**AUCHENHARVIE ACADEMY**

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**Reopening of Auchenharvie Academy – August 2020**

Dear Parent/Carer

I am delighted to finally be able to write to you with further details of how our building will reopen in August 2020. Until now I have been asked by the local authority to refrain from publishing full details until the model used to reopen all schools in North Ayrshire was officially approved at council level. I apologise in advance for the length of this communication but I feel it is important that you are aware of our plans for returning in August.

Before I set out in detail arrangements for reopening our school in August I want to thank you all for the efforts you have made during lockdown to maintain your child’s education. Please do not panic or worry about how much work has been missed during this time. Our staff will adopt a positive mind-set to all pupil’s education and we will continue to work tirelessly to make up for any gaps in learning that have occurred since schools closed in March. Our initial primary focus will be on pupil wellbeing but this will turn quickly to additionally supporting literacy / numeracy and all other aspects of learning.

**Model for school reopening.**

As you are aware all secondary schools in North Ayrshire will initially adopt the same model for pupils returning in August although individual schools will have the flexibility to timetable the school day as best meets our context and circumstances (room capacity / staffing / transport etc)

Pupils in S1/6 will be grouped into two cohorts – Group A and Group B and you should already have been notified which group your child has been allocated. If you do not have this information then it is essential that you contact us as soon as possible.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Monday** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** |
| **Group A** | **In School** | **In School** | **Home Learning** | **Home Learning** | **Home Learning** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Group B** | **Home Learning** | **Home Learning** | **Home Learning** | **In School** | **In School** |

Each day when pupils are in school they will follow a timetable which is slightly different to a ‘normal school day’. We feel that the time taken to sanitise hands etc would impact negatively on the amount of learning possible in the usual 50 minute period. Pupils in S4/5/6 will follow the subjects they chose earlier in the school year and will be working towards the SQA arrangements for certification in August 2021. Pupils in S3 will also follow their chosen subjects while pupils in S1/2 will continue to follow a Broad General Education.

The school day in August will be structured as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Period**  | **Time** |
| **Daily Wellbeing insert** | **0845-0900am** |
| **Period 1** | **0900-1000am** |
| **Period 2** | **1000-1100am** |
| **Morning Break** | **1100-1120am** |
| **Period 3** | **1120am-1220pm** |
| **Lunch** | **1220-1300pm** |
| **Period 4** | **1300-1400pm** |
| **Period 5** | **1400-1500pm** |

Pupils will therefore experience a 10 period school week (2 days each of 5 periods) however this will be structured as a 20 period school fortnight to allow for maximum exposure to all subjects available.

Pupils attending in Group A will be given work home over a Monday and a Tuesday to be completed at home over the remainder of the week while pupils in Group B will be given work home over a Thursday and a Friday for completion at the start of the week. In S1/2/3 each subject has been asked to provide the equivalent to 1 hour of home learning work with the exception of English / Maths / HWB whole will provide 1.5hrs of work each week. This will vary for subjects in the senior school.

As far as possible home learning work will be in paper version to eliminate the issues many families have reported they have had accessing online work. Paper copies of work issued as part of this blended learning approach will be returned to school by pupils when they next return to the individual subject.

We are confident that within a couple of weeks of returning to school under these new conditions that Auchenharvie will be in a strong position to adopt our own model and we are currently working on plans to upscale our offering to pupils. Priority will be given in the first instance to pupils in S4/5/6 who are studying SQA courses and to how we can extend the time spent in school in front of teachers. Maximising time in school is our main priority although we are only able to function within the framework of national regulations on social distancing which impact on class capacity. We hope to be able to upscale to senior pupils being in school for 4 full days in the week swiftly upon our return and we will communicate this to you soon after our return in August.

The arrangements for the first week back are as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Day / date** | **Arrangement****Group A** | **Arrangement** **Group B** |
| **Monday 10th August 2020** | **Holiday – staff in-service** | **Holiday – staff in-service** |
| **Tuesday 11th August 2020** | **In School** | **Home Learning** |
| **Wednesday 12th August 2020** | **Home Learning** | **Home Learning** |
| **Thursday 13th August** | **Home Learning** | **In School** |
| **Friday 14th August 2020** | **Home Learning** | **In School** |

**Risk Assessment.**

In conjunction with colleagues at North Ayrshire Council Health and Safety department a full and comprehensive risk assessment has been completed specifically for our school building. This has been shared with all staff in detail and the operational aspects of this will be shared with all pupils immediately upon their return to school in August. A copy of the risk assessment for Auchenharvie Academy has also been attached to this communication and will be posted on our school website. I would encourage all parents/carers to read this at your earliest convenience. This contains important information about pupils being dropped off and picked up and also about parents visiting school. It also contains details of procedures if a suspected case of COVID-19 occurs and arrangements for parents/carers entering the building for meetings. Please note that an abbreviated version of the risk assessment document will be sent to all parents / carers which summarises the key health and safety points prior to school returning in August. As is standard practice the risk assessment document will be constantly reviewed to reflect the safest practices in our school.

**School Uniform.**

As previously intimated we would encourage all pupils to return to school in full uniform in August. This is primarily for safety, security and safeguarding purposes.

Please see the extract below from my communication of 22/6/20 for details of when school will be open for parents / carers to purchase school ties. All pupils are being encouraged to come to school wearing their PE kit on the days when they are timetabled for this subject.

***To assist with school uniform for next session our school office will be open from Monday 3rd August from 10am-1pm to allow you to purchase school ties. Pupils in our incoming S1 have all been provided with school ties during their successful transition days this week.***

**Start of the day / Morning break / Lunch / End of the day.**

As you will see from the risk assessment document pupils are encouraged to arrive at school for 0840am. Please try to avoid sending pupils to school prior to this time to avoid issues with social distancing in the school playground. The school building will open to pupils at 0840am and each year group have been allocated an entrance point to the building. These will be clearly signposted for our return in August. Pupils will line up outside the identified entrance observing social distancing markings and will sanitise their hands whilst having their name taken for registration purposes. Pupils will be advised which class to go to on the first day of their return and they will receive their timetables at this point. Very clear markings are in place both in corridors and stair wells to highlight the one way system which will operate in our school.

Each day will start with a 15 minute wellbeing insert which will focus on supporting the mental and physical wellbeing of pupils and this will be delivered in the same class as period 1 learning.

During the school day there will be restrictions on the number of pupils who can use the school toilets at any one time. To support this, teachers will (unless in emergencies) only allow one pupil out of each class to use the toilet at any one time. We are also discouraging pupils from consuming excessive amounts of water during the school day to minimise the potential number of visits to the toilet.

At morning break pupils will be dismissed to the school playground and the pitches at the leisure centre side of the school will be used for identified year groups to allow us to obey social distancing rules. Can I please ask that pupils bring a snack with them for morning break as the canteen will be unable to cope with the usual volume of traffic during such a short period of time. At the end of morning break pupils will again enter the building through the designated year group entrance, sanitise their hands and report to their next timetabled class.

For the first couple of weeks upon our return pupils in s1/2 will be released 10/15 minutes early from class at lunchtime. Canteens have been reconfigured to minimise likely traffic and full details of how these will operate will be given to pupils on their first day back in August. I am advised that there will be no cash payments in our canteens and that North Ayrshire Council will communicate directly with families to set up cashless payment systems. Pupils will be permitted to leave the school grounds at lunchtime to help with social distancing issues. I understand that parents/carers of the new S1 may wish to insist that their child remains in school during lunch for an initial period of time and we are happy to support this but will not be in a position to ‘police it’ .As our canteens can only accommodate 24 pupils each we will be opening the assembly hall which can accommodate a further 56 at lunchtimes for pupil use. Pre ordered meals will also be served here. At the end of lunch break pupils will again enter the building through the designated year group entrance, sanitise their hands and report to their next timetabled class.

At the end of the school day pupils will be asked to leave the building and to make their way away from the school grounds to home. We would ask for your support in encouraging pupils to observe social distancing rules at this potentially very busy time of the school day. For the first two school weeks there will be no extra-curricular activities but I hope to phase these back in quickly thereafter.

During the course of the school day we are trying to minimise the amount of movement around the school so in some cases pupils may remain in the same room for more than one period while teachers rotate around the building. When pupils do leave one room to travel to another they will be provided with a wipe to clean down their desk, chair and any other equipment they have used during that period. This will be disposed of in the class. Pupils are welcome to bring their own stationary to school but must not share this with any other pupils. Pupils who do not have the correct stationary will be provided with pencil/ rubber etc which again will be for their use only.

**Senior student support – August 2020.**

Those of you with pupils in the senior school will know that the SQA will be releasing results on Tuesday 4th August. As is always the case some pupils will require an appeal while others may wish to change their options before the school year starts. To support this process you can contact school on Wednesday 5th August to arrange an appointment to deal with any of these matters. School will be open on Thursday 6th August 10am-3pm and Friday 7th August 10am-1pm to attend to these matters. I am sure you will appreciate that unlike previous years when we have operated a drop in service that we are moving to an appointment system to allow us to comply with social distancing regulations.

In conclusion, I apologise again for the length of this communication but I do feel it is essential that you are as fully informed as possible. I hope that you find the information contained here useful and as ever my senior staff and I are happy to answer any questions you may have. Please get in touch using the usual channels if this is required.

I wish you all a happy and healthy summer break and I look forward to working with you all in the new academic session.

Yours sincerely,



Calum Johnston

Head Teacher

Auchenharvie Academy