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Our ref: SMcE/JB  
Date: 6<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you are well and have had a restful summer. We are looking forward to welcoming back our young people next week.

Following the letter from Lorraine Sanda, Chief Education Officer, I would like to share more information with you regarding your child coming back to school next week and an update regarding the recent SQA exam results.

### **SQA Results and Change of Subjects**

Our senior pupils recently received their SQA results. On Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> August any young person wishing to discuss their results and/or make an appeal will be welcome to speak to their Guidance Teacher or Year Head.

In any normal year we would invite pupils in to meet with us following the publication of results before the term starts. I am sure you will understand that unfortunately we cannot do this at the moment. Therefore if you wish to speak to someone before the 12<sup>th</sup> please email [alva@edu.clacks.gov.uk](mailto:alva@edu.clacks.gov.uk) leaving your name, contact number and child's name and a member of our team will get back to you.

We will be happy to submit an appeal for any young person who has not achieved the grade we estimated for them.

If any young person wishes to change a subject they should speak to their Guidance Teacher or Head of Year on the 12<sup>th</sup> August.

The information below has been shared with us by the SQA.

Key important messages for parents:

- SQA will not accept requests from candidates, parents or carers, and that only their child's school can request a review of the grade awarded.
- If the grade a pupil has been awarded is lower than the estimate grade the school submitted to the SQA, and they have the evidence to show that the pupil was performing at the level of the estimate grade, the school can submit an appeal, which will be reviewed by a senior SQA examiner.
- Three possible outcomes: Awarded a higher grade / grade stays the same / awarded a lower grade.
- A successful appeal will result in a change of grade only (i.e. A, B, C) not a change of band (i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4 etc.)
- Priority will be given to candidates requiring a result to secure a conditional place at college or university. The deadline for these Priority Appeals is Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August, and schools will receive the outcome on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September.
- The deadline for all other appeals is Friday 21<sup>st</sup> August, and the outcome date is still to be confirmed as this will depend on volumes received.

- Schools must have the candidate's agreement to submit the request, as their grade may be lowered.

Some websites to signpost to parents may be helpful, and indeed may allow them to access the information they are seeking clarity on, meaning that they won't have to contact school.

SQA website at [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)

SQA Candidate Advice Line 0345 279 1000. Available from 8am on Tues 4th August, 8.30am onwards from Wed 5th August until and including Fri 7th August.

BBC Bitesize [bbc.co.uk/bitesize](http://bbc.co.uk/bitesize) - dedicated section on 'Your guide to SQA results day' with two related documents 'Top five results day worries - and how to cope with them' and 'Your guide to SQA results day'

SDS Results Helpline 0808 100 8000. Available to offer advice, information and guidance for young people and their parents. The helpline will be open on 4th/5th August 8am-5pm  
6th/7th August 9am-5pm  
10th/11th/12th August 9am-5pm

[youngminds.org.uk](http://youngminds.org.uk) has a good range of parental support/advice, although is based in England, and therefore refers to GCSE/A levels and England's equivalent of our SDS)

Childline has good supports at [childline.org.uk/info-advice/school-college-and-work/school-college/exam-results](http://childline.org.uk/info-advice/school-college-and-work/school-college/exam-results) for parents/carers and families

DYW #NoWrongPath at [nowrongpath.scot](http://nowrongpath.scot), highlighting that there are many different options for career pathways for every young person

## Timetable

As you will be aware we are working to Scottish Government guidelines to ensure we are keeping our young people and colleagues safe.

Next week we will have a slightly phased return to the new term with S1 and S5/6 pupils returning on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> and all pupils returning on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup>. This will allow us to complete the school induction for our S1 pupils and the extensive induction programme with our senior learners.

|                    | <b>Monday</b>     | <b>Tuesday</b>    | <b>Wednesday</b>       | <b>Thursday</b>        | <b>Friday</b>          |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>W/c 10.8.20</b> | <b>In-service</b> | <b>In-service</b> | <b>S1, S5 &amp; S6</b> | <b>All year groups</b> | <b>All year groups</b> |

Your child will receive their personal timetable when they arrive at school.

## Subjects

With a few exceptions, pupils will cover all subjects that they would be expecting to if things were normal, including the subjects chosen in the option exercise that took place in March. We will endeavour to deliver as much of our curriculum as is physically possible but there may be occasions when we need to make short term adaptations.

## First Day

On arrival at school your child will be met by a member of staff who will direct them to a specific area of the building. Our new S1 pupils will be accompanied by senior pupils. Supervised hygiene protocols will be in place as pupils enter the building.

Pupils will be taken through an induction programme that will let them know about the health and safety measures that are in place and the arrangements around breaks and lunchtimes. They will be given their timetable at this point.

Our new timetable will aim to minimise movement throughout the school day with more S3-S6 classes being taught in double blocks where possible.

The induction will provide each pupil with information on:

- Social Distancing – Where possible social distancing will be encouraged particularly for senior pupils. Identified social areas will have more space to encourage social distancing. Adults will look to maintain a two metre distance in class and throughout the school building.
- Toilets – Toilets will be open as usual however, we will encourage pupils to use the toilets throughout the day and not go in large groups at break and lunchtimes.
- Hygiene procedures – Hand sanitizers will be positioned at all exit and entry points of the school. Expectations will be clearly explained.
- New one way system being used in corridors – The one way system will be explained to young people in detail and will highlight the meaning of new signage around the school.
- Fire evacuation – Young people will be reminded of the fire evacuation procedures and gathering points.
- Procedures for pupils feeling unwell – Any young person feeling unwell will report to the Pupil Room immediately.
- Behaviour expectations – As always there will be high expectations of our young people behaving respectfully and kindly.
- Break and lunch arrangements – Break and lunchtimes will take place at the usual times. All young people should bring a pack lunch and those eligible for a free school meal will be provided with one. There will be no food or drinks on sale in the school.
- Equipment – Young people should bring any jotters or textbooks they have taken home over lockdown. Pupils **are** allowed to bring school bags and will have access to their lockers. Young people should bring their own pens and pencils, however, the school does have a stock of stationery available.

## **Break and Lunchtime Arrangements**

Our advice at the moment is that all young people should bring a pack lunch to school in August. Those entitled to a free school meal will receive a lunch from our catering team. There will be no food on sale.

Young people will be allocated an outdoor and indoor area at break and lunchtime. Pupils will **not** be allowed to leave the school campus at break times or lunchtimes.

## **School Uniform**

We will be expecting all of our young people to be in school uniform in the new term. I fully appreciate that it may be difficult to source a blazer during the summer but we would be expecting as close to full uniform as possible.

Our parent council - Friends of Alva have set up a bank of new and pre-loved blazers and uniforms, details are available on their Facebook page. From a school point of view the uniform is vitally important for a number of reasons:

- Non-uniform days over a prolonged period of time can cause huge anxieties for young people who may not have designer casual clothing. School uniform allows them to be the same as everyone else.

- From personal experience the school uniform allows us to immediately identify anyone who should not be in the school building and therefore allows us to protect the young people in our care.
- School uniforms are part of the connection a young person has with the school. It also plays a significant role in their mind-set and attitude towards their school work.

I appreciate that uniform may not be everyone's priority at the moment but I hope you can see how vital a role it plays in the life of our school community.

## Home Learning

Our home learning platform, Google Classroom, will evolve in the new term and we will continue to develop it for all homework tasks and to engage young people unable to return to the school building. We will be in a position in August/September to send a weekly report to parents on their child's engagement with homework and Google Classroom tasks.

## Transport

School buses will run as normal. Parents dropping off and picking up their children should use the designated drop-off zones and must **not** use the school carpark or bus bays. Arrangements for pupils accessing taxis will be communicated to parents prior to August.

## Hygiene Procedures

All staff and pupils will be required to hand wash/sanitise each day of attendance at school. Please contact us if there is any reason your child cannot use the products supplied to hand sanitise. Hygiene procedures will be in place to ensure work areas are cleaned between teaching periods. Working closely with the Health and Safety Team we will implement and adapt our hygiene protocols to match the expectations of the Scottish Government.

Additional cleaning staff have been allocated to the school and will be carrying out general and targeted cleaning throughout the day.

Young people and school staff are welcome to use face masks.

## Communication

If you have any questions about the details of this letter please contact me or your child's year head at [alva@edu.clacks.gov.uk](mailto:alva@edu.clacks.gov.uk)


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|-----------------|--------------|
| Head of S1 & S2 | Mrs Brown    |
| Head of S3 & S4 | Mr Forrester |
| Head of S5 & S6 | Mr McDowall  |

## Going Forward

As the last four months have demonstrated things can change quickly. We will continue to act swiftly on any new guidance from the Scottish Government and will continue to contact you regularly.

Please continue to stay safe and we look forward to welcoming all of our young people back next week.

Yours faithfully



Mr S McEwan  
Head Teacher