

Dear Parent/Carer,

It is with positivity that we look forward to next week's phased return of our young people. Hopefully this will be a prelude to a fuller return. I would state again my gratitude to parents/carers for their unstinting support of both your young people and the school. It is this partnership between home and school that has allowed us to deal with and make the most of the current circumstances. In addition, the attitude of our young people must be praised. They have shown themselves again to be resilient, hardworking and a credit to their families and school.

With next week in mind, our mitigations will be in place to ensure the school is as physically safe as possible. These mitigations are designed to prevent any potential spread of infection, should someone at the school have COVID-19. Crucially, it is vital that no-one comes into school if they, or anyone in their household, have COVID-19 symptoms. If that is the case, the household should isolate and the person(s) with symptoms should seek a test immediately. They should not come to school until a negative test is confirmed.

School Planning – Session 2021/22

Each session and throughout the year, the school is fortunate to be well supported by our parent Council and wider parent forum in many ways. One example would be the long-standing involvement of parents/carers, along with our young people, in helping set the ongoing improvement priorities for the school. In recent sessions, our Parent Council have helped support the school in developments such as:

- our revised **anti-bullying** policy
- reviewing **course choice and careers pathway information**
- the **timing** of the S1 Parents' Evening
- developing a new **tracking** system
- raising awareness of **extra-curricular activities** on offer
- extending **leadership opportunities** into the junior years
- reviewing the **curriculum structure**
- introducing more **vocational** and alternative accreditation
- Supporting parents/carers to develop an understanding of how our **young people are assessed**, particularly in the broad, general education (S1-3)
- **Publicising and refining our provision of opportunities for parents/carers and pupils to learn together**

As we look to session 2021/22, we know that circumstances continue to be different. However what does not change is the commitment to ensuring our young people have the best possible experience and that our school continues to develop in a positive and aspirational manner. I would therefore be most grateful if you could take a few moments to complete the online questionnaire below by **Wednesday 31st March 2021**. Recognising the many commitments of parents/carers, the form has been amended to be quicker to complete.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=oyzTzM4Wj0KVQTctawUZKSzmTVBabU1Gs0nOQl1zoZNUQk1TV0dLUTgwVUM0SFhZQ0dTRDhZVU83RC4u>

In the coming weeks and months, we will also be consulting with our young people and will continue to develop our planning for the year ahead. We are grateful for the input of parents/carers as part of this process.

Pastoral Head – Pentland

Congratulations go to Laura Eckles, on her permanent appointment to the post of Pastoral Head of Pentland House. We wish Laura all the best as she continues in this role.

Easter School

To keep up the support for our young people as they head towards further SQA assessments, our Easter School will run again this year, in virtual fashion. Watch out for communications detailing the timing of the sessions.

Parent Council

A constructive and engaging Parent Council meeting took place this week, with discussion focused on the planned phased return of pupils, the arrangements for SQA assessments and positive input from our School Captains. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 5th May 2021.

To conclude, I look forward to seeing our pupils back in school in fuller numbers from next week and wish all Braes families well.

Yours faithfully,

Iain Livingstone