

Dear Parent/Carer,

Restart and Recovery

As we progress through the new session, once again I have been impressed with the actions of our young people in adhering to the new procedures operating in our school. All those working with pupils in our school are aware that this has been the most tumultuous time for everyone. However we appreciate that for our young people in particular the changes have been significant in terms of their education. My admiration for the way in which they have adapted to the changing expectations has only deepened, and it is a pleasure to work with our young people each day in our school.

As we move through the fourth week of term we are able to reflect on how the sessions has begun. Our plan has always been to focus on 'Restart and Recovery', with the initial few weeks of the session primarily focused on ensuring our restart would be a smooth as possible, to allow our pupils to become accustomed to what is expected, and to allow all in the school community to build trust in one another. As such, a gradual, phased introduction of the various aspects of our school's life was envisaged.

Of course while we are all no doubt pleased to be back in school, there is no doubt that it is not 'business as usual', and there will be many things that pupils, staff and parents/carers will be missing from what school used to be like. Therefore it is important that in addition to planning the functional aspects of how the school operates on a daily basis, we now shift our emphasis to 'Recovery' as a school community. Consequently, the Recovery Plan has been collated, to provide a framework in which we can operate together to bring our school back even further to the values-driven community we are.

Over the next few weeks you will see gradual reintroductions of pupil-centred activity such as supported study sessions, extracurricular activities and moves towards appropriate practical learning in certain curriculum areas. Obviously all such moves will be conducted in ways that support our over-riding reopening principle of ensuring our school environment is as physical safe as possible.

Senior Phase learning

Again the way in which our senior phase learners have taken to the task of resuming in-person learning has been impressive. Similarly, their commitment to remote learning has also enabled pupil to keep their learning progressing. There is no doubt however that special attention will be required on our senior phase learners to ensure they are properly prepared for SQA assessment requirements. Faculty Heads and teaching staff keenly await final confirmation from SQA as to exactly how National Qualifications will be shaped this session. However it is clear from discussions with Faculty Heads that there is a thorough approach being adopted in supporting pupils in S4-6 in this way.

Parent/carer engagement

It is of course necessary for any thriving school to have the support and engagement of parents/carers. We recognise that families are facing a combination of challenges at present, and that engagement with one another as fellow parents/carers can be helpful. We are fortunate in Braes to have two parent-led groups. Friends at Braes our parent-led fundraising group, has its first meeting of the new session this evening at 6.30pm online. If you wish to join this meeting please email Leah Currie at friendsatbraeshigh@gmail.com. Our Parent Council holds its AGM on Tuesday

8th September at 7pm, again online and details of this meeting can be sought from Elspeth McCallum at braeshigh.parentcouncil@gmail.com.

COVID-19 symptoms

Please find the recent communication, previously issued, from Professor Jason Leith, National Clinical Director, in relation to when someone in your household has COVID-19 symptoms. The flowchart may also be helpful when dealing with such circumstances in the morning before school. Of course symptoms can also develop in people over a weekend. If that happens and you have arranged a test for someone, please follow the national procedures and contact the school on the Monday morning to update us.

Finally, I hope everyone is doing as well as possible and I would thank you for your ongoing preparation of your young people for school.

Iain Livingstone
Headteacher