



An t-Eilean Sgitheanach

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PORTREE HIGH SCHOOL

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5 August 2020

Dear Parent / Carer,

As Head Teacher I am delighted to be able to welcome your child back to school. I am writing to you today to update you on our next steps together and to say a sincere thank you for your support during the school closure period.

Firstly, I would like to explain what the first week back will look like for your child. As you may already know, the Scottish Government directive is that all children and young people will return to school and early learning by the 18th of August at the latest. To ensure that all children and young people return safely a phased return is necessary. The details of this phased return are given below.

Highland Council has created a new education page which I would encourage you to visit: www.hIGHLAND.gov.uk/backtoschool.

Return date and timings for year groups/full school

We will have a phased return during the first week:

- Wednesday 12th August: S1 and S6 only
- Thursday 13th August: S2 and S3 only
- Friday 14th August: S4 and S5 only

This week will be slightly different from the norm in that we will be concentrating on settling pupils back to school and re orientating them into being back in the building. We will spend time speaking with them about their experiences and giving them an opportunity to talk. We will also be doing the normal things such as issuing timetables and ensuring that senior pupils are properly coursed.

We will also be introducing our “mile a day “ initiative so pupils must bring their trainers!

The normal timetable will begin for all pupils from the 17th of August.

Safe Lunchtime/break time routines

In the social areas we have altered the position of school furniture to ensure adequate spacing so that pupils are able to maintain social distancing where possible. We will also have staggered breaks and lunchtimes.

- S1 to S3 will have their break as normal at 10.30am
- S4 to S6 will have their break between 10:55-11.10am. This will mean that period 3 will be split. This arrangement will continue for the first two weeks and will then be reviewed.
- S1 to S3 will go to lunch at 12.25pm
- S4 to S6 will go to lunch at the normal time of 1.15pm

The online payment system is available and is actively encouraged.

https://self.hIGHLAND.gov.uk/service/School_meal_payments Pupils will need to know their Scottish Candidate Number, which will be issued on the first day back.

Safe hygiene routines and protocol

Pupils will be asked to take hand sanitiser to school. Hand sanitiser will also be available on entry to classrooms. They will be reminded to wash their hands regularly/use hand sanitiser, including when they enter the building.

Each time they enter and leave a classroom they will be asked to clean down their desk and chair with the disinfectant spray available, and sanitise their hands.

We will be implementing a one-way system to reduce corridor traffic, and not have bells between periods to allow staff to dismiss classes when the corridors are quieter.

Classrooms have also been de-cluttered and furniture re-arranged to maximise the ability to socially distance when at all possible. Teachers will try to maintain social distancing between themselves and the pupils and, in situations where this is not possible, may wear facemasks/visors/further PPE if appropriate.

Once back full time, entry and exit to the school at the start and end of the day will be through a number of doors, not just the main one, thus reducing the flow of pupils and alleviating congestion.

School localised transport arrangements

We await information about transport arrangements. Further details will be sent out to you soon.

There will be a staggered end to the day.

- S1 to S3 will leave school five minutes early at the end of each day. This will be at 3.35pm.
- S4 to S6 will exit the building at the normal time.

First term curricular engagement

The first week will be a reorientation week for all pupils with a focus on health and wellbeing. Pupils will have time to adjust to the new systems and routines in school and will be given opportunities to reflect on the impact of lockdown on their wellbeing and learning. Each year group will also begin to get back to being in classes with their friends and re-engaging with their teachers. From the 17th of August, pupils will follow a normal timetable. While learning and teaching is at the heart of what we do here in Portree High School we fully appreciate that pupils may continue to need extra support and this will continue to be available as pupils adjust to being back at school.

Wellbeing support

Pupils Support staff will meet with pupils during the first week back to discuss any aspects of lockdown or of the new term that are causing anxiety. They will also be available as usual to discuss curriculum options and pathways with senior pupils. The emphasis will be on educational recovery but also on a fresh start and we will be setting out a positive “can-do” mind-set from day one. We aim to ensure that all pupils leave school with both academic qualifications and wider achievement success.

Support for Senior phase pupils with SQA results

We will be available to discuss all aspects of SQA results with pupils during the first week. There is a google form available if pupils wish to launch appeals. This will be discussed in full when pupils return.

There will be further information on Friday and we will continue to communicate with you.

Once again, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your support at this time and look forward to being able to open our school doors again on the 12 August.

Yours faithfully

Catherine A. MacDonald

Catherine A MacDonald
Head Teacher

Miss C A MacDonald
Head Teacher/Ceannard