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Education and Families

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School Return Update

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are now able to offer you the specific details of your child's return to school. From previous correspondence from NLC you will know that the following arrangements are in place for the phased return of pupils:

Wednesday 12th August – **P1**, P2 and P3
Thursday 13th August – **P1**, P4, P5, P6 and P7
Friday 14th August – **All** pupils return

As we are a very busy joint campus, we have taken certain decisions which may differ from other schools around the authority and in working together with New Stevenston Primary we have finalised our plans with Pupil and Staff safety at the fore and we have tried our best to be considerate of working parents and those with additional child caring responsibilities. Within this letter will be details surrounding everything you will need to know/consider for your child's return next week.

Some of the following, particularly around how we get to meet and interact with our parents is going to be very different from our usual way of working and we cannot wait for the day when we no longer need these measures. If you haven't already done so I would encourage you to read the government guidelines on returning children to school and the FAQs on North Lanarkshire Council's website. Although the decision has been made to return all pupils to school in August the guidance and guidelines show that it is not, unfortunately, 'business as usual'.

We have decided not to have a 'staggered start' for our campus. This means that when attending school, pupils (with the **exception of P1** on day 1) will start and finish at their usual time (9am – 3pm). We hope this offers our families some support in order to return to your normal day as much as is possible.

Please, wherever possible, do not collect pupils out with school hours. Even taking your child out of school slightly before the final bell would make our general plans impossible and would cause us to have to reconsider our arrangements and their effectiveness.



Class	Teacher	Entry/Exit Arrangements
P1	Mrs McCargo Mrs Neary	Attend Wed, Thurs & Friday : Pupils enter at double gates (see plan) with parents at 9.30 on Day 1 only . From Thursday onwards, 9am at double gates. Pupils collected from gate at 2.30pm on Day 1 only – children will be brought out by staff. (3pm from Thursday onwards)
P2	Miss Park	Attend Wednesday and Friday – normal times, double gates. 9am – 3pm
P3	Mrs Slavin	Attend Wednesday and Friday – normal times, double gates. 9am – 3pm
P4	Miss Mulvaney	Attend Thursday and Friday – normal times, double gates. 9am – 3pm
P5	Mrs Henderson	Attend Thursday and Friday – normal times, double gates. 9am – 3pm
P6	Mrs Allan	Attend Thursday and Friday – normal times, double gates. 9am – 3pm
P7	Mrs Carroll	Attend Thursday and Friday – normal times, double gates. 9am – 3pm

Primary 1

P1 will start at 9.30am and finish at 2.30pm on **day 1 only**, (*moving to a 9am – 3pm day from Thursday onwards*) to offer them some calm and to allow our staff to ensure the process is safe and to help set the children up well for following days. Parents (only) of P1 pupils can accompany the children into the school playground where there will be markers carefully set out on which we ask that you stand with your child. This is the only way we can ensure the safe social distancing of yourselves as adults within our playground and it will only be possible if you strictly adhere to staying in close proximity to your own child (*this will **only** be for day 1 and thereafter staff will collect P1 pupils from the double gates*). The Primary 1 pupils will then be escorted into class by their teachers. It is not permitted for any adults, other than staff to enter the school building. It is a difficult thing to ask of you, I know, but it's important that all parents leave the playground as soon as the children have entered the school building. We will ensure we take a photograph of each child at their new desk and will provide you with this. At pick up time, (2.30pm for P1 on day 1 only) we will carefully dismiss our P1 pupils from the single gate at the side of the playground (plan included to show location). Please consider social distancing and avoid large numbers of adults congregating here, this area is for parents only and it will ensure children aren't overwhelmed as they leave after their first day. All P1 pupils will eat their lunch together under teacher supervision whether packed lunch or school dinner. Quite often we see P1 pupils fighting their way through huge and varied piles of snacks and lunches and they can become distressed as they feel they must finish it all. A light lunch would be best and will allow children to maximise their time playing with new friends outside.

Our normal drop off each morning is generally a calm affair, with children arriving at regular but spaced out intervals, avoiding bottle necking and crowding and both schools will rely on this supportive and sensible approach to allow us to continue to avoid the need for staggered starts. The large double gates into the playground will be opened to offer more space for pupils arriving in the morning and these will be used for exiting school at 3pm too (plan included to show location).

When pupils are within the playground they will be safely directed to zones, located around the yard that they will be required to stay within.

If your child is old enough and confident enough to approach the gates into the playground on their own, then please consider not accompanying them through the school carpark as a gathering crowd of parents at this point would seriously impact our ability to operate safely. Likewise, please follow government advice and avoid bringing your car into the school carpark if there is any way you can avoid it. All parents are asked to leave the school grounds immediately after dropping off their child, whether this be on foot or by car. Our joint campus

families always employ common sense and kindness at pick-up and drop-off times and it is no understatement that we are fully relying on you to do this upon our return to school. Our role as staff will be to ensure the robust safety of our pupils within the school gates. Again, for our older pupils, at the end of the school day, if you are able to agree a meeting/collection point for your child away from the school gates then please consider this.

School Uniform

Our advice with regards to school uniform will not change initially as we return next week. Pupils can wear every single item of their formal uniform other than their school ties. We expect to be able to ease the restriction on ties quite soon although I would again point out that there will be no pressure at all to quickly provide a tie for your child at that stage. Pupils may also wear their school polo shirt at all times if that is more suitable and as previously communicated pupils may wish to wear dark tracksuit bottoms or dark leggings. We will use our outdoor areas as regularly as possible for play and learning so sensible clothing choices for jackets and footwear is advised (footwear should be dark and not brightly coloured trainers etc.). Please label every item that can be labelled.

School Bags

As a school and campus we are very restricted for space. School bags will not be permitted to be brought from home, initially, as these would require to be stored at each child's feet under their desks which would leave children with very little room to move when seated. Pupils' jackets will be stored in our cloakrooms, increased spacing between pegs means there will be nowhere to hang school bags, initially.

Water Bottles and Packed Lunches

The only additional items that each child should bring with them to school is a filled water bottle and a packed lunch box/bag. We are not permitted to use the water fountains in school so bottles cannot be refilled during the day. Packed lunch bags could be used for snacks even if your child is a school dinner that day. Water bottles and lunch bag/box will sit underneath each child's chair and no-one else should touch or handle this during the school day other than the child, in order to reduce risk.

Personal Equipment

Pupils are not required or permitted to bring any pens, pencils etc. into school. Everything they need will be provided each day and we will manage the use of resources to avoid unnecessary sharing/handling with each pupil having their own equipment.

School Lunch

Payment for school dinners is now completely cashless. No pupil should bring cash to school and it cannot be added to an account on the premises.

We request that all children once in school stay in school and do not go home for lunch.

Many parents/carers have already signed up to online payments however for those of you who have not then please see the guidelines below:

<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=22284>

Paying through iPayImpact you are able to pay securely online 24/7 using debit/credit card for all school meals and all other school expenses.

Should you have any other questions in relation to the above, please contact the school office or email onlineschoolpayments@northlan.gov.uk

Increased Hygiene/Handwashing

We have hand sanitiser units at each entry point to our school and outside each staff and pupil toilet area. We will encourage pupils to use these regularly and each teacher will discuss how and when to use them with pupils. We will make regular, planned use of our sinks located in the main teaching bays. Pupils are permitted to bring their own hand sanitiser with them if reasonably sized.

Masks and Face Coverings

The latest scientific advice from the Scottish Government indicates that there is no requirement for primary aged pupils to socially distance when they return to school in August.

Adults should still maintain a 2m distance between themselves and other adults, and themselves and pupils, where possible.

It may be necessary at times for staff to wear a face mask if they were to be working in closer contact with a pupil for a long period of time or when administering first aid. In order to help us to maintain social distancing between adults and children, we would request that you consider items of clothing that your child may need adult support with (shoe laces, zips etc.). Our staff will introduce the use of a mask very gently if needed and we will be explaining and discussing this with pupils in classes to avoid any confusion/upset. Scottish Government and North Lanarkshire Council advice is currently that generally there is no need for a teacher to wear a mask (there are exceptions) but they will have the option to do so if they wish. As a general rule, pupils are not required to wear face coverings unless clinically advised to do so.

Breakfast Club

The latest scientific advice from the Scottish Government indicates that there is no requirement for primary aged pupils to socially distance when they return to school. However, it is important for adults to retain their social distancing during the breakfast club sessions.

To enable parents to return back to work our breakfast club will commence on Wednesday 12th August '20. (8.15am and 8.45am entry to zoned playground)

Visitors to Schools / Establishments

Parents and carers will **not** be permitted to enter into school buildings unless there is an absolutely necessity for them to do so. If a parent or carer needs to enter the school building, face masks must be worn as per government guidance. All visitors will be required to complete track and trace information.

For the first time in our campus history our pupils will have their breaks at different times. This decision was made with very heavy hearts. We have a duty to ensure within each individual school we avoid groups of children ('bubbles') mixing and this is a big enough challenge for each separate school. We know our campus reputation of friendship is well established and we hope to return to shared breaks as soon as possible. It seems wise for us to assess how our new normal looks with reduced numbers before we think about both schools sharing break times. Again this decision was made with nothing other than pupil safety and pupil experience in mind.

We look forward to the successful return of our pupils next week, we are all incredibly excited and can't wait to see all of the boys and girls again. Your patience and trust in us as a school has been incredible and it has made our job so much easier. We have tried wherever possible to only issue advice and information when it has been verified as being definitive and sound. Thank you again for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M Dinsmor
Head Teacher

