. All entrants must be registered with an Athletics club outwith school.

Our S5/6 Senior football team are into the last thirty-two of the Scottish Cup having beaten both Trinity High School (Renfrew) and Eastwood High School. We have been drawn away to the winner of Bearsden Academy v Gryffe High School.

## **Reporting and Parents' Evenings**

All year groups should now have had interim reports. We will now trial virtual parents' evenings, starting with S3 this week. If the virtual event runs well this week, we will run virtual evenings for all other year groups. If there are major issues, we will revert to our contingency plan which was to issue a second report.

## **Dates**

Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> February	S3 Parents' Evening
Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February	S5/6 Parents' Evening
Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> March	S4 Parents' Evening
Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March	S2 Parents' Evening
Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> May	S1 Parents' Evening

Joining instructions have been shared with S3 Parents/Carers and will follow when necessary for all other year groups. It should be noted that there are some challenges associated with Parents' Evenings that could become more apparent online than they are in a face-to-face setting.

- Some staff teach 90 pupils per year group.
  - Appointments are five minutes per pupil
  - To see every parents/carer, the teacher would need to be available for seven and a half hours
  - The allocation of time given over to each Parents' Evening is two hours (as per the working time agreement)
  - There is scope for staff to volunteer to extend their appointment times
  - The maximum number of appointments per teacher is 24 within 2 hours, or 30 within 2 and a half hours (voluntarily extended by staff)
  - Online systems are time limited, meaning staff cannot end one appointment early in order to see more parents/carers than the five-minute cycle will allow
  - In the above scenario, sixty parents/carers would not be able to see the class teacher, as they can only see thirty families in the time available
  - These challenges are unique to a secondary school environment where staff can often teach many more pupils per year than there are appointments available at Parents' Evenings

The above challenges were always present in face-to-face events, but staff and parents were better placed to be flexible. It has always been the case that some parents/carers may not be able to arrange appointments with a small number of teachers (in light of the above).

However, issues are often minimised because not all parents/carers choose to make appointments with all staff. In the event that moving online increases the overall parental attendance figure, we may find that supply and demand issues are more apparent this session. In the first instance, we need to use the S3 Parents' Evening as a trial and take things from there.

In the event that parents/carers cannot make appointments that they would otherwise have made, we will explore alternative forms of update after the Parents' Evening but need to be mindful of expectation of staff when doing so (against terms and conditions). Please be assured that school staff will gather this information from parents/carers and will act to address any issues. Patience is requested while we trial the online system and navigate issues like that detailed above.

We are also conscious of the fact that for a small number of parents/carers, online access may be an issue. Where we are already aware of this, staff are proactively working with families to find solutions. The booking system will be monitored closely to ensure that any parent/carer not making any appointments is contacted and offered support to access Parents' Evening.

### **DHT Remit Update**

Each member of our Senior Leadership Team will provide a general update on progress against their area of responsibility during this evening's meeting.

### **Staffing**

There are no vacancies at the time of writing.

Ms Nica, Mrs McLean and Mr Hastings have joined our classroom assistant staff. Miss McCrindle has joined our AP Base to cover Miss Millar's maternity leave.

Miss Gibson (teacher of Modern Studies) has started Maternity Leave. Miss Robyn Brogan was appointed to cover Miss Gibson's leave and has started with us.

We wish Ms Conroy well as she takes on an Early Years post at Onthank ECC.

The annual staffing exercise, which depends significantly upon the completion of annual options, will commence in February. An update on anticipated staffing levels and any changes in advance of next session will be shared at subsequent meetings.