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Education and Families

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Dear Parent/Carer

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. I am writing to you to update you on the plans for school returning next week. North Lanarkshire Council is fully implementing Scottish Government guidance for the return to schools. It is important to emphasise that no single measure can make schools as safe as possible. However, we at Our Lady's, will do everything we can to welcome our pupils back safely.

I understand that some parents and young people will have anxieties about returning to school. The health and wellbeing of young people is our priority. It is expected that all pupils will be able to return to school unless otherwise advised by a medical professional. If there are any issues you wish to discuss with us then please contact your child's pupil support teacher.

Every school has been through an individual risk assessment. An enhanced daily cleaning regime is in place. Cleaning staff will focus on touchpoints during the day as well as at the end of the day.

Pupil Return

Schools in North Lanarkshire will return on a phased basis from Wednesday 12 August, following an in-service day on Tuesday 11 August.

The arrangements are as follows:

Wednesday 12 August: First Year, Second Year, Third Year.

Thursday 13 August: First Year, Fourth Year, Fifth Year, Sixth Year.

From Friday 14 August: All pupils.

The school has signage to assist with the safe movement of pupils around the building and allow space for physical distancing between staff. Signage indicates the direction of travel and a 'keep left' policy is in place in corridors and stairs.



There will be different entrance and exit points for each year group which will be clearly signed. Pupils will be instructed to use hand sanitiser every time they enter the building. Different areas of the canteen will be marked out for different year groups.

School Uniform/Equipment

Pupils should wear their school uniform. Uniforms should be washed as normal. Bags, pencil cases and lunch boxes can be brought into the building but items should be limited where possible. Pupils are asked not share stationery. Bags should not be placed on desks or tables. They should be placed on the floor.

Drop off/Pick up

School transport will be available as normal to eligible pupils. Scottish Government guidance states that school transport should be treated as an extension of school, i.e., that no physical distancing is required.

School buses will drop young people off in the bus bay and pupils will walk to their respective entry point/yard.

We would ask that parents drop pupils off as far away from the school as possible. A dedicated drop off point for parents is at the entrance to Ravenswood sports area (at the bottom of the hill). The car parks around the building are for staff only.

We would encourage young people to walk to school if at all possible.

School Entry/Exit

Hand sanitiser will be placed at entry points and must be used by everyone every time they enter the building. Frequent hand washing will also be encouraged.

S1/S2 Pupils will enter/exit the school at the traditional pupil entrance. S3/S4 will enter/exit through the main canteen door and S5/6 will enter/exit through the door at their social area. S1 will socialise in the red yard, S2 in the green yard and S3 in the yellow yard. The yards have signs on them and we will familiarise pupils with these arrangements when they return next week.

Parents/Visitors to the School

At this time it is not possible for parents/carers to visit the school. If you are concerned about any aspect of school life please contact your child's pupil support teacher by phone and they will call you back as soon possible.

Parents/Carers should not enter the building or the school grounds at this time.

School Life

No assemblies will take place at this time and there will be no gatherings of large groups of pupils. Smaller groups may come together at various times but this will be limited.

At this point we have been advised that it is unlikely that school to school travel will take place for senior students wishing to access subjects at a local school.

It looks likely that we may be making some changes to the timetable to allow for double periods for all pupils. This measure would be implemented to reduce movement around the school as much as possible.

School bells will be altered to allow for staggered movement around the building. Pupils will be issued with further information next week.

Physical Education

Guidance from the Scottish Government advises that Physical Education lessons should take place outdoors at this time. This means that young people will need to be prepared for inclement weather and should bring appropriate clothing and footwear.

Personal Protective Equipment

Scottish Government guidance states that pupils do not routinely require to wear face coverings. However, should pupils wish to do so, that is perfectly acceptable.

Staff will not require to wear face coverings provided physical distancing can be maintained from pupils, however they may choose to do so. Where that is not possible, and staff are closer than two metres for 15 minutes or more, staff will be required to wear face coverings.

Leaving School at Interval and Lunchtime

In Our Lady's High School we do not routinely allow pupils in S1, S2 or S3 to leave the school grounds during the day. We are asking that all pupils to remain in school at interval and lunchtime. However, should a senior school pupil leave at interval or lunchtime they must comply with Scottish Government guidance, for example in wearing a face covering in shops.

A final word for now

We will be delighted to welcome our young people back to Our Lady's next week. As you can appreciate the world we live in is constantly changing, I will update you on any changes to the information contained in this letter.

All pupils will be met by a member of staff on their first day and issued with their timetables and all of the information that they will need.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your support during this very difficult time. We have missed our young people and pray that we are moving to brighter times for everyone.

Kind regards

Mrs Cunningham
Head Teacher