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Head Teacher: William Inglis MA (Hons)
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Dear Parent

As you know, all East Renfrewshire pupils will return to school on Wednesday 12th August. Whilst pupils are to return to school without physical distancing, a number of mitigations will be put in place to reduce risk where possible. I have outlined some of these mitigations below. The associated adjustments to normal school arrangements will be shared with pupils when they return next Wednesday.

All pupils in S2 to S6 will return on Wednesday 12th August for an 8.40am start as normal.

Our new S1 pupils will be asked to arrive at 9.15am once the older pupils are settled in their classes.

On arrival, pupils will go to a designated registration room where they will be issued with their timetables and detailed information will be shared with them. They may choose to meet with friends in The Street first, or go straight to their registration rooms.

Outlined below are some of the key messages for our return which I hope you will find helpful:

Timetable

The 'blended learning' timetables issued in June are no longer relevant and can be discarded. Pupils will instead follow a standard timetable and will experience the full curriculum. Pupils' timetables will be issued to them in their registration classes next Wednesday.

Health and Safety

In order to reduce crowding, pupils will be asked to use multiple entrances when they arrive at school each morning. Pupils will be instructed to use hand sanitiser on arrival and regularly throughout the day, in particular before and after breaks. Sanitiser will be provided at each entrance, in the social area and in all classrooms. Cleaning schedules will be enhanced and there will be an increased focus on 'touch points' such as door handles, toilets etc. The school will also be treated fortnightly with an electrostatic spray which coats all surfaces and effectively 'envelops' any virus. (Please note that our sanitisers are designed to work with this treatment and pupils are therefore discouraged from using their own sanitisers). Hand hygiene and 'catch it, kill it, bin it' messages will be reinforced in school and I would be grateful if you could reinforce this message at home and provide your child with paper handkerchiefs to 'catch' any coughs or sneezes when at school.

Face coverings are not required in schools and physical distancing among pupils is not necessary. Staff are, however, required to maintain normal physical distancing from one another and from pupils, so may need to wear a face covering if working closely with a pupil for example. Pupils who wish to use face coverings may, of course, do so.



Classrooms will be arranged in rows rather than in groups, and pupils will be asked to sit in the same seat each time they attend a particular class. They will be asked to use a wipe to sanitise their desk area and equipment at the start and end of each lesson. Pupils should remember to bring the necessary equipment with them to avoid the need to borrow pens, pencils, calculators etc. Books and jotters can be passed between pupils and teachers, but this will only happen where necessary (for example for marking). Pupils should routinely carry any necessary books and jotters with them in their schoolbags. Pupils will be asked to place bags on the floor, rather than on chairs, desks or tables. Pupils should continue to use their lockers to store PE kit etc. to reduce the number of bags they are carrying.

Outwith the classroom, pupils will be asked to walk on the left hand side of the corridor. Stairs will operate on a one-way system between periods to reduce face to face crowding. During breaks, pupils will be asked to remain in their 'friendship bubbles' as far as possible and to spread out around the full school building. Those using The Street area during break and lunchtime will be asked to sit in the seated spaces provided and should not move chairs to other locations. Our canteen staff will make arrangements to reduce queuing as much as possible at lunchtime, for example by using multiple locations for pre-ordered meals and designated hatches for different yeargroups. Many pupils may prefer to avoid lunch queues altogether by bringing a packed lunch.

Contact with children and adults from outwith the school establishment will be minimised; consequently, I would ask parents to contact pupil support or office staff by telephone rather than visiting the school (other than by pre-arranged appointment). Pupils will also be advised that they may not leave the school grounds at intervals and lunchtimes.

Pupil Attendance

If children are at all unwell, they should remain at home and you should follow the relevant medical guidance on [NHS Inform](#) and [Test and Protect](#). Please telephone or email the school office in the normal way if your child is unwell, and provide an absence note when your child returns to school. Ideally this would be submitted by email for the attention of your child's pupil support teacher. Attendance will be monitored in the usual way and a text message sent if a child is absent and we have not received notification from a parent. If your child is tested for Covid-19 and the test result is positive, please telephone the school office without delay to inform us.

If a child feels unwell or presents with any of the symptoms of Coronavirus during the course of the school day, we will ask that you collect your child as quickly as possible, following the guidance on [NHS Inform](#) and [Test and Protect](#). We have been asked to exercise a 'zero tolerance' approach to Covid-19 symptoms in school and will therefore err on the side of caution in reaching decisions about sending pupils home. Again, if your child tests positive for Covid-19, you should inform the school office immediately. If someone in the household starts displaying symptoms, your family should self-isolate and follow the guidance on [NHS Inform](#). You should advise the school of your child's absence and the reason for this absence. In the event that two or more positive cases are confirmed within a school in a 14-day period, East Renfrewshire Council will work with the NHS Health Protection Team to determine the actions required to protect the health and wellbeing of all pupils and staff in the school. Test and Protect Contact Tracers will contact anyone deemed to have been a close contact of those who have tested positive and will provide advice on the need to self-isolate or take any additional steps as set out in the guidance. If you or your child are not contacted by a Contact Tracer through the Test and Protect scheme, there is no requirement for self-isolation.

Pupils in the highest risk category, or those who have been shielding on medical advice, will require a personalised risk assessment. It is important that we are aware of this information. You should ensure that you advise the school prior to next Wednesday's return if your child requires a personalised risk assessment. Please mark your email for the attention of Mr Muirhead who oversees first aid matters in the school.

Learning and Teaching

Although pupils will follow the full curriculum, some activities may be modified slightly to reduce risk. In PE lessons for example, staff will try to select activities which can take place outdoors, which are lower risk and which involve less pupil-to-pupil contact. In practical classes such as science, drama or home economics pupils will be asked to work with the same partner(s) in each lesson where possible. Please be reassured that strategies to mitigate risk in classes will, however, not adversely impact on learning and teaching.

The remote learning that pupils undertook between April and summer will be revisited and consolidated to ensure that there are no gaps in pupils' learning, and we will then move forward at pace to ensure that courses are covered in full. In senior classes, some additional time may be devoted to assessment and the gathering of evidence for SQA purposes in the unfortunate event of any disruption to next year's examinations or pupil absence from examinations

as a result of isolating. Google Classrooms will continue to operate and staff will be ready to provide online learning for all courses should this prove necessary as a result of further school closures in the future.

The school library will remain open and pupils will be able to borrow books as normal. Library books will be quarantined for 72 hours.

Our supported study programme for pupils in examination years will operate as normal from mid-September following the same hygiene procedures as those employed during the school day.

In line with national guidance, instrumental music tuition in strings and percussion will continue using technology. All other music tuition will be suspended pending further review.

Please note that clubs and other extra-curricular activities will also be temporarily suspended. Again, this will be reviewed in September after which I am hopeful that our extra-curricular programme will be able to resume.

Uniform

Normal uniform should be worn and should be washed/cleaned as normal. There is no requirement to wash uniforms more frequently. I am aware that our senior pupils may have experienced delays in having braiding added to their blazers. Pupils should not be concerned about this; it is not a matter of priority.

Buses

As you know, First Bus have been in the habit of providing additional buses at the beginning and end of the school day which drop off and pick up our pupils from the school car park. Please note that First Bus is no longer operating this service.

Whilst I would encourage pupils to walk or cycle to school where possible, I am conscious that many of you will choose to bring your child to school by car, especially in poor weather. The car park is already prone to congestion and is likely to be busier than ever. Please try to drop off or pick up your child a short distance from the school to reduce this congestion if you can. If using the school car park, I would ask you to avoid stopping directly in front of the school building; instead you should use the drop-off zone on the left hand side of the car park. As there will be no buses, you are also welcome to use the bus lane (on the right hand side of the car park) as an additional drop-off/pick-up zone.

It is not currently the intention of First Bus to reinstate these buses, even after the removal of all Covid-19 restrictions on public transport. I am grateful to our Parent Council who are in discussions with First Bus to try to secure the reinstatement of the service once restrictions have been lifted. If you wish to offer support or find out more about their efforts, you can contact our Parent Council Chair (Simon Cunningham) on wiliamwoodpc@gmail.com

School Trip Refunds

Full refunds have been made to parents for all cancelled trips and events (including Duke of Edinburgh). Refunds are paid into your ParentPay account; from there, you can transfer the funds back to your payment card. If you have not received your refund for any reason, please contact the school office.

School Calendar

There will be no mass gatherings such as assemblies, parents' evenings, information events, concerts, dances etc. during term 1 at least, and the school calendar will be adjusted accordingly. Please note that the S4 work experience week will no longer be able to take place. I have rescheduled all parents' evenings to take place in the second half of the year. Should we still be unable to conduct parents' meetings at that time, I shall arrange for pupil performance



information to be shared with you in a different way (for example by telephone). Many of our annual events such as careers fairs, exhibitions, concerts etc. will still take place ‘virtually’. Given the uncertainty surrounding the timescales for the easing of restrictions, the calendar will remain a fluid document. I have issued the draft version of the calendar to staff for comment and will prepare a final version to be posted in the *Parents* section of the school website next week.

Holiday dates for the coming session will be as follows:

- Teachers and school staff return Monday 10th August 2020
- In-Service Monday 10th August 2020
- In-Service Tuesday 11th August 2020
- **Pupils return Wednesday 12th August 2020**
- **Last day of school Wednesday 23rd September 2020**
- September Weekend Thursday 24th September 2020
- September Weekend Friday 25th September 2020
- September Weekend Monday 28th September
- **Reopen Tuesday 29th September 2020**
- **Last day of school Friday 9th October**
- In-Service Monday 19th October
- **Reopen Tuesday 20th October 2020**
- **Last day of school Friday 18th December**
- **Reopen Tuesday 5th January 2021**
- **Last day of school Thursday 4th February**
- In-Service Friday 5th February 2021
- Mid Term Monday 8th February 2021
- Mid Term Tuesday 9th February 2021
- **Reopen Wednesday 10th February 2021**
- **Last day of school Thursday 1st April**
- **Reopen Monday 19th April**
- **Last day of school Friday 30th April**
- May Day Holiday Monday 3rd May
- **Reopen Tuesday 4th May 2021**
- **Last day of school Wednesday 5th May 2021**
- In-Service Thursday 6th May 2021 (local elections)
- **Reopen Friday 7th May 2021**
- **Last day of school Thursday 27th May 2021**
- May Weekend Friday 28th May 2021
- May Weekend Monday 31st May 2021
- **Reopen Tuesday 1st June 2021**
- **Last day of school Friday 25th June 2021**

Also attached for your information are a letter from the Director of Education and a letter from our Child Protection Coordinator, Shirley Gibson outlining the school’s nut-free policy.

Yours faithfully

William Inglis

Head Teacher

Williamwood High School