



COMMUNITY

27th August 2020

Whole-School Summer Contact 2: Preparation for Start of Term

This letter follows our last letter which can be located by [clicking here](#)

Dear Parents and Carers,

I write to keep you updated of arrangements in the run-up to the start of term and to ensure that you feel assured and clear in the school arrangements for what will be our 'Newsome Normal'. There may be future occasions and possibly difficult conversations, where there may be disagreements with some of the approaches taken by the school but I ask in advance for your patience and understanding as to why we are doing this - in the best interests and safety of your child. Rest assured that this is at the heart of our planning and we want to ensure that everyone is as safe as possible whilst keeping learning as near to normal as possible. It's also important that our school operations give the freedom to feel and be safe in and around our personal family arrangements - protecting those who we live with, visiting loved ones and not feeling you are threatening the health of the community etc. All of which we also have at the heart of our planning.

The learning inconveniences we have to prepare for are small fry when we relate back to the 'why' of such arrangements. I'm sure there will be some glitches and amendments as we all familiarise ourselves with new procedures, but one thing I am even more sure of is our amazing togetherness and ability to overcome the challenges and obstacles we face - something we demonstrate regularly. We have tried to be ahead of the ongoing national changes, and in some cases U-turns, to ensure you get absolute clarity every step of the way. This letter continues that theme with some of the decisions made in relation to face coverings. I'm hoping we have covered most eventualities since this dreadful virus began affecting education in March but we will keep the communication frequent to ensure you are well informed every step of the way.



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School decisions in relation to face coverings

- You may be aware of the national discussions and debate around face coverings following the start of Scottish schools 2 weeks ago. **Because of the local situation in relation to higher levels of transmission, we have made the decision that face coverings are to be worn by students at all times (unless instructed otherwise and/or for specific health reasons).** This rule will be in place at all times and in all areas where social distancing of 1m+ cannot be maintained which includes classrooms. Teaching can still take place as normal where teachers can remain 2m+ from students and students can remove face coverings when seated during social times to eat and drink and when outside. We have made this decision to ensure absolute safety for all in our school and it will hopefully be a small inconvenience when considering the bigger picture of why we need to do this. **We will have discussions with key students for whom this has wider health implications e.g. Hearing Impairment, Physical Impairment and those with medically certified serious health conditions which would exempt them from covering their face.**
- Students are required to bring their own face coverings which they will have already become familiar with (these are now part of the uniform). We ask that these are appropriate for a professional context and students will be asked to remove any garish, inappropriate or distracting coverings and given a plain disposable mask in its place. This shouldn't be a big ask but we request your support in the teaching of appropriate professional wear and the need to prevent any wasted time in debating this. You may have already received the pastoral email which gives more information on expectations around this.

Reminders for the start of term (apologies but these will be on every letter before we start back!)

- Below is a reminder of the start of term arrangements and I include a link [HERE](#) to a previous letter shared outlining arrangements. Please do ensure you are fully aware of arrangements so we can get back to learning both swiftly and smoothly.

WEEK 1		WEEK 2	
Monday 7th Sept	INSET	Monday 14th Sept	Year 7 and Year 11
Tuesday 8th Sept	INSET	Tuesday 15th Sept	Year 7, 11, 10
Wednesday 9th Sept	Year 7 only	Wednesday 16th Sept	Year 7, 11, 10, 9
Thursday 10th Sept	Year 7 only	Thursday 17th Sept	ALL
Friday 11th Sept	Year 7 only	Friday 18th Sept	ALL

- Students are to be in usual school uniform.*





We will start to increase the communications again in the run-up to the start of term, so that everyone feels confident and secure in the arrangements, through texts and letters where appropriate as feedback has shown that this was very much welcomed.

We are extremely grateful for all the support received from the school community and we will continue to keep in touch if there are any updates to our plans or if we need to make changes due to new or updated government advice.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Watkin', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

D Watkin Headteacher



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