



## Introduction

I hope this briefing finds you safe and well. I hope you have enjoyed the summer break and you have made the most of the incredible days and weeks of sunshine during our stay-cation this year! As we come to the end of the second week of the session, it has been fantastic to see all staff and pupils back to Keith Grammar School full of enthusiasm and ready to get stuck into their learning.

Prior to our return, I shared our updated school safety measures to respond to the ongoing COVID pandemic. While restrictions across our wider community have eased a little more, we continue to take a cautious approach in school due to our unique setting. This approach will help us take necessary precautions to ensure we work towards a full school year of face-to-face learning. A brief reminder of the safety measures appears later in this briefing. I would like to thank all staff and pupils for their support of the safety measures and their continued compliance; it makes a huge difference to the safety of everyone at KGS.

## Whole School Information

### New Pupils

It is always great to welcome our pupils back to school. This term we have had a number of new enrolments across all year groups joining Team KGS! We wish all pupils well for the new school year and we are really looking forward to working with them this session.

Our senior buddies have done an amazing job looking after our S1 pupils last week. They have been brilliant role models and a real credit to us, we could not be more proud of them.

### New Staff

Like our pupils, it has been wonderful to see colleagues return full of enthusiasm. The buzz around school this week and last has been phenomenal with a number of new staff eager to support our young people. Pupils and colleagues have been brilliant in giving them all a warm KGS welcome! We asked our new colleagues their views of KGS after their first week and here is what they had to say:



#### Mr Cowie (PT Humanities)

"Really looking forward to getting started back at KGS. Never in a million years did I think I'd be teaching Geography in the room where I studied it whilst at school. I'm hoping that the pupils enjoy coming to the department and I'm looking forward to instilling a 'can-do' attitude where they have high expectations of themselves and of me. It's going to be great."



#### Miss George (Digital Learning)

*"Staff and pupils of Keith Grammar School are so welcoming. I am pleased to be part of such a lovely school community. It's been a great first week!"*

# Parent Briefing

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2021



**Miss Campbell (English)**

*"My first impressions of KGS have been really positive. Pupils are keen and eager to learn and have worked really hard during this first week back."*

**Mr Musil (Biology)**

*"The enthusiasm, politeness and general attitude of pupils here at Keith Grammar School has blown me away. It is a delight to have pupils who engage in lessons- I have been made to feel very welcome. Thank you."*



**Mrs Cowie (Home School Link Worker)**

*"Everyone has made me feel so welcome- I am glad to be part of such a warm, friendly school."*

**Miss Harvey (Biology)**

*"I've had a really positive first week here at Keith Grammar School. The staff and pupils have been so kind and welcoming- making me feel at ease. Pupils have made a great first impression on me with their politeness and engagement."*



**Miss Robak (Art and Design)**

*"I am delighted to join Keith Grammar School. During my first week, I have been very impressed by pupil attitude and effort in Art & Design. Well done everyone!"*

**Mr Grieve (Inclusion Co-ordinator)**

*"Since joining KGS, I continue to be impressed by how friendly staff and pupils are and the attitude towards ensuring everyone achieves their very best."*



**Miss MacLennan (Pupil Support Assistant)**

*"Working with learners that have such imaginative minds and excellent personalities has been magical- I really look forward to contributing to their futures."*

**Miss Stewart (Home Economics)**

*"I'm excited to have joined Keith Grammar School. It's been such a positive start- thank you to everyone, pupils and staff, for making me feel so welcome. I am looking forward to the rest of the year!"*



I am sure you will join me in wishing all new staff the very best for the year ahead. We are really pleased they are with us and are sure they will make a huge difference to the learning and lives of our pupils.



## Health and Safety

### COVID Update

Since the relaxation of rules and an easing of guidance across Scotland alongside the return of schools it is not surprising that cases have started to climb. If you are keeping up to date with the news it is well reported that we are starting to see increasing cases.

The track and trace guidance has changed and there is now a self-contact trace process for you to carry out, should you have any symptoms. It is vital you help us keep our school safe by letting us know of any positive cases. This information will be kept confidential but will help us work with public health to inform others.

Two sites with further details on updated symptoms and a self-help guide are noted below.

<https://www.nhsgrampian.org/covid-19/covid-19-public-information/subpages/covid-19-community-testing/>

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/self-help-guides/self-help-guide-coronavirus-covid-19>

### Current Safety Measures

The changes to the safety measures we have in place have remained the same as they were before summer. The Scottish Government has advised that these will be reviewed later this term if not before, again it will depend on the scientific evidence to support any changes. I would ask for your continued support of these measures and reinforce this with your child(ren). We all hope things will change soon, but if we can hold on for that wee bit longer it will ensure we are all safe and schools will remain open for the whole year.

#### The current measures that will continue are:

- We **must adhere** to the social distancing guidance between staff and pupils.
- Face coverings **must be** worn in all indoor spaces where we are in the company of others. Face coverings can only be removed when outside and a safe distance from others.
- Lateral Flow Testing must continue as this is another measure that has proven to help identify cases more rapidly.
- Regular hand washing and routine application of sanitiser throughout the day.
- Following the one-way system.
- Staggered lunch break.

We are expecting further updates over the next few weeks and any changes will be shared with you as soon as they are confirmed.

### Lateral Flow Testing

This is optional for all pupils who wish to continue testing as part of the universal testing offer. Please note that testing should be carried out on a Sunday and Wednesday. If your child needs a replacement kit, these are available from the school hall Monday and Thursday lunchtimes. We have also started delivering test kits to BGE classes across the week to make sure they have enough supplies.

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## COVID-19 Vaccinations

The COVID vaccination team have been in school to support the vaccination of our 16 or 17 year olds. It was encouraging to see many of our senior pupils have already had one or both doses which just demonstrates how responsible our young people are. Well done everyone for supporting our efforts to keep our school community safe!

## School Flu Immunisation Programme

We have received a letter from the Scottish Government about the plans to extend the flu immunisation programme to secondary school pupils this session. Public Health Scotland will provide a flu education pack with resources so that you have as much information as possible. The proposed date for the programme to start is the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Further information will be issued in due course but the website noted below is a good starting point for more details: [www.nhsinform.scot/childflu](http://www.nhsinform.scot/childflu)

## SQA Update

Last week the SQA set out the key detail on plans for assessment of National Qualifications in 2021-22. This follows confirmation from the Cabinet Secretary for Education that exams will be held for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses this session.

The Cabinet Secretary has informed parliament that, *'The central planning assumption is that an examination diet for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses will be held in session 2021-2022. This decision has been informed by the views of stakeholders, including the National Qualifications Group, and by public health advice.'*

SQA exams will take place from **26 April to 1 June 2022** with results day on **9 August 2022**.

Once more information is available we will share this with you as soon as we have it. It is clear that while planning for exams is a priority it clearly depends on any further impact of the COVID-19 pandemic across the school year, making our following the safety measures a crucial part of the process to successfully reach the exam diet.

## School Counselling

This year we have a new school counsellor at KGS. Chrissy MacDonald is available to provide support for our young people on a range of areas that may affect their school life and their learning. Pupils can book an appointment with Chrissie using the QR code below or from the information on the Pupil Support notice board in school.



*"Hi, my name is Chrissy and I am Keith Grammar School's counsellor. I am available every Wednesday, please use the QR Code to make an appointment or speak to your Guidance Teacher. You will find more information, as well as the QR Code on the 'Pupil Support' Noticeboard in the corridor."*



Please take care and have a relaxing weekend

Best wishes

Alan Bruce

Head Teacher