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Parent / Carer

Dear Parent/Carer

Re-opening of Perth Academy

We are looking forward to welcoming back our children and young people from the start of the new term on 11 August 2020.

We recognise the many challenges you have been facing as you juggle childcare, supporting home learning and working from home and would thank you for your support with online and at home learning since schools were closed in March.

Planning for the re-opening of schools has focused on maximising the amount of time children and young people will spend in school, as frequently as possible, as safely as possible. This has been guided by the key principles identified by the Scottish Government as well as consultation with professional associations, staff and feedback from parents and carers through the Council's informal poll on social media.

Our [framework](#) for the re-opening of schools was outlined recently by Sheena Devlin, Executive Director of Education and Children's Services on the Council's website: www.pkc.gov.uk/coronavirus/schools.

We have shared much of this information with you previously, but all schools in Perth & Kinross have been asked to share their most up to date arrangement in a communication with parents today.

Attendance Patterns

Schools have drawn up revised timetables that will ensure almost all pupils spend a minimum of 40% of the school week in class. In our school the arrangements will be attendance in school for every S1-3 pupil learner two days per week and attendance in school for every S4-6 pupil of three days per week. You will note that we are prioritising more time in school at this stage for learners within the Senior Phase of their education and who are on a qualification pathway within the SQA qualification framework for session 2020-21.

We are therefore now working to the following model of attendance for Term 1, with students attending school on the following days every week:

S1 - S3 Thurs and Fri

S4 - S6 Mon, Tues and Wed

Our term 1 start dates for each year groups are therefore:

S4-S6 Tuesday 11th August

S1-S3 Thursday 13th August

Transport

If your child currently receives free home to school transport, your transport arrangements for August cannot be confirmed at this time. The Public Transport Unit is looking at all transport options to support the attendance patterns of pupils who require free home to school transport. This may include larger vehicles, additional vehicles, multiple journeys and alternative transport providers.

The Scottish Government's current guidance on physical distancing means that the number of seats available on both public transport and school transport vehicles will be greatly reduced. It will not be possible for pupils to travel on school transport services in the same numbers as pre COVID-19.

Education and Children's Services and the Public Transport Unit are currently working through the implications for free home to school transport requirements for entitled pupils in August. It is anticipated that some parents of pupils who normally would travel on school transport may wish to transport their own children to school, and we would actively encourage parents/carers more widely to consider this option, where possible.

We are working closely with the Public Transport Unit regarding home to school transport arrangements for our schools and the details of this will be notified directly to parents of children who use home to school transport by the Public Transport Unit in early August.

Health and Safety

Schools have been working hard on their health and safety assessments and staff, pupils and parents will see some changes when they come to school. On arrival and departure from school, there will be provision for sanitising hands. Everyone in school will wash their hands frequently throughout the day and pupils will be reminded of the importance of hand and respiratory hygiene.

Classrooms will be laid out in line with physical distancing guidelines, and resources for learning will be selected to ensure they can be easily cleaned. It is planned that we will limit the number of times equipment and resources are physically passed between home and school, however, where this is necessary, we will look at ways of limiting the number of people in contact with equipment or how we can maintain clean resources. We will be able to provide more information on how this will be done in due course.

The frequency of the formal cleaning in school will be increased, and in addition, staff will be carrying out spot cleaning throughout the day.

If staff have to administer personal care for a pupil, or if a pupil requires first aid, the appropriate PPE will be worn. However, the focus for everyone in school will be practicing good hand and respiratory hygiene, frequent cleaning and physical distancing.

Blended Learning

All pupils will receive high-quality teaching in school complemented by home learning which is not solely dependent on digital access. We will do everything we can to ensure that teachers will have time available to support home learning remotely, and there will be a clear focus on well-being and literacy and numeracy while pupils are in school. The Council's [Remote Learning Hub](#) is also available for parents, pupils and staff to access key information and guidance whilst working and learning from home.

Uniform

School uniform requirements will be relaxed during this phase of blended learning. This is to recognise the requirement for more frequent washing of clothes and to enable pupils to undertake PE in their day clothes. Pupils should therefore attend school in clean clothing that is suitable for participation in outdoor physical activity if timetabled to do so.

This is a temporary position and will be reviewed as soon as the guidance suggests a return to uniform is practically possible.

Critical Childcare for Key Workers

Childcare from 11th August will be offered **for Primary age children**, during school opening hours for those families who have been approved as having key worker status in PKC. There will therefore be no provision at Perth Academy **for Secondary age children**, during school opening hours for those families who have been approved as having key worker status in PKC.

Perth Academy aims to continue to offer a safe breakfast club provision from 11th August from 0800hrs daily and will provide you with further detail on this before our return in August.

Structure of the School Day

We are awaiting the return of the Public Transport Unit analysis regarding home to school transport arrangements for Perth Academy. The final return on these arrangements may require us to review our start/end of the day plans.

To best manage the flow of pupils into the building, our plans currently include a staggered and “soft” start to the school day. We will ask all of our pupils who travel to school by any mode of transport other than school transport to arrive before 0845hrs to ensure that they are safely in the school building for 0900hrs. We are planning to have our buses drop off our bussed pupils at 0855hrs to ensure that they can be brought safely into the building before 0910hrs.

We aim to start our learning activity at 0910 each day with a fifteen-minute period of “reconnection time” with our learners. There continues to be a requirement for pupils to receive universal support (Home Room) as part of their in-school experience. Home Rooms at Perth Academy are vertical and require a mixing of learners, for this reason, Home Room will not operate during this phase. The “reconnection” programme will have focus on wellbeing, learner voice and guidance on how learners can make the best of the current blended learning approach.

Lunch will be staggered for 33% / 50% of the attending cohort, reducing the numbers of young people that are outside at any given time.

Lunch provision, where available, will be a cold bagged lunch on order and pick up only at designated areas.

Pupils are encouraged to bring a packed lunch. Pupils will be expected to have their lunch outside and should be prepared with appropriate clothing. There will be some provision made for more vulnerable pupils. In the event of severe weather lunch will be taken in large spaces (Games Hall / Gym) where pupils will be supervised.

We look forward to welcoming all children back into our school and would assure you we are taking every precaution to ensure they, and our staff, are as safe as can be when they return.

Yours sincerely



J Lothian

Rector