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(JD/DS)



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Dear Parent/Carer

Government Announcement on Proposed School Reopening

I felt it would be useful to write to you again in the light of the First Minister's announcement yesterday regarding school reopening.

Most parents will by now be aware that schools across Scotland will begin to reopen to pupils on 11th August. This means that in Perth and Kinross pupils and staff will return one week earlier than was planned with the likely impact of a shorter summer break. We have also been told that staff are likely to return at some point in June to allow time for planning, and it has also been suggested that pupils involved in transition may also have some limited access to schools in June, though there are no firm plans in place for this at local authority level as yet.

The government has identified a range of criteria for prioritisation of pupils' returning, and schools and local authorities will now need to work through these to come up with a coherent plan. Although staff will be returning at some point in June to plan for the August opening, we will also continue a remote teaching function during this month, so again careful planning will be required to manage this.

For the school to reopen in August there will be considerable work to be done to ensure that pupils return to a safe environment. This will include consideration of arrangements for physical distancing and hygiene and will almost certainly require that most pupils in the first instance attend on a part-time basis. In regard to health and safety, the framework document issued by the Government states the following:

Everything within the paper is predicated on two crucial factors:

- 1. Implementation is conditional upon scientific and medical advice confirming that it can be done so in a manner that is consistent with wider efforts to control the reproduction rate and protects the health of staff and pupils alike.*



- II. *Comprehensive implementation of complementary public health measures, including adherence to 'test, trace, isolate and support' (TTIS) practices, the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) where appropriate for all staff, and a range of other hygiene measures such as:*
- *Increased hand-washing facilities/hand sanitisers and use thereof.*
 - *Regular and enhanced cleaning of surfaces (e.g. sinks, toilet seats and door handles).*
 - *Protocols for what to do if a child/member of staff has suspected/confirmed COVID 19.*
 - *Ongoing risk assessments on the operational parameters of re-opened centres.*

There is no doubt that the devil will be in the detail when it comes to ensuring that we can create an environment that is safe for staff and pupils. The government has said that more detailed guidance will be available shortly and this will need to be studied carefully at both local authority and school level.

I know that parents will be keen to know what patterns of part-time attendance are likely to be put in place as these may impact on their own return to work; as yet I simply do not know what these are likely to look like but I promise you that I will update you on this as soon as I possibly can.

Given that most pupils will be attending part-time, work in school will have to be supplemented by a continuation of remote learning. This mix of in-school and home learning is what the government has described as 'blended learning'. This will be a further new challenge which I am confident both staff and pupils will be able to rise to.

I realise that this continues to be an anxious time for parents and that you will understandably want to be informed of and, as appropriate, involved in decisions that will have an impact on your child's well-being and educational progress. In the first instance, I will discuss these matters with members of the Parent Council to consider how the voice of parents might best be heard. In the meantime, though, as always please do get in touch with me or a member of the senior management team if you have any queries or concerns.

Yours faithfully



Mr John Devine
Headteacher