**AUCHENHARVIE ACADEMY**

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**Date: 16th September 2020**

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am aware that it has been a couple of weeks since I have been in touch to keep you all updated on the latest developments and updates relating to our return to school during this global pandemic. Before I do so however, I hope that this letter finds you all safe, well and coping during these difficult times.

As ever we continue to work tirelessly to support our pupils on an individual basis. We have experienced a large volume of young people presenting to us distressed following their experience of lockdown and in many cases struggling to return to the normality of the school day. To support our pupils we are focussing very much on positive relationships, wellbeing and nurture and we are also working in very close partnership with our external agencies who continue to support us in supporting the emotional and mental wellbeing of our pupils.

Unfortunately, the government advice on arrangements for Physical Education have not changed and we are therefore obliged to continue with outdoor PE only until at least the 5th of October when this will be reviewed again. I would like to thank you for your ongoing support and patience with this. Can I please ask that pupils are reminded that if they are wearing their PE kit to school that they are not in classes wearing shorts? Pupils choosing to wear PE kit to school should ensure that they are also wearing trousers or tracksuit bottoms to avoid this. Pupils are also reminded that they must wear full school uniform on all other days when they do not have PE.

We are very aware that a number of our pupils who study Music are missing out due to government restrictions on rules for singing. We are currently piloting amended arrangements for our certificated pupils for whom singing is a significant aspect of their coursework. This involves singing outside (in a quiet space behind Music) under careful restrictions and assuming this pilot is successful we will be looking to extend this into other year groups swiftly.

Earlier this week you will have received a message from me regarding where pupils are and are not allowed to visit at lunchtime. Your help and support in enforcing this is greatly appreciated as we aim to keep pupils safe in the community. Thanks in advance for this.

The overwhelming majority of pupils are doing really well in remembering to wear facemasks when they are in communal areas of the school such as corridors, stairwells and social areas. There are however a minority who, despite not being exempt from wearing facemasks, continue to ‘forget’ about their social responsibility. I would ask all parents and carers to reinforce the importance of wearing facemasks to all pupils and to insist that this government regulation is enforced. All pupils are also reminded that the wearing of facemasks in public places and on public transport is also mandatory and that these laws should also be followed on the way to school, at lunchtime and on the way home.

Finally, during lockdown our depute heads and our pastoral care teachers were making regular phone calls to many families and during these calls it was identified that a lack of access to IT was causing a real issue in terms of accessing and completing work from home. North Ayrshire Council, funded by the Scottish Government, have vowed to provide this IT access and I am delighted to say that we have now taken receipt of Chromebooks for all pupils who require these based on lockdown conversations. Pupils will be given a contract for safe use of the Chromebooks this week and when this is signed and returned they will be issued with the Chromebooks. These are not to be brought to school every day and are to be used to support learning at home.

I hope you find this information useful and as ever if you wish to discuss any matter relating to school please just contact me using the details above.

Yours sincerely,



Calum Johnston

Head Teacher

Auchenharvie Academy