Dear Parent/Carer,

It is a privilege to be able to write to you to introduce myself as the new Head Teacher of Taylor High School. With the current safety measures and restrictions that are in place, it is a strange time to be joining a school community, but I have experienced a very warm welcome from our staff and pupils. Even with the small numbers of people in the building, and the challenges of online engagement, the warmth of the ethos of our school has been very clear.

From my initial virtual meetings with staff this week, it is very clear that the ongoing support of our young people’s learning and wellbeing is dominating our team’s thoughts, discussions and actions. We are anticipating further advice from the Scottish Government to enable us to respond to the First Minister’s recent announcement about a small number of senior phase pupils being allowed to return to engage in practical work that cannot be done at home. Again, please be assured that we will work on this guidance as soon as it is available and provide an update with our plans for taking this forward.

As we consider any increase in pupils returning to school for essential purposes, the health and safety of our pupils and teachers is foremost in our mind. To support safety and reduce risk of transmission, the Scottish Government has very recently provided COVID-19 testing kits for staff and Senior Phase pupils to use at home. You will receive an update on this early next week with information on how this will work for your young person. In addition to this you will receive a consent form which needs to be signed and returned to the school. I would kindly ask that you sign and return this as soon as possible next week so that we can support our young people to access their own personal testing kits in a safe and socially distant manner.

In the meantime, we would appreciate your ongoing support for our online learning programme. Over and above all the resources and support that are available through your young person’s class Teams, you will find attached a summary of the live and recorded learning sessions that our young people can access. Engagement of our learners online is good, but we are keen that all learners maintain a good and healthy routine at home where they can still progress in their learning.

Over the coming weeks, I would hope to be able to engage with some young people and their families directly to listen to your views and experiences. I am keen to learn about the amazing work that goes on in our school, and what your hopes are for the future. Your views and contribution to our school’s future are essential for improving our school community.

I look forward to working with you to ensure the best outcomes for our young people’s learning and wellbeing.

Yours sincerely,

Paul McWatt

Head Teacher