

Harris Academy

Barry Millar – Head Teacher

Perth Road
Dundee DD2 1NL

Tel: 01382 435700

Email address – harris@dundee.gov.uk
Follow us on Twitter - @harrisacadundee



Newsletter for young people, parents and carers

Respect Equality Enjoyment Achievement

22nd June 2020

Dear S1 Pupil / Parent / Carer,

With the last week of term upon us, I write to offer you a final update along with information that will support our school's return in August.

The information below has been shared with, and supported by, our Parent Council in advance of publishing.

Please be reassured that all the decisions and plans we have made are driven by our commitment to provide a safe and positive environment for our whole school community. We know that these arrangements will cause some challenges for some of our families. We have done all we can to try and minimise the impact of these but still ensure the safety of all.

The speed upon which our landscape is changing is incredibly fast. This makes planning for the future, even in the short term, very difficult.

All the plans we have shared with you here could be subject to change should Government guidance and advice shift between now and August.

Should this be the case we will continue to run with our intended plan for at least two weeks unless the Scottish Government increases restrictions at which point we will respond immediately.

If on reading this newsletter there is any key information you feel has not been covered please get in touch with us at the email address noted above by the end of this week.

Induction – Day 1

We are absolutely delighted to have the opportunity to welcome our new S1 pupils into the building for a short transition visit in this last week of term. These transition visits centre around three main areas: -

- Welcome presentation from Head Teacher and House Head
- A tour of our school building
- A short classroom session with a Guidance or SFL teacher

Our welcome presentation includes a short film created and edited by our out-going S6 pupils who were very keen to support our new S1 pupils in their transition to Harris Academy. Once the transition visits are over the film will be uploaded to our school website in the S1 Transition Tab and to our school Twitter feed.

Week beginning 10th August

On our return in August, our S1 transition will continue on **Wednesday 12th August 2020**.

All Birnam pupils should report to the school at 9am and will be finished at 11am

All Cawdor pupils should report to the school at 9.30am and will be finished at 11.30am

All Forres pupils should report to the school at 1pm and will be finished at 3pm

All Kinloch pupils should report to the school at 1.30pm and will be finished at 3.30pm

Pupils **do not** need to wear school uniform of any kind during the induction day in August.

Timetable for August

Our August timetable begins in earnest for our S1s from week beginning 17th August. We will review our curriculum offer in line with National and Local advice on a week by week basis but currently plan on S1s being in school at the following times:

Tuesdays 9am – 12pm

Wednesdays 9am – 12pm

Thursdays 9am – 12pm

We would ask that S1s arrive in time for entry into the building and for a 9am start. **With this in mind, our doors will open from 8.50am onwards but not before this time.**

Although this will be discussed in more detail with our S1s during their induction slot in August, they will enter the building using the following entry points:

Birnam pupils Clock Tower (Plaza) entrance

Cawdor pupils Front doors (Perth Rd)

Forres pupils Enhanced Provision entrance (east end of the building, top level)

Kinloch pupils Maths entrance (east end of the building, one level down via external stairs)

The school bell will be turned off during this amended timetable. This will allow a soft start and end to learning episodes to support pupil flow in and around the building.

Arrangements for lunch

Although we strongly encourage lunch to be eaten at home after our morning learning episodes or before our afternoon learning episodes, a packed lunch service (am) and packed tea (pm) will be available to order on a takeaway basis.

The logistics required were still being discussed with Tayside Contracts as we went to print and will be finalised for our August start and communicated to both pupils and parents/carers in due course.

Toilets

We are finalising our procedures for access to toilets. The use of toilets will need to be tightly monitored to try to ensure social distancing is adhered to. Pupils should be aware that there may be a queue for toilets and that social distancing must be observed when waiting. All pupils should wash their hands and use hand sanitiser after using the toilet. We will make individual arrangements for those young people who will require immediate access to toilets due to medical conditions. We will share procedures for accessing toilets during the induction visits.

Transport

Discussions are underway with colleagues in City Transport in both Dundee City Council and Perth and Kinross Council to ensure that transport is in place to support our young people who need to take the bus to travel to and from school.

To support in the planning of this Dundee City Council are asking all parents and carers of young people in Harris Academy to complete the following survey by Friday 26th June: <https://bit.ly/2YbenGX>

Whilst we are still awaiting further detail around school bus services for next session what we do know is that due to current social distancing requirements the capacity on all bus services has greatly reduced, with only 20 persons being allowed on a Double Decker bus.

Perth and Kinross Council have informed us that at the commencement of next term there will be no concessionary places available on their school bus service and that only those who are entitled to transport to school will be offered a place.

Further information will be shared with the school community via the normal channels as soon as it becomes available to us. ***At the time of printing, the Scottish Government have made face masks compulsory on public transport.***

Please note that, although we are still in discussions with the bus companies, there is no guarantee that they can support our amended timetable arrangements in full.

Curriculum

Due to COVID-19, all year groups will have a reduced amount of time in school. To maximise the time available in school, we have reorganised our curriculum offer in the following way. One period each (approx. 1 hour long) of:

 Maths  English  Modern Language	 Social Subjects  Science  Expressive Arts	 Technologies  Health & Wellbeing  SE/RE on a bi-weekly rota
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When the young people are not in school, they will continue their learning at home. This home learning will both compliment and progress the work carried out in school.

To ensure there is not an overload of work issued to pupils, our remote learning will be delivered in a Week A/B model from 17th August onwards. The table below gives more detail.

Week A w/b 17 th August and every second week thereafter	Week B w/b 24 th August and every second week thereafter
Maths English Modern Languages RE Music and Drama Business Studies Science Technical Education	Maths English Social subjects Art Computing Science Home Economics PE

Our approach to remote learning will centre around the use of Show My Homework and Microsoft Teams. Our S1 pupils will be introduced to both platforms (although we are aware that many are already using Microsoft Teams) during the induction session in August.

Equipment

Pupils should bring their own pencil case with all necessary equipment with them from class to class. Pencil case equipment should not be shared with any other pupil.

Class structure for August

Our young people will be placed in four different classes at Harris Academy as follows: -

1. **From August 2020 and until further notice** young people will be placed in a Learning Set of **10** pupils within their respective House Group class. E.g. Ba 1- House Birnam, Ba half of the House, Learning Set 1. Young people will attend class with this group when they are in the building and most of the classes will take place in a Home Room. Pupils will only move to certain practical subjects where specialised equipment is required (e.g. Music & Science). For the foreseeable future young people will attend school on a part-time basis whilst also working remotely from home when they are not in the building. (see Timetable for August section)
2. Guidance/Non-Practical Classes (e.g. 1Ba) Maximum 30 pupils. **Not running for the foreseeable future.** *Examples include: PE, RE, PSHE, Modern Languages, Social Subjects, English and Maths*
3. Practical Class (e.g. section D) Maximum 20 pupils. **Not running for the foreseeable future.** *Examples include: Science, Computing, Business, Music, Home Economics, Technical and Art & Design*
4. Registration Class (e.g. K8) 10 minutes every morning. Registration classes are vertical and have some S1-S6 pupils in them. **There will be NO REGISTRATION classes running for the foreseeable future.** Pupils will report directly to their Home Room on arrival at Harris in August.

Take Home Tasks

The Transition Team have made every effort to ensure that all our new S1 pupils are warmly welcomed into the Harris Academy community and have a positive start to their secondary school learning experience.

As part of their transition visit during the last week of term all new S1 pupils will be given Take Home Tasks that has been developed to support and guide them to into their new 'blended' learning experience in August. These Take Home Tasks has been developed by our Principal Teachers of Literacy, Numeracy and Modern Languages and will provide opportunities for all of our new S1 pupils to build on the skills and knowledge they have acquired in P7 and embark on a successful learning journey in Harris Academy.

The Take Home Tasks have also been planned so that they will provide a platform for the new learning that will take place in Literacy, Numeracy and Modern Languages classes in August and will be the focus of the Remote Learning Offer for all S1 pupils during the first two weeks of the new term.

For young people who have not been able to attend the transition visits, electronic copies of the Take Home Tasks will be made available on the school website and paper copies can be requested from the school office from the week beginning Monday 3rd August.

Our House Teams

Working alongside Mr Millar, each House has an associated Depute Head Teacher (House Head) and two Guidance Teachers as noted below:

Birnam House Head Mrs MacDonald	Cawdor House Head Miss Chacko	Forres House Head Mr Perry	Kinloch House Head Mr Stewart
Mrs M Taylor - Ba (Mon-Wed) Ms R Walker (Thur-Fri) - Ba Mr A Cunningham – Bb / Bc	Mr R Lesslie - Ca Miss C Meldrum - Cb	Mr V Clements - Fa Mrs M Nicolson – Fb / Fc	Mr D Milne - Ka Mrs L Gow - Kb

Mr Millar (Head Teacher)



Birnam House



Mrs MacDonald (DHT)

Cawdor House



Miss Chacko - DHT



Ms Walker



Mrs Taylor



Mr Lesslie



Miss Meldrum



Mr Cunningham

Forres House



Mr Perry (DHT)

Kinloch House



Mr Stewart (DHT)



Mrs Nicolson



Mr Clements



Mrs Gow



Mr Milne

Uniform

We want our young people to be as comfortable as possible when we re-enter our building in August but at the same time, we place a high value on school uniform.

After consultation with pupils, staff and our Parent Council, we have decided to change our uniform to a Harris branded hooded sweatshirt for Term 1 (August – October). **Our aim is that all young people return to full school uniform from Term 2.**

Families will **not** be expected to pay for a school hooded sweatshirt. One will be provided for you / your child. A suggestion from the Parent Council at last week's meeting was that some families may wish to make a contribution towards the cost of the sweatshirt. As a result, there will be a facility to do so via our survey (below).

We do wish all young people to wear this sweatshirt when arriving at school.

Please complete the survey below by the end of this week to ensure delivery for August.

www.bit.ly/hoodieuniform

Families can also order additional sweatshirts at a cost of £12 per item.

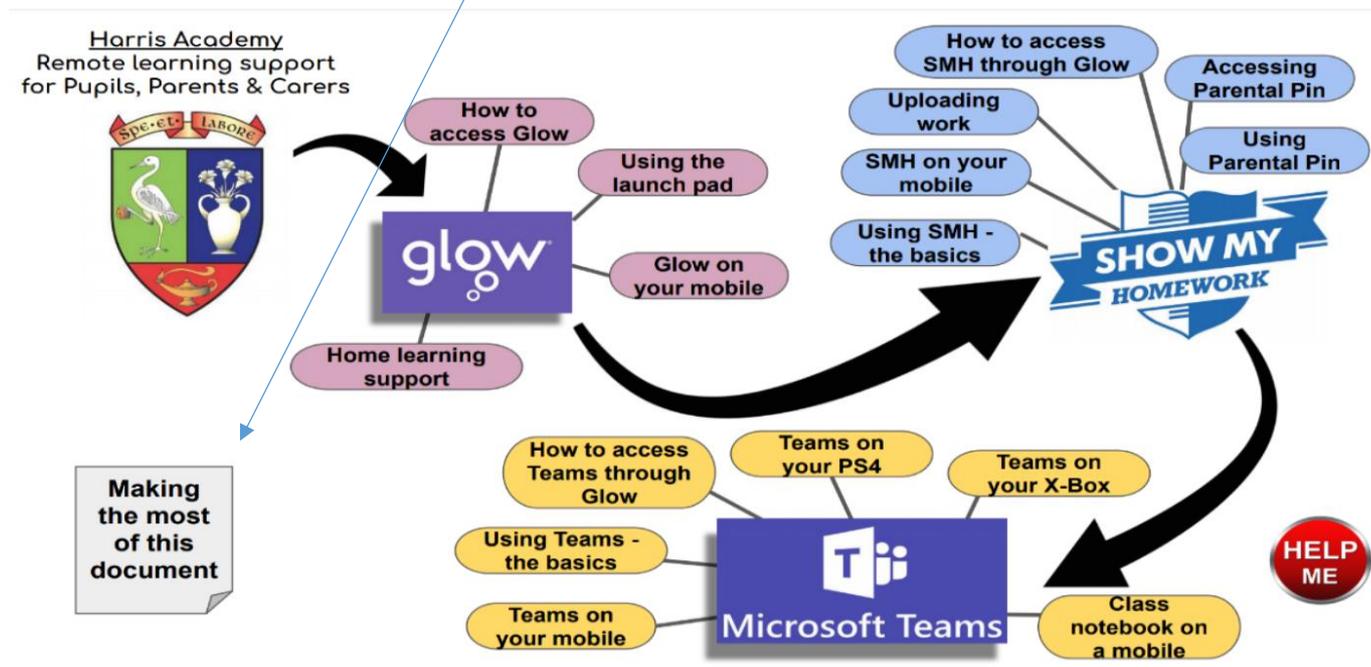
All sweatshirts will be able to be collected during the induction day on Wednesday 12th August.

Young people can wear comfortable, easily washable attire that they already possess to compliment the hooded sweatshirt.

Supporting Parents, carers and pupils with remote & blended learning

The interactive guide, for supporting Harris Academy parents, carers and pupils as they navigate the digital platforms for remote & blended learning is now live. Download it here and click on making the most of this document for an overview.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HqrHAQD6BOXe1v4Ba3nAs-uK18u1FNzH/view?usp=drivesdk>



Virtual Guidance Base

During these testing times the Guidance Department have made themselves as accessible as possible. This is happening by allowing all pupils to email directly to their Guidance Teacher using the House's own email address:

- forresguidance@dundee.gov.uk
- cawdorguidance@dundee.gov.uk
- kinlochguidance@dundee.gov.uk
- birnamguidance@dundee.gov.uk

By emailing into one of these addresses, this will allow someone from the relevant House team to get back to you and get you the help and support you will need or answer any questions you might have.

Your Guidance teacher may call you or your parent / carer or email back depending on the nature of the enquiry.

Once in the building from August, you will also have regular face to face contact opportunities with your Guidance teacher and virtually through Microsoft Teams classrooms.

You will have plenty of opportunity and ways of getting in touch and made to feel part of our Harris Academy community.

Show My Homework

Show My Homework is an online tool that enables us to record, monitor and track home learning. The app allows you to see the details of the tasks that have been set, all their deadlines and their submission status and grades. The tool has helped us to improve the way we communicate with parents/carers and gives you greater visibility into the home learning we set.

At the start of next term all S1s will learn how to use Show My Homework in their Technologies class. We will issue a personalised letter that will include login details to your personal account, which is linked to your young person's home learning calendar where you will be able to see their To-do List and any home learning that is overdue.

Dundee City Council FAQs

Up to date information is available for parents, cares and young people by clicking on the following link. These FAQs will be updated as and when more questions are asked and more information becomes available from the Scottish Government.

https://www.dundee.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/20200615_parent_faqs_for_school_return_.pdf

Transition support videos

As you may already be aware, we have uploaded a number of films to support your child's transition to Harris Academy. These videos are on our school website under **the S1 Transition Tab** and have been posted on our Twitter feed. We hope you and your child find them useful. If you have not had an opportunity to view the films, we would strongly suggest that you do so – especially the whole school support film. A link to the S1 Transition Tab is provided below.

<http://harrisacademy.ea.dundee.sch.uk/s1-transition>

Support from Parents / Carers

To help us ensure the safety of your child, along with all other young people and staff, I would ask that you support us in the following ways:

Please encourage and support your child to be at school in good time for their designated start times. Please remember that early entry (other than 10 minutes before the allotted start time) will not be possible.

If you are dropping your child off by car, please do so either on West Park Road (at the wide point of the road rather than the bottom of the hill) or on Shaftesbury Avenue.

To maximise our ability to focus on safety of young people and staff, I am afraid we will not be offering parents / carers the ability to arrange an appointment to enter the school building during school hours when we return in August. This will of course be reviewed on a weekly basis.

Keeping in touch

We would like you to follow us on Twitter. Here, you will find the most up to date information as our plans progress in response to local and National advice.

Our Twitter feed is also heavily used to share all of the fantastic achievements of our young people.

Our school website will also continue to be updated with key information from week beginning 3rd August onwards.

Follow us [@harrisacdundee](https://twitter.com/harrisacdundee)

Message to parents / carers

We are genuinely sorry that we cannot meet with you as would be our offer at this time of year.

I assure you that as soon as it is safe to do so, you will be invited into **our** school to meet key staff.

We are very much looking forward to working with you to maximise the educational experience for your child and in keeping with this, I give you an assurance that on a daily basis we will strive to do the very best we can to support your family.

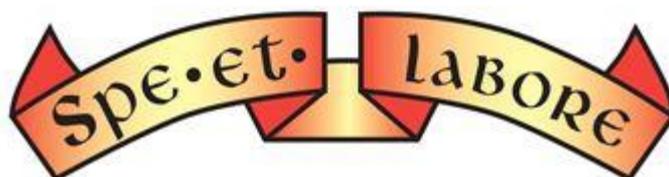
Parent Club - <https://www.parentclub.scot/topics/coronavirus> - and The National Parent Forum of Scotland - <https://www.npfs.org.uk/2020/06/10/coronavirus-covid-19-scotlands-curriculum-for-excellence-in-the-recovery-phase/> - have excellent information and FAQs pages which may help you and your child prepare for returning to school.

Message for new S1 Pupils

We would like to welcome you to **OUR** school in the most unusual and challenging circumstances this year. We know that as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic that your transition to Harris Academy has not been what we would have wanted it to be. Your Health & Wellbeing days, Passport to Europe event and two full Induction Days were all cancelled because of all schools being closed by the Scottish Government. We are absolutely delighted that you are able to have a short transition visit with us this week, which we hope will be helpful to you as you go into the summer holidays. We are also delighted that you will have a second induction session on Wednesday 12th August (see *Week beginning 10th August* section above).

We hope that the many Transition videos we have posted on our school website (S1 Transition Tab) and our Twitter feed (@harrisacdundee) have been helpful and re-assuring to you.

This is a hugely important transition in your life and we hope that you have an extremely positive experience throughout your time at Harris Academy. You are coming to an inclusive, excellent school and we want you to work closely with us to make it even better. We look forward to working with you and getting to know you well when you start officially in August 2020.



We hope this update is of some use to you.

On behalf of all of our colleagues here at Harris Academy, we hope you and your loved ones are safe and well and have a warm, enjoyable summer.

Yours sincerely,

Barry Millar
Head Teacher

Michael D Stewart
DHT – P7/S1 Transition Co-ordinator