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Working Together, Learning Together

To Be The Best We Can Be

Thursday 6th August 2020

Dear Parents,

Following the information provided by our First Minister on 30th July, I am delighted to share with you the information required for a full time return to education for your child(ren). Below, I have set out a series of specific areas with key information which is in line with the Scottish government return to education guidance. I must stress that although it is a full time return, it is not school ‘as normal’. All schools must follow the guidance which is set out across the 49 page document which is available for all to see here<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-preparing-start-new-school-term-august-2020/>

**Return to School**

Before the holidays I shared proposals for a full and blended return. The dates issued then remain and they were as follows:

* School will return for staff on Monday 10th August and for pupils on Wednesday 12th August.
* Pupils in P2-7 will return full time and for full days from the 12th August.
* P1 pupils have been separated into smaller groups for week one to allow a soft start (9am – 12:15pm). A reminder for our P1 parents:
* Wednesday 12th August – Group 1
* Thursday 13th August – Group 2
* Friday 14th August – Group 3
* For week 2, Monday 17th August – Friday 21st August, all P1 pupils will attend for half days (9am – 12:15pm).
* On Friday 21st August, Primary 1 will be welcome to stay for lunch with collection at 13:00.
* From Monday 24th August onwards, P1 pupils will be in school full time and every weekday

**Entry and exit Doors**

To avoid overcrowding, I would encourage you to arrive as close to the pickup and drop off time as possible. Children should arrive between 08:50 and 09:00 and not earlier where possible.

Please note that there is now a change to the proposed entrance/exit points, pick up/drop off points toilets and classrooms for some pupils. They are as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Class** | **Class space** | **Entrance /Exit** | **Drop Off Point (where possible although only one per family required)** | **Toilets** |
| **P1/2** | Room 1A | Side Door (current pupil entrance) | Half Miley | Girls Toilet in Main Corridor |
| **P3/4** | Room 1B | Fire Door by Art Cupboard | Half Miley | Boys Toilets in Main Class Corridor |
| **P5/6** | Room 2 | Gym Hall Door (pitch) | Car park | Girls/Boys Toilets in by Office |
| **P6/7** | Hut | Hut Door – in by ramp, out by steps | Car park | Girls and boys in Hut |

On arrival pupils will be asked to remain in their outdoor class area until the bell rings. We are aware that our P6 year group are split over 2 classes and therefore playground bubbles are not ideal for groups mixing however, we do hope this is a temporary measure and have ensured the two bubbles are next to each other. Areas are as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Class** | **Class space** | **Playground Space** |
| **P1/2** | Room 1A | Area by Main Reception/Side entrance and right-hand side of netball court |
| **P3/4** | Room 1B | Area by Half Miley entrance/shelter |
| **P5/6** | Room 2 | Bottom half of pitch |
| **P6/7** | Hut | Left hand half of Netball Court and top end of pitch |

**Pick Up and Drop Off**

The proposed arrangements for pick up and drop off are as follows:

* **Only** parents of Primary One and Primary Two pupils should come into the playground (and only if necessary). All other parents should not enter the school grounds; this prevents the avoidance of large groups of adults who are still required to socially distance.
* ALL Parents to complete this Microsoft Form to notify us of the collection point they will use. If you have children across two points, we recommend you go to the one for your youngest child and we will ensure the older sibling goes there too. Pick up points should be the same each day as far as possible. <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=BpPZ_i1NCUSVndDttzBKCz9IycQQ-9ZFjCUIVIPfRTZUOVEzTlRQUzVVTDc3VjYxQ1RVMERCNlJMWC4u>

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Half Miley** | **Parents to form a queue. Child to get out of the car when first in line, walk to Crossing Patroller and cross. Car to move away and next car to move to front of line. Repeat.** | **Parents to stand safely outside their car. A member of school staff to assist with crossing as well as the Crossing Patroller. Please note, the member of school staff will be wearing a mask.** |
| Parent Car Park | Parents to get out of car with child. Assess when it is safe for child to cross the car park and enter the school grounds. | Parents to be visible by standing outside their car - an adult will see the children safely across the car park to meet their parents. |

* I will be positioned at the exit point to the Half Miley at the end of each day to support the children and ensure a safe crossing alongside the Crossing Patroller. Teachers will be asked to support the car park exit. Please note staff will be wearing masks at this time.
* Visitors should be kept to a minimum. Buzzer system to be used – staff to go to door and not visitors to come into Office. Parents should not come into the school building unless absolutely necessary. Other forms of communication should be used – phone calls, voicemails, email the school office etc.

**What pupils need to bring to school**

**For now,** your child is welcome to bring a school bag containing:

* Water bottle labelled and filled. This can be safely refilled from the spout but no general use of the water fountain.
* Pencil cases can be brought to school and pupils will be encouraged not to share their personal equipment with others and their pencil case will remain in your child’s tray. School is happy to provide basic equipment if necessary.
* Trainers for PE
* No toys from home.

Your child should wear suitable footwear and, where possible, a clean uniform daily. Please note that school bags and jackets will remain in the classroom with your child. I propose that P1/2 will use the main cloakroom (spread out across all pegs) however this will be assessed when we re-access the building on Monday.

Indoor shoes are not required however if shoes are particularly dirty/muddy, the children will be asked to change into their PE trainers.

**Breaks**

* All pupils will have the same break times but will be allocated class spaces in the playground as outlined above.
* Breaks will remain at 10:30 – 10:45 and 14:00 – 14:15.
* Where possible, two members of staff will be on duty to allow each member of staff to position themselves between two bubbles.
* Playground equipment can be used for consistent groupings as per the guidance to ensure no sharing across classes.
* Once we see how the return to school looks and works, we may rotate the outdoor areas on a weekly basis to allow pupils to access all areas.
* Our playground boxes will be used with each bubble having access to one/two per week.

**Lunch**

For the first 2 weeks there will be a reduced lunch menu which will be packaged in compostable materials and delivered to the classrooms. Packed lunches are permitted.

We will have a staggered lunch as follows:

* + 12:00 – 12:45 P1/2 and P3/4
  + 12:15 – 13:00 P5/6 and P6/7

One member of staff will supervise each class area before the children move outside (kitchen staff will support with this). Kitchen staff will clean the desks ready for the afternoon learning sessions.

**Gatherings**

As you will be aware, large gatherings are not permitted and this applies to schools also. As a result Assemblies will take place virtually as they did previously. In addition, the children will not be permitted to sing in school.

**PE**

PE will take place outside, weather permitting. Children will wear their school uniform and change into their trainers. Staff will aim to provide PE lessons towards the end of the school day and we would ask that uniform is washed on this day/days.

**Library**

For the moment the library will not be used due to the 72hr decontamination period and also the small space available for pupils and staff. I would encourage you to use your local community library’s click and collect service.

**Outdoor learning**

There will be an increase in time spent outdoors as transmission rates are deemed much lower. Please ensure your child comes to school with appropriate outdoor clothing every day.

**Ventilation**

Windows and doors will be open as appropriate to increase air exchange and ventilation.

**Symptomatic child**

If your child or any household member is unwell and is displaying Covid-19 symptoms, DO NOT send your child to school. Please contact the school urgently to inform the Head Teacher and arrange a test through NHS inform.

The most common symptoms are new:

* continuous cough
* fever/high temperature (37.8C or greater)
* loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste (anosmia)

A new continuous cough is where you:

* have a new cough that’s lasted for an hour
* have had 3 or more episodes of coughing in 24 hours
* are coughing more than usual

A high temperature is feeling hot to the touch on your chest or back (you don’t need to measure your temperature). You may feel warm, cold or shivery.

If your child becomes unwell at school with Covid-19 symptoms, he or she will be isolated within the building and you will be contacted immediately to collect your child. You must prioritise collection. Staff will wear full PPE when tending to your child. If there are any positive or suspected cases within the school, the local Health Protection Team will manage the situation.

**First Aid**

Staff will wear full PPE when administering first aid and when dealing with or cleaning bodily fluids.

**Social distancing and Face coverings**

As you know, children are not required to wear a face mask and there is no social distancing for children under 12. Face masks however are optional, and your child is welcome to wear one. Staff are required to socially distance from the children and each other. Whilst a teacher is in class or working closely with a child, it is likely they may choose to wear a face covering.

Throughout the guidance there may appear to be some contradictions with guidance from out with schools. Whereby we fully appreciate this, we must follow the guidance that we are given. We have been asked to encourage consistent groupings ‘where possible’. A quote from Aberdeenshire’s Return to School Q+A page states, **‘**It is important to emphasise that the use of consistent groups (inside and in the playground) is not an all-or-nothing approach. These will bring public health benefits even if practical arrangements mean they can only be implemented partially.’

**Handwashing/sanitising**

Children will be asked to wash their hands regularly throughout day. There will be class routines in place where your child will be expected to wash their hands with warm soapy water or with the hand sanitiser available. Should you wish to provide your own soap or sanitiser please ensure it is clearly labelled. We also ask that you provide tissues for your own child’s use (a label would be most helpful).

Please note that your child **will be expected** to wash their hands each time they enter and before exiting the school, before and after eating and at various transition points throughout the day.

**Transport**

School transport is considered an extension of the school estate and some practical approaches to grouping will be provided. Further information was provided via email yesterday. Should you have any questions or concerns around transport, please contact the Passenger Transport Unit on [school.transport@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:school.transport@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) or tel. 01467 533 335.

**Learning and Teaching**

The details of what Learning and Teaching will look like in school will be discussed and explored during the INSET days next week. A class newsletter will be distributed to parents within the first two weeks of our return. Health and well-being will be a key focus area as we all reintegrate back to school.

**Quarantine**

If you are on or have been on holiday recently, please check the Scottish Government website for information on whether a quarantine period is required. We urge you to follow the guidance given to ensure the safety of all. Please email [skene.sch@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:skene.sch@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) if your child(ren) are in quarantine and when they will return to school. Appropriate absence codes have been generated for the duration of the pandemic.

**Parent partnerships**

As you are aware parental communication is key and must continue to be regular and effective. School notes delivered by the children are not possible and therefore I ask that you e mail the school office with any information. The school will continue to communicate via email, phone, our school website, Facebook and Groupcall. The current guidance from our Director of Education, Laurence Findlay is that there will no face to face meetings with parents for the remainder of this calendar year, including Parents Evenings. We will seek to find alternative ways to report pupil progress.

I am delighted to welcome the children back to school fulltime. Attendance of every child should be encouraged. If you have any concerns about your child accessing school, please get in touch. My contingency plan for blended learning remains in place should it be required at any time. I know that you are placing a great deal of trust in our Skene team to provide the safest possible learning environment for your child(ren) and as always, we will do my very best for them. All the necessary risk assessments are in place to ensure the safety of our school community. **Please contact the school if you consider your child at high risk to ensure an individual risk assessment is in place.** In return, I ask that you consider the safety and wellbeing of my staff too – please abide by the rules set out by the Scottish Government and let’s work together to keep everyone safe and learning.

Best wishes,

A Blackwood

Mrs Amanda Blackwood

Head Teacher

Skene School