**AUCHENHARVIE ACADEMY**

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**Date: 8th October 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, and as always, I hope that this letter finds you all safe, well and coping during these difficult times.

I would like to start by thanking you all for your ongoing support during these very tricky times. My staff and I who have had cause to meet and speak to parents/carers have been delighted with the levels of support we have received this term.

I am delighted to report that we have had no positive test cases for COVID-19 and long may this continue. However, to achieve this we continue to seek your support in reinforcing the health and safety messages to pupils regularly at home. Whilst the overwhelming majority (I estimate 97-98%) of pupils are fully compliant with our school specific rules such as facemasks, one-way systems, stair wells, sanitising, cleaning workspaces, door entry points etc. there remains a small number who do not see these as their responsibility and sometimes challenge staff when these rules are being enforced. Please work with us to ensure that all pupils are complying with the regulations in the coming term.

I also wanted to thank all parents/carers for their involvement in helping us to write our school improvement plan. This will be published on our website prior to the October break. I have also used Groupcall to contact parents/carers to seek any interest in becoming involved in school improvement working groups. If you are interested or would like further information please just contact the school and I would be delighted to help you.

We are currently working with colleagues at North Ayrshire Council to establish what, if any, arrangements can be made for parents’ evenings this session and I will keep you updated as these discussions develop. I am sure you will appreciate that the logistics of organising a parents’ evening in a secondary school is very different to that of a primary school. In the event that these cannot take place we have developed contingency plans based on additional reporting. The facility to make contact with school pastoral, faculty head and senior staff will still remain so that we can best support you to support pupils throughout the session.

As things currently stand the Scottish Government have still not relaxed the rules on how Physical Education should be delivered in schools. This means that after the October break we will continue to operate a limited outdoor PE programme with the same contingency plan wellbeing/personal development award for wetter days when PE is not possible. Pupils are therefore still permitted to come to school wearing their PE kit if they choose although temporary changing facilities are also available. Can I please seek parental support again to ensure that if pupils are coming to school wearing PE kit that they wear trousers / tracksuit bottoms over their shorts. Pupils should not be in classes wearing shorts.

Finally, you will have heard the statement made by the Scottish Government about the revised plans for the examination diet for May 2021. It has been decided that National 5 examinations will be cancelled next year and be replaced with internal coursework and assessment which will be marked by teachers. The Higher and Advanced Higher examinations are still scheduled to take place as planned. I am sure that after the October holiday further discussions about the implications of this will be discussed at local authority and national level and I will of course keep you informed with any relevant updates. What I would like to say at the moment however, is that the all staff at Auchenharvie Academy will continue to organise courses and plan learning and teaching in such a way that maximises every opportunity for all pupils (including Higher and Advanced Higher) to gather as much evidence as possible. We will leave no stone unturned to do the best for our pupils and this will continue throughout the session. Equally, if a pupil (or a parent/carer) is feeling anxious or distressed about the decisions taken nationally and is concerned about how this might impact on their/their child’s future we will do our very best to support them and to reassure them as best we can. Please contact us directly if this is required.

In conclusion, I hope you all have a resting and relaxing October break and I look forward to seeing and continuing to work with you all in the new term.

Yours sincerely,



Calum Johnston

Head Teacher

Auchenharvie Academy