

BRAES HIGH SCHOOL

Phased return of pupils from 15th March 2021 – General Information for Parent/Carers

1. INTRODUCTION

General background

As outlined by the First Minister in the Scottish Parliament on Tuesday 2nd March 2021, a phased return for all secondary school pupils begins from Monday 15th March 2021. The intention of this is to allow all secondary pupils to spend some time in school between 15th March and the Easter break. The First Minister specified that senior phase pupils will have priority for face to face lessons in school. However, all secondary pupils will have an in-school experience each week up to the Easter break. However, schools are advised that where possible, all learners in secondary schools should receive some in-school experience each week. Within the blended learning arrangements, schools are advised to prioritise in-school learning for Senior Phase learners as they approach assessment for qualifications. To facilitate this, schools have been advised they may require to consider adapting the offer of remote learning.

Our approach and rationale

Our approach to planning for this initial phased return in Braes is governed by the same 3 key priorities we have adhered to over the last year :

- Ensuring our school environment is as physically safe as possible
- Focusing on the emotional wellbeing of all in our school community
- Learning and teaching

As outlined in the Scottish Government guidance on this return, we will give priority for lessons to learners who are taking National Qualifications. This is to support their preparation for qualifications under the 2021 Alternative Certification Model. In planning for this return, we must take account of the 2 metre physical distancing guidance now in place between pupils. Consequently, the school timetable must be amended, to ensure we can observe such distancing in classrooms. This means less young people in any one classroom, with more teachers required to cover the additional class sets created. Staff have worked to revise the timetable, to ensure that young people have a safe, welcoming and productive experience when in school. We must also take into account the flow and number of pupils in school at any one time, and the use of canteen and communal spaces. In doing so, this allows us to keep the emphasis on our young people's safety. This guidance will offer detail on this. In planning for this physical return to school, our approach to remote learning, which to this point has been based on almost all pupils learning at home around the structure of the normal timetable, will require adaptation.

The purpose of this guidance is to offer insight into how our school operates between 15th March and the Thursday 1st April 2021.

2. TIMETABLE AND SCHEDULE

On what days are young people to learn in school?

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Week beg 15/3/21	S4	S4	S5/6	S1/2	S3
Week beg 22/3/21	S5/6	S5/6	S4	S3	S1/2
Week beg 29/3/21	S3	S4	S5/6	S1/2	Holiday

Pupils should follow their normal timetable and go to their normal classrooms. At that point they will be redirected to alternative nearby spaces.

3. FLOW OF THE PUPIL DAY

The flow of the pupil day will be as follows :

Timing	Activity
9.00am – 9.50am (soft start from 8.50am)	Period 1
9.50am – 10.40am	Period 2
Interval	10.40am – 10.55am
10.55am – 11.45am	Period 3
11.45am – 12.35pm	Period 4
12.35pm – 1.10pm	Lunch
1.10pm – 2.00pm	Period 5
2.00pm – 2.50pm	Period 6
2.50pm – 3.40pm (Tue & Thu only)	Period 7

Pupils will continue to arrive in school using a variety of transport methods. Obviously we will encourage active travel. However we anticipate that some parents/carers will wish to transport their young people to school by car.

The default position for almost all pupils on arrival at school is that they will remain outside the building in the school grounds. On arrival in the grounds, pupils will make their way to the outside areas as designated below

Although the first lesson of the day will not begin until 9.00am, the initial bell to signal the 'soft start' to the day and managed pupil access to the building will sound at 8.50am. It is recognised that some pupils may not arrive in school until after this time. However it is anticipated that these small numbers of pupils can be fed into the flow of pupils in corridors on their arrival.

On arrival in the grounds, pupils will make their way to the outside areas as designated below :

S1 – area at the back of the school
S2 - area at the side of the school
S3 – area at the back of the school
S4 – area at the back of the school
S5 – area at the side of the school
S6 – area at the back of the school

Entry to building

At 8.50am the outside area supervisor will lead the entrance of pupils into the building, reminding pupils of the requirement to observe 2 metre physical distancing, sanitise hands on entry to the building and wear face coverings. On the days when more than year group are in school, the older year group will wait until the younger year group have entered the building.

Pupils at the side of the school will use the Drama stair doors and the PE doors. Pupils at the back of the school will use the door next to the Hub, and at the Pupil Support stairs.

Moving to period 2

On the days when we have more than one year group in the school, teachers of the younger year group should conclude their period 1 lesson at 9.45am and direct pupils to their period 2 lesson, following the one-way system. Teachers of the older year group should conclude their lesson at 9.50am and direct pupils to their period 2 lesson. To support the maintenance of physical distancing, staff will supervise corridors around their classroom.

On the days when we have only one year group in the school, teachers should conclude their lesson at 9.50am and direct pupils to their period 2 lesson.

To support the maintenance of physical distancing, staff will supervise corridors around their classroom.

Morning Interval

This will take place between 10.40am and 10.55am.

On the days when we have more than one year group in the school, teachers of the younger year group should conclude their period 2 lesson at 10.35am and direct pupils to their outside areas, following the one-way system. Teachers of the older year group should conclude their lesson at 10.40am and direct pupils to their outside area, following their one way system.

On the days when we have only one year group in the school, teachers should conclude their lesson at 10.40am and direct pupils to their outside area.

To support the maintenance of physical distancing, staff will supervise corridors around their classroom.

Outside spaces at interval and lunchtime are as follows :

S1 – area at the back of the school
S2 - area at the side of the school
S3 – area at the back of the school
S4 – area at the back of the school
S5 – area at the side of the school
S6 – area at the back of the school

Moving to period 3

Pupils will conclude their morning interval at 10.55am and will then move to their period 3 lesson, following the one-way system. Supervising staff will be on hand to direct pupils from the Hub or their outside spaces. To support the maintenance of physical distancing, staff will supervise corridors around their classroom.

Moving to period 4

On the days when we have more than one year group in the school, teachers of the younger year group should conclude their lesson at 11.40am and direct pupils to their period 4 lesson, following the one-way system. Teachers of the older year group should conclude their lesson at 11.45am and direct pupils to their period 4 lesson. To support the maintenance of physical distancing, staff will supervise corridors around their classroom.

On the days when we have only one year group in the school, teachers should conclude their lesson at 11.45am and direct pupils to their period 4 lesson.

To support the maintenance of physical distancing, staff will supervise corridors around their classroom.

Lunch

This will take place between 12.35pm and 1.10pm.

On the days when we have more than one year group in the school, teachers of the younger year group should conclude their period 2 lesson at 12.30pm and direct pupils to their outside areas or the Hub, following the one-way system. Teachers of the older year group should conclude their lesson at 12.35pm and direct pupils to their outside area or the Hub.

On the days when we have only one year group in the school, teachers should conclude their lesson at 12.35pm and direct pupils to their outside area or the Hub.

To support the maintenance of physical distancing, staff will supervise corridors around their classroom.

Outside spaces at interval and lunchtime are as follows :

S1 – area at the back of the school
S2 - area at the side of the school
S3 – area at the back of the school
S4 – area at the back of the school
S5 – area at the side of the school
S6 – area at the back of the school

Moving to period 5

At 1.10pm the outside area supervisors will lead the entrance of pupils into the building, reminding pupils of the requirement to observe 2 metre physical distancing, sanitise hands on entry to the building and wear face coverings. On the days when more than year group are in school, the older year group will wait until the younger year group have entered the building.

Pupils at the side of the school will use the Drama stair doors and the PE doors. Pupils at the back of the school will use the door next to the Hub, and at the Pupil Support stairs.

Moving to period 6

On the days when we have more than one year group in the school, teachers of the younger year group should conclude their lesson at 1.55pm and direct pupils to their period 6 lesson, following the one-way system. Teachers of the older year group should conclude their lesson at 2.00pm and direct pupils to their period 6 lesson, following the one way system. To support the maintenance of physical distancing, staff will supervise corridors around their classroom.

On the days when we have only one year group in the school, teachers should conclude their lesson at 2.00pm and direct pupils to their period 6 lesson.

To support the maintenance of physical distancing, staff will supervise corridors around their classroom.

Departure from school (Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays)

On the days when we have more than one year group in the school, teachers of the younger year group should conclude their lesson at 2.45pm and direct pupils to the nearest exit. following the one-way system. Teachers of the older year group should conclude their lesson at 2.50pm and direct pupils to the nearest exit, again following the one way system. To support the maintenance of physical distancing, staff will supervise corridors around their classroom.

On the days when we have only one year group in the school, teachers should conclude their lesson at 2.50pm and direct pupils to the nearest exit following the one way system.

To support the maintenance of physical distancing, staff will supervise corridors around their classroom.

Tuesdays and Thursdays – moving to period 7

On the days when we have more than one year group in the school, teachers of the younger year group should conclude their lesson at 2.45pm and direct pupils to their period 7 lesson, following the one-way system. Teachers of the older year group should conclude their lesson at 2.50pm and direct pupils to their period 7 lesson, following the one way system. To support the maintenance of physical distancing, staff will supervise corridors around their classroom.

On the days when we have only one year group in the school, teachers should conclude their lesson at 2.50pm and direct pupils to their period 7 lesson.

To support the maintenance of physical distancing, staff will supervise corridors around their classroom.

Departure from school (Tuesdays and Thursdays)

On the days when we have more than one year group in the school, teachers of the younger year group should conclude their lesson at 3.35pm and direct pupils to the nearest exit, following the one-way system. Teachers of the older year group should conclude their lesson at 3.40pm and direct pupils to their period 7 lesson, following the one way system. To support the maintenance of physical distancing, staff will supervise corridors around their classroom.

On the days when we have only one year group in the school, teachers should conclude their lesson at 3.40pm and direct pupils to their period 7 lesson.

Bells

Bells will ring only at the following times :

- 8.50am – ‘soft start’ managed access to building
- 9.50am – period changeover
- 10.40am – beginning of interval
- 10.55am – end of interval
- 11.45am – period changeover
- 12.35pm – beginning of lunch
- 1.10pm – end of lunch
- 2.00pm – period changeover
- 2.50pm – period changeover Tue & Thu/departure Mon-Wed
- 3.40pm - departure (Tue & Thu only)

Pupil registration

Registration will take place twice a day, in the morning and in the afternoon as usual.

Pupils who arrive late

Pupils who arrive late should enter the school at reception and follow the instructions of the staff present.

Toilet access

It is important that we manage pupil access to toilets. Therefore, the following arrangement will be in place prior to the pupil day, lunchtimes and morning intervals :

- Campsie and Lomond pupils will use the toilets outside the Hub
- Ochil and Pentland pupils will use the Senior toilets

In these communal toilets, no more than 4 pupils will be able to gain access at one time, with staff supervising access and exit.

Inclement weather

In the case of inclement weather before the school day, a decision will be taken to bring pupils into the building, where they can congregate, observing physical distancing in the Games Hall and Senior Social Space.

Pupil Dining arrangements

Pupils who do not wish to access the Hub canteen facilities should immediately make their way to the designated outside area. Pupils who do wish to access the Hub canteen should make their way to the outside space at the back of the school and queue towards the outside doors. Staff will be on hand to guide pupils. The queue will then move into and around the edge of the hall as they would normally do, observing physical distancing. There will be markings on the floor and staff to help pupils with this. There will be 2 separate serving stations to help pupils get served as quickly as possible.

Pupils will be encouraged to stay on site during lunch breaks. However we will also be advising local shops of our arrangements. Pupils will be advised on how to conduct themselves when in the local community and hygiene measures required when they return to school. If pupils decide to visit local shops they are subject to the same rules as other customers visiting those businesses.

4. MINIMISING CONTACT WITH OTHERS

Promoting Physical Distancing

2 metres physical distancing is now in place between pupils, in addition to continuing to be in place for staff in secondary schools. This applies to all learners in secondary schools including vulnerable children and the children of key workers. Guidance and reminders will be issued to pupils to maintain 2 metres physical distancing.

Meetings with parents/carers and others

The default position is that all meetings should take place remotely until further notice.

Pupils' observation of physical distancing

Our experience so far of pupils' compliance with physical distancing has been positive. The key messages will of course be reinforced to pupils regularly. Should a young person be wilfully and

continually breaching this guidance the matter will be dealt with through communication with parents/carers, the pupil concerned and potential modification of the pupil's learning arrangements.

Corridor one-way system

Some changes will require to be made to our system of how pupils make their way through corridors and stairwells. Our goal is for pupils to keep to a one-way system as far as possible.

On the ground floor, the one way flow goes from the Pupil Support corridor, through the Senior Social Space, along past reception, towards Stair 3. Pupils leaving Drama to move to their next class would move along to the area outside the Hub and then join the one way system, moving along past the senior social space and so on.

The first floor corridor will become one way, with pupils moving from the English end to the Technical end.

The second floor corridor will remain one way as it now, with pupils flowing from Modern Languages towards Science.

The third floor corridor will remain one way as it is now, with pupils flowing from the Humanities end to the Mathematics end.

Stair 1 will be for upwards travel only.

Stair 2 will be for downward travel only.

Stair 3 is for upwards travel only

Stair 4 will be for downward travel only.

At the beginning of the day, all stairs will be used for upward travel.

Although this system will bring us the benefit of one way travel, it does bring into play potentially longer journeys for pupils between classes. However it is anticipated that by adopting a policy of teachers coming to pupils where possible and appropriate, and by having fewer changeovers overall, that this can be tolerated.

5. PROMOTING GOOD HYGIENE

All in our school community have a responsibility to ensure and promote good hygiene. This includes:

- frequent washing/sanitising of hands for 20 seconds and drying thoroughly, particularly when entering/leaving the building and before/after eating
- encouraging pupils/staff to avoid touching their faces including mouth, eyes and nose
- using a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins, that are emptied regularly for tissue waste

Signage will be in place to promote personal hygiene standards. There will also be hand sanitiser at key areas. The opening of doors and windows will be encouraged to increase natural ventilation and

also to reduce contact with door handles. There will also be enhanced cleaning arrangements in schools.

Cleaning

An enhanced cleaning regime continues to be in place.

Ventilation

Ventilation will be promoted by the opening of windows and doors. Should weather conditions require, a proportionate and pragmatic approach will be adopted to ensure learning can continue in comfort. This will involve opening windows & doors at the beginning and end of periods and refreshing the classroom.

Face Coverings

The most recent Scottish Government guidance states that all staff and young people should wear face coverings at all times throughout the day.

6. LEARNING AND TEACHING

When pupils are in school, teachers will continue to deliver engaging and well planned lessons, taking into account the necessary mitigations such as distancing, wiping surfaces and not sharing materials. Pupils should follow the directions of staff and maintain distancing when entering and exiting the class.

Given the need for 2 metres physical distancing between pupils, we will have a significant number of teachers delivering learning to the young people in school on any given day. However, it is important that all pupils continue to have a productive and engaging learning experience at home. To assist with any queries you may have, we have outlined below a list of most commonly asked questions, which will provide you with clarity about what you can expect during this period of blended learning.

What is Blended Learning?

Blended Learning is exactly as it sounds – it's a blend of learning that comprises face-to-face teaching in school with class teachers as well as online learning from home. Every Braes High school pupil will spend some time in school each week before the Easter break.

When in school will pupils be taught by their usual class teacher?

The teachers a pupil normally has will be the people leading and setting their learning. As classes need to be divided into smaller groups when are in school, pupils might also be supported by another member of staff in completing their in-school activities, but it will be their class teacher who oversees and leads the learning.

Will the learning in class be different from before?

Not really. Pupils will need to remember to keep 2 metres distance from other pupils and wear their face coverings at all times (all pupils) but apart from that, pupils will be still moving on with courses and carrying out activities.

What learning will pupils do on the days when they are not in school?

When in school, pupils will be set learning activities to complete when they are at home. In addition, teachers will still continue to direct learning activities via Teams. It will be different from the current situation where teachers are 'virtually present' each period. The emphasis will be on activities that promote independent learning, consolidate the learning that is taking place in class, and in preparation hopefully for a more full return of pupils in April.

What if pupils need help with my learning in between the days in school?

Pupils can still interact with teachers via Teams. You might find that teachers are unable to provide the same live interactions you are used to but they will continue to support you as much as possible alongside in school classes to progress pupils' learning. Teachers may also direct you to other sources of learning, where you can access materials, such as www.e-sgoil.com and resources through [Education Scotland](#) or [Falkirk Council Blended Learning](#).

7. PASTORAL CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Staff across our community in Braes High School are our most valuable resource in supporting the health and wellbeing of our young people and this remains a priority. The Pastoral and Pupil Support teams will continue to provide support and guidance to young people and their families on our return to school, as they have been throughout school closures. We encourage parents and carers to continue using email wherever possible to contact our support teams. The following measures will be in place to provide pupils access to pastoral care on our return:

- Pupils will attend PSE classes on a weekly basis providing regular contact with their Pastoral Head and to support wellbeing.
- Pastoral and Pupil Support staff will be visible during social times providing an opportunity for young people to seek support.
- Pupils will not be allowed to leave classrooms to seek their Pastoral Head, gain access to nurture spaces or to see Cheryl without prior arrangement with the member of staff/Pupil Support team through their classroom teacher.
- Support staff will contact classroom teachers to arrange contact and, wherever possible, collect pupils from their lesson and return them after, using available school spaces to facilitate discussion.

We will regularly review support systems to ensure we continue to provide the best possible support for our young people and their families.

8. GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS

Support for Minority Ethnic pupils

The Scottish Government has noted that there is some wider evidence that children, young people and adults from a Minority Ethnic background who are infected with COVID-19 seem to be at higher risk of severe disease. Consequently, the concerns within Minority Ethnic communities must be recognised and individual requests for additional protections should be supported wherever possible. Our Pastoral Team will be alert to such situations with our pupils and will deal with any such situations and requests in the first instance.

What happens if a pupil presents with symptoms consistent with coronavirus?

The Scottish Government has advised that there should be a zero tolerance of coronavirus-like symptoms and that the whole school community should be vigilant for the symptoms of COVID-19. Scottish Government guidance notes that 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)

Further guidance on symptoms can be found on the NHS Inform website.

Any young person who has symptoms consistent with coronavirus should not attend school, and neither should anyone from their household. Similarly, if someone else in the young person's household has such symptoms, the entire household should isolate until that person is tested, has received a negative result and advised the period of isolation can end.

If this happens before the pupils attends school, please call to let us know. Previously, most parents/carers arranged tests directly for their young people with NHS, although we can support this process.

When in school, if it seems a young person has symptoms consistent with coronavirus, the following process will take place :

- The pupil concerned will be directed and supported to get to the medical area with all their belongings.
- The pupil will be based within a specific space in the medical area, contact will be made with the pupil's family and arrangements made for the young person to leave school to be with their family and follow NHS advice.
- The Scottish Government advise that the pupil is collected from school by an adult member of the household and not a grandparent. They will not be able to use public or school transport to make their way home.
- Until the pupil has been tested and told if it is safe to leave home, they should not come into school, and neither should anyone else from their household. If there is a positive test, the school should be informed as soon as possible.
- The class of pupils the young person was in will move to another learning space.
- The learning space the young person has been in will be cleaned accordingly.

In following this process it will be important to take care to not cause undue alarm for the young person concerned, or the other pupils in the class. Care for all concerned will be paramount.

Will pupils be able to use the lift?

Only one person will be able to access the lift at one time and queuing for its use will require to observe physical distancing. The lift will only be for use by those who absolutely need it.

Will there be signage and markings to support pupils?

Pupils will follow the school's one way system which will be marked out with signage. Floor markings will also be in place to promote physical distancing.

Is there advice for people who are clinically vulnerable people or are shielding?

Parents/carers should be aware of guidance in relation to people who are clinically vulnerable, shielding or in any other groups who may be more susceptible to poor outcomes if infected by COVID-19. This can be gained from the NHS Inform website. If families feel there is an issue for their young person in attending school, please contact your young person's Pastoral Head to discuss the matter. Pastoral Heads are of course not medical experts and will not be able to advise specifically on individual health cases. However they will be able to direct parents/carers to further guidance, and to discuss the young person's general educational provision. If your young person has an underlying health condition, is clinically vulnerable or is shielding, please ensure the school is aware of this if not already communicated.

This link gives [information on shielding, including who would be considered within the highest risk group](#). This link gives [guidance for people with underlying health conditions](#)

Is there advice about the NHS Test and Protect system?

Parents/carers should be aware of the Scottish Government's Test and Protect system. Guidance can be found at the web link below :

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/campaigns/test-and-protect>

A key message is that if someone has symptoms consistent with coronavirus, they should make sure they self isolate at home straight away and advise the school. Until they have been tested and told if it is safe to leave home, they should not come into school, and neither should anyone else from their household. If there is a positive test, the school should be informed as soon as possible.

Like all members of the public, it is possible that pupils could be advised to self-isolate by NHS contact tracing. Should this happen please contact the school and arrangements can be made to support your young person's education for the period of self-isolation.

What are the arrangements for school transport?

Maintaining appropriate distancing is recommended and arrangements should be made wherever possible for each passenger to sit on their own. For example, pupils can use staggered "zig-zag" style seating, with pupils permitted to sit alternately in window/aisle seats in each row of the vehicle or, on services where there are banks of three seats, one seat is left empty between passengers. Children and young people from the same family should be permitted to sit next to each other.

Will fire evacuation arrangements be different?

Yes. If the evacuation signal sounds, pupils should make their way to the bus bay area and gather in form classes as directed by staff, respecting 2 metres physical distancing.

Will there be extra-curricular activities?

Yes, these will start back gradually.

Will there be any larger-scale events?

Until further notice, there will be no in-person assemblies, events, concerts, shows etc. As soon as we are able to resume more normal arrangements for such event we will do so.

Will there be excursions?

Until further notice, there will be no out of school excursions. As soon as we can move to more normal arrangements we will do so.

Water dispensers

These can be used as we did prior to January 2021, with care, zero contact with the dispenser, and observing 2 metres physical distancing from other people.

School reception

Parents/carers should not normally be coming into school and instead should make contact with the school via email or telephone. The school's email address is braeshighschool@falkirk.gov.uk and the telephone number is 01324 719551. If it deemed absolutely necessary by a parent/carer to attend the school in person you should enter only by the school main entrance and follow the direction of the person at reception, observing hygiene, face covering and physical distancing protocols. The default position until further notice is that any meetings with school staff will take place remotely.

School Ethos

Our school values and ethos remain as strong as ever. We are committed towards celebrating your young person's successes both in and out of school. The link between home and school has never been more vital. Positive referrals will continue to be sent home, along with progress reports and updates.

Free Meal Entitlement

For young people who have Free Meal Entitlement, they will be able to access this as normal during lunch breaks.

School Uniform

Given the strong support for school uniform, normal expectations will continue. We are keen for pupils to experience as normal a return to school as possible, to re-establish their identity as Braes pupils, and to benefit from the security and positive ethos school uniform supports. However we do understand that some families may have had difficulty in purchasing uniform and as previously communicated we will adopt a common sense approach when dealing with young people in this regard.

Lateral Flow Testing

A significant number of pupils and staff have been participating in Lateral Flow Testing. Although not compulsory and attendance at school is not dependent on participation, taking part in this testing programme is encouraged to help keep the school community as safe as possible. Information has been emailed to parents/carers on this.