

Harris Academy

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5th August 2020

Parent / Carer update – August 2020

Dear Parent / Carer,

With a week to go before school resumes for young people, I can offer you the following update. This takes in to account the most recent Scottish Government and Dundee City Council advice. A copy of the Scottish Government's advice, which was published last Thursday, can be found on our website or by clicking on the link below.









<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-preparing-start-new-school-term-august-2020/>

A link to Dundee City Council's FAQs in relation to the reopening of schools can also be found below

<https://www.dundeecity.gov.uk/coronavirus/faqs-for-parents-about-the-re-opening-of-schools-and-nurseries>

Our Safe Working Practices

To ensure we focus on the health and wellbeing of young people and staff, various measures will be in place on our return to the building. They include:

-  A strict 'keep left' protocol in our corridors
-  Anti-bacterial hand gels and wipes, along with tissues in each classroom
-  Any young person or staff member who wishes to wear a face covering will be free to do so
-  Additional service areas for food at lunchtimes will be introduced
-  Enhanced day-time cleaning regime
-  Social distancing will be strongly encouraged wherever is practically possible
-  A staggered interval and lunchtime from week beginning 17th August (the details of which are still be consulted on).
-  Controlled entry to and exit from the building

We will review these working practices on a daily basis to ensure we are doing all we can to work in as safe an environment as possible.

A copy of our presentation to staff and young people that will detail our safe working practices will be made available to parents / carers via our website, twitter feed and will be sent by email.

Our Risk Assessment, once agreed with the support of our Trade Union representatives in school, will also be available on our website.

Week beginning 10th August

To ensure a positive, safe return to school for all young people and staff, week one of the term will be:

Monday 10 th August	In-service Day 1 – staff only
Tuesday 11 th August	<p>In-service Day 2</p> <p>1-3pm Course choice change requests S5 or S6 pupils who have course choice change requests can, by appointment only, come in to meet with their Guidance Teacher. Further details on how young people can make an appointment will be communicated later this week.</p> <p>3-4pm Prefect Induction All newly appointed prefects are invited to attend an induction session, assembling in the Plaza (clock tower), arriving no earlier than 2.50pm. Prefects are not required to wear uniform for this induction session.</p>
Wednesday 12 th August	<p>S1 will complete their induction and will go to their timetabled classes for the rest of the day <i>All S1 pupils should report to the Tiered Seating / Dining Centre for 8.45am</i> <i>Prefects will be in school to welcome and support our new S1s</i></p> <p>After Wednesday, S1s will return to school, along with all other year groups, on Monday 17th August.</p> <p>S5 or S6 pupils who have course choice change requests can, by appointment only, come in to meet with their Guidance Teacher. Further details on how young people can make an appointment will be communicated later this week.</p>
Thursday 13 th August	<p>S4-S6 pupils will attend a welcome back extended period and then attend their timetabled classes for the rest of the day <i>We will communicate in advance of Thursday, which classrooms our senior need to report to at 8.45am.</i></p> <p>After Thursday, our Seniors will return to school, along with all other year groups, on Monday 17th August.</p>
Friday 14 th August	<p>S2 and S3 pupils will attend a welcome back extended period and then attend their timetabled classes for the rest of the day <i>We will communicate in advance of Friday, which classrooms our S2 and S3 pupils need to report to at 8.45am.</i></p> <p>Our S2 and S3 pupils will return to school, along with all other year groups, on Monday 17th August.</p>

Catering at Harris during our COVID Recovery

A limited meals service will be available, to allow for catering staff to facilitate physical distancing measures within kitchens and the dining environment.

Initially there will only be a lunchtime provision. Young people will be required to bring an interval snack / drink with them.

Any young person requiring lunch will complete a snack order card during period 1; this provides a limited number of choices for the young person to select. Each sheet requires completion of the child's name and class to identify them. The child's lunch will be provided within sealed containers in a snack bag.

A copy of the Tayside Contracts menus can be accessed by clicking on the following links.

<http://harrisacademy.ea.dundee.city.sch.uk/dundee-cold-deli-meal-deal-pre-order-aug-20.pdf>

<http://harrisacademy.ea.dundee.city.sch.uk/v-4-aug-bagged-secondary-menu-08-20.pdf>

Young people will not be able to use cash to top up their accounts, as all Dundee City Council schools will be operating a cashless catering service. Your young person's account can be topped up through ParentPay. The following links will support you in setting up ParentPay if you have not used it so far.

<http://harrisacademy.ea.dundee.city.sch.uk/parentpay-parentpack-a5-flyer-hr.pdf>

<https://www.parentpay.com/parents/>

If you would like support in using ParentPay, please contact the school office by telephone or email.

Payment for the meal will be removed centrally following receipt of a young person's lunch order.

Packed lunch will continue to be an option for all of our young people.

Our social spaces will all be accessible for young people to sit and have their lunch.

For those young people who choose to go out for lunch, we would appreciate your support in reminding them that current restrictions including social distancing and wearing of a face covering is **mandatory in all shops at present**.

SQA Update

Our Seniors have now received their SQA results and we hope that everyone is happy with the grades they have achieved. We are aware, as is the case every year, that this will not be universal. SQA have made an amendment to their Post Results Service for this session given the unprecedented situation our young people found themselves in with the cancellation of the SQA examination diet and estimate grades being forwarded by schools.

An **Appeal Service** is in place for young people who have been awarded a grade, which is **lower** than the estimate grade sent to SQA. Where a young person has been awarded the same grade as the estimate provided, or indeed a higher grade than the estimate, **no appeal can be made**. Where an appeal is being requested the school must provide clear evidence of why they think a young person has been graded incorrectly. This evidence must be packaged and sent off to SQA where it will be looked at by an SQA marker and a decision made accordingly.

SQA are at pains to ensure pupils and parents are fully aware that grades can go down as well as up when the evidence submitted is assessed by a marker.

Appeals are made by the school staff and are signed off by myself as Head Teacher. **Parents cannot make an appeal to SQA**. For an appeal to be made the individual young person **must consent in writing** to the school. At Harris, this is done via a pro-forma letter, which is issued to the young person in advance of the deadline.

Contact should be made with the relevant House Team and Principal Teacher Subject where young people and or parents/carers wish to discuss a potential appeal.

Deadlines for logging appeals with SQA are as follows:

Priority Reviews – Friday 14th August 2020. Only appeals that have a bearing on University entry for session 2020-21.

Non-Priority Reviews – Friday 21st August 2020.

Estimate Grades

Young people who have received their SQA results are entitled to receive the estimate grades, which were submitted by the school to SQA in May 2020. To comply with GDPR guidelines parents/carers cannot request this information. Any young person who wishes to receive this information should do so in writing to the school office at their earliest convenience.

The National Parent Forum of Scotland

The above association has compiled a very helpful FAQ sheet for parents and carers, which can be found by clicking on the link below:

https://www.npfs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/npfs_backtoschool_guidance_F.pdf

Pupil entry to the building

Please note that currently, young people will not be able to enter the building before 8.30am.

School Contract buses (23s, 27s, 28s and 29s)

The Scottish Government have confirmed that these buses (along with the Carse of Gowrie bus) should be seen as an 'extension to the school estate' and therefore face coverings are **not** required. All young people should still clean their hands with the available hand sanitiser on entry and exit from the bus.

Travelling to school on Public Transport

Young people who travel to school on all other buses must **observe social distancing**, wear face coverings, and ensure good hand hygiene

Bus Passes for session 2020-2021

Bus Pass entitlement will be extended for 2020-2021 to include all pupils who were entitled in the 2019-2020 academic year. The automatic award for this year is because of current circumstances (Covid-19), and because of previous entitlement.

Parents and carers will be asked to advise Dundee City Council of any changes in circumstances which may affect their entitlement.

Letters confirming entitlement should be sent out to parents during the 1st week in August.

Carse of Gowrie Dedicated School Bus Service

Perth and Kinross Council run a dedicated school bus service for those young people who attend Harris Academy, reside in the Carse of Gowrie and meet their criteria for entitlement. **Only young people who meet the criteria for entitlement have been allocated a place on the Carse of Gowrie contract bus and are able to make use of this service.**

In previous years, concessionary spaces have also been made available to other young people who do not meet the entitlement criteria. **There will be no concessionary spaces available on the school bus this year as Perth and Kinross Council will be operating a smaller bus which, combined with reduced capacity because of Covid guidelines, is already at capacity with entitled pupils.**

Pupil Drop Off / Pick Up by Car

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 Shaftsbury Avenue.

Please note that care sharing with other families is discouraged.

Active Travel

Active travel is encouraged whether it be walking or cycling. For those who choose to cycle, adequate bike racks are available in the Plaza and we will arrange for helmets to be stored in school.

Toilets

While we appreciate that young people may need to go to the bathroom during a period this should be an exception to the rule.

Last session, far too many young people were out of class during periods, which cannot be permitted during this pandemic.

My request is that parents/carers work with us by encouraging young people to stay in classrooms until the end of period wherever possible.

Equipment





Young people are encouraged to bring their own pens, pencils etc. This equipment **should not be shared with any other pupil.**

Personal water bottles filled at home prior to leaving for school. Please note that all water fountains in the school (and all other Dundee City Council schools) have been turned off at this time.

Water jugs will be available at lunchtime for young people to re-fill water bottles.

Classrooms

To ensure the safety of all:

-  Young people will be given an antibacterial wipe to wipe down their desk, chair and working area at the start and end of lessons
-  Young people will require to use the available hand sanitisiers on entry and exit from each classroom
-  Young people will remain seated at their desk / working area and not move around the room wherever this is possible. Staff members will be the only people who have free movement around classrooms
-  At the end of lessons, pupil should remain seated until directed by the teacher

Supporting the wellbeing of our young people

As has always been the case, our Guidance Team will be the first point of contact for young people and their families for any issues related to our extended absence from our school building during lockdown and our return.

As well as our Guidance Teachers, our extended Pupil Support team are on hand to support in any way required and we have a host of external support specialists at our disposal if required.

Uniform

We look forward to seeing all of our young people back in school, wearing full uniform. As a reminder, all S1 pupils will be given a school tie.

If, for any reason, families will not be in a position to provide school uniform, please contact the relevant Guidance teacher via the following, relevant email address. We will do all we can to help.

forresguidance@dundeecity.gov.uk
cawdorguidance@dundeecity.gov.uk
kinlochguidance@dundeecity.gov.uk
birnamguidance@dundeecity.gov.uk

Unfortunately, our uniform suppliers could not attend our planned Uniform event which was scheduled for today.

S1 families are still welcome to come along today (Wednesday 5th August) from 4-6pm to collect a school tie.




For any family who wish to purchase a school blazer, please follow the link below for more information.

<https://www.academyuniformsltd.co.uk/>

Supporting people who become COVID-19 symptomatic

If you or any member of your family show symptoms of COVID-19, **your young person should not come to school** and you should call the school as soon as possible to report this.

As a reminder, the symptoms are:

-  A new, continuous cough
-  A high temperature
-  Loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste.

For more information, please click on the following link:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-general-advice>

If young people display symptoms during the school day, we will call for them to be collected as soon as possible. Your support with this will be both appreciated and necessary.

Restricted visitors in school

To limit the number of visitors in our building, the majority of our contact with parents/carers will be via telephone only at this point in time.

School Crossing Patrollers

On our return to school, we will continue to have two School Crossing Patrollers positioned outside the school on Perth Road.

For the foreseeable future however, we will not have a School Crossing Patroller at the bottom of the Kelso Steps on Blackness Rd. As soon as I have more information on this, I assure you that I will update you.

Yours sincerely,



Barry Millar
Head Teacher

