



Acting Head Teacher:
Douglas Morgan

Hermitage Academy
enquirieshermitageacademy@argyll-bute.gov.uk

1st April 2021

Dear Parent/Carer and Pupils (please share this information with your young people)

I hope this letter continues to find you and your loved ones safe and well.

Full return of pupils – 19th April 2021

The updated guidance from the Scottish Government has indicated that the full reopening of secondary schools will take place following the Spring break on Monday 19th April, unless new scientific evidence requires reconsideration.

As with previous returns to the building, we are keen to share with you and your young person the arrangements that have been put in place to minimise any risk.

Face Coverings

- Pupils and staff will be required to wear face coverings at all times whilst in the school building.
- Those who are exempt from wearing a face covering will be provided with a lanyard stating that they are exempt. This is to avoid pupils being repeatedly asked by staff about not wearing a mask.

Entering the building at the start of the day

- The school day will start at 8.55 am.
- The doors to the school building will open at 8.45 am and pupils are asked to enter as soon as they arrive after this time.
- Pupils should enter via the door closest to their registration class.
- Once pupils are in the building they should make their way directly to their registration class even if it is before 8.55 am. This will help to avoid larger groups of our young people forming in social spaces.

Classroom Routines

- Pupils will be asked to enter classrooms on arrival to help avoid congestion in the corridors.
- Pupils should sanitise their hands on entry into each class.
- Pupils may be asked to sanitise their workstation. This will likely be done at the beginning of each period as it allows them to sanitise for their own use and helps them to be confident that it has been carried out effectively.

Timetables

- From 19th April, all pupils will follow their normal school timetable.
- S6 pupils with individual study periods at the start or end of the day do not need to attend school at these times. S6 pupils in school for individual study periods should use the Upper Assembly Hall.

Movement around the school

- Staff will release pupils from class gradually in a way that reduces larger groups in corridors.
- Pupils should make their way directly to their next class via the shortest route. Please note that this may include going outside the building.
- Pupils will be reminded of our current advice when moving around the building. Stay left in corridors/stairwells and use nearest entrance/exits.
- As pupils and staff are expected to wear face coverings at all times (unless exempt) this includes moving around the school and in toilets.

Interval

- Pupils are reminded that they should remain in the school grounds during morning interval.
- Pupils are encouraged to make sure that they have an appropriate outdoor jacket for poor weather as they will be asked to utilise outdoor space at intervals to reduce time in the building.
- The outdoor picnic tables are available for use.
- Pupils are able to purchase items from the lunch hall at interval but are then asked to make their way outside.

Lunch Time

- S4/5/6 pupils will be released from class 5 minutes before lunch to support the ease of movement at this time.
- Lunch will be available to purchase in the main hall. Pupils are asked to make their way outside once they have finished their lunch.
- School meals will be available for those entitled to receive free school meals.

Uniform

- Full school uniform should be worn by pupils on their return to school. Pupils will however, be allowed to wear their jacket over this, since classroom temperatures may vary due to windows being open for increased ventilation.
- Pupils will now have the opportunity to use changing rooms in PE as required and therefore should come to school in full school uniform with their kit to change into.

Wet Weather

- Our default position to limit the time in the social spaces will be to encourage our young people to utilise outside areas during interval and lunch time.
- During wet weather, separate indoor areas will be available for year groups to use as outlined below:

Year	Location
S1	Side Gym
S2	Back Gym
S3/4	Main Hall
S5/6	Upper Assembly Hall

End of the day

- S1/2/3 will be released from their last period class 5 minutes early to support the ease of movement at this time.
- At the end of the day pupils should leave the school building via their closest exit.

Transport

- The Local Authority have made arrangements for pupils who travel by school transport to be able to continue to do so.
- Please note that masks should be worn on school transport (unless exempt) and that there is no longer the restriction of social distancing on school buses.

Lateral Flow Testing Programme

- S4-6 pupils who wish to take part in the Asymptomatic Testing Programme and are not yet signed up to do so are asked to complete the consent form that can be found in the following link:

<https://forms.gle/kLRJVaGfDVaSvNFG7>

- We have been informed by the Scottish Government that the programme will be extended to offer the opportunity for participation to S1-3 pupils from after the Spring Break. If your young person would like to take part in the testing programme and you are happy for them to do so, please complete the consent form in the link above.
- Young people who are currently testing do not need to continue the programme over the Spring Break. However, we would ask that you restart testing on Sunday 18th April if you are in a position to do so.
- For those young people in S4/5/6 who are attending Spring Study School we would ask that you restart testing on Sunday 11th April if you are in a position to do so.

Additional In-service Days

To support schools with the alternative certification model, the Scottish Government has allocated secondary schools an additional two in-service days. In Argyll and Bute it has been agreed that one of these dates will be 27th May, with an existing planned in-service day on 28th May. We have the discretion to allocate the second in-service day on a date that best suits our needs and we have worked with curricular leaders to identify that the 10th May will be the additional day that we will request to the Local Authority.

Change of timetable

We are currently planning that the last day for leavers will be Friday 4th June and we have been working with S6 pupils representatives to identify ways to mark the end of their school journey.

With this in mind the start of the new timetable will be Monday 7th June and the day S1 move into S2, S2 into S3 etc.

We will welcome the P7s in that week for their induction days where they will follow their S1 timetable on the Thursday and Friday.

Headstrong - Mental Health Session for Parents and Carers

The Headstrong session for Hermitage Academy Parents & Carers will take place on Wednesday 21st April, 6-7pm. The session will be recorded with the links shared following the event for anyone who would like to view the presentations at a more convenient time. Further details will follow after the holidays about how to log into the event.

Please find a preview of the session via the link below from Brian Costello, Director of the organisation Headstrong:

<https://youtu.be/gt7RwIWz3d8>

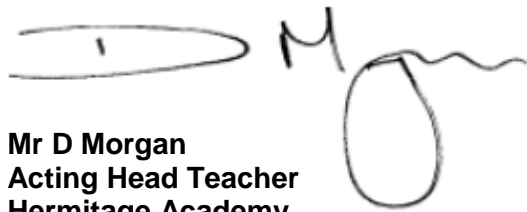
Happy Easter

Can I ask you to talk through the contents of this letter with your young person as it will help them to prepare for their full return to school after the holidays and to understand the restrictions and arrangements that we have put in place to minimise any risk.

Please remember if there is anything at all that we can do for you, do not hesitate to ask.

From everyone at Hermitage Academy – many thanks for all your support this term and have a lovely Easter Holiday when it comes.

Take care and stay safe.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Morgan', with a large, stylized 'O' at the end.

**Mr D Morgan
Acting Head Teacher
Hermitage Academy**