

# Harlaw Academy

18-20 Albyn Place  
Aberdeen  
AB10 1RG  
Headteacher: Mr R McLaren



14<sup>th</sup> August 2021

## Headteacher Update

Dear parents and carers

I write in anticipation of welcoming our pupils back to school after what has hopefully been a relaxing and restful Summer break. I am hopeful that as outlook has improved and the, by now, familiar restrictions have slackened, you and your families will have enjoyed the good weather we have experienced and are fully recharged for another hectic school session.

In order to try to make that first day back as easy for all as possible, please can I provide a few small, but in some cases very significant updates;

1. [Harlaw Academy - Building works](#)
2. [Lateral flow testing for COVID-19](#)
3. [Pupils arriving for school on day one](#)
4. [The wearing of masks and social distancing](#)
5. [Reintroduction of Form time](#)
6. [Use of the PE changing rooms](#)
7. [Expectations around school uniform](#)
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### 1. [Harlaw Academy - Building works](#)

I am delighted to report that over the summer break there has been a significant amount of work undertaken both inside the school and within the wider grounds. We have started a rolling programme of re-decoration within the building with several rooms having their purpose/usage changed. Our focus has been around creating more classrooms and more friendly environments for all. We have worked on ten rooms so far with more due later this year and beyond.

Externally, our new front path has been completed and the security barriers installed. This significant development will improve the security of our perimeter, but also provide much safer access to the building for pupils.

Following their extensive fund-raising efforts last term, the Parent Council have undertaken a significant amount of cleaning and building works in our playground and outdoor spaces doubling the number of usable spaces and outdoor seating. This represents a significant improvement which I believe the pupils will appreciate. Additional picnic tables are due to arrive later this month.

## **2. Lateral flow testing for COVID-19**

All school staff and secondary pupils who engage in the LFD testing programme are encouraged to restart twice weekly testing tomorrow, Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> August, in preparation for the return to school. Ideally, tests would be taken on a Wednesday and Sunday evenings each week.

Many schools provided test kits to staff and pupils prior to the summer break which can be used for this purpose. If your child did not receive test kits or if you require more, you can access them in a range of different ways, including ordering online for home delivery, or collecting kits from your nearest test site or pharmacy. You can also take a test at a local test site, which may be better for those who need assistance with testing. Further information is available at:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested/>

If involved in the programme please make sure that you record your results online, whether positive, negative or void. This helps Public Health understand what levels of COVID-19 are and can inform policy on things like mitigations in schools.

Thank you to those of you who continue to support the testing arrangements.

## **3. Pupils arriving for school on day one**

All of our pupils are now familiar with our arrival at school protocols. They have not changed for the start of session. Pupils are asked to arrive at school from 8.15am ready for an 8.30am start. As our year groups have all moved up one year, the locations have changed. Pupils are asked to congregate in the following areas ready to be welcomed into school to undertake our hand sanitising regime.

- S1 – The small playground – access via Albyn Lane – enter school via Technical Dept.
- S2 – The large playground – access from either side of school – enter via glass corridor
- S3 – The large Playground – access from either side of school – enter via Boiler House door
- S4 – The ‘grassy’ Playground – access from either side of school – enter via Social Subjects
- S5 – Front of school – access via front of school – enter via left hand main entrance leading to Languages
- S6 – Front of school – access via front of school – enter via right hand main entrance next to Janitors door/office.

**Please do remind your child as this will help us greatly.**

## **4. The wearing of masks and social distancing**

The vast majority of control measures in place in June 2021 will remain in place until, at least, the end of September. This includes the need for secondary pupils to;

- wear face coverings on school transport and in schools,
- follow strict hand washing,
- sit in designated seats when in class,
- maintain recommended distance of over 1m from all staff and pupils,
- maintain hygiene routines around chair and desk use.

## 5. Reintroduction of Form time

One of the biggest differences to our school last session was the temporary removal of Form time at the start of the day and adjustment to our lunch and break times. This was a significant yet necessary disruption. That said, having made a number of changes to our accommodation, resources, systems and structures, we believe we are now able to reintroduce our more familiar school day. Please see below for our school timings and note the return to a singular lunch break for all pupils and return of Form time. The removal of the need for “bubbles” has meant that we also plan to reintroduce our seating within the canteen and snack bar. Welcome news of our more familiar routines I am sure you will agree. On the first day of term, we will have a slightly longer Form period running through to the end of period 1 in order to hand out timetables and go through all of our back to school procedures for pupils.

Reg	1	2	Break	3	4	Lunch	5	6
0830 - 0848	0848 - 0940	0940 - 1032	1032 - 1047	1047 - 1139	1139 - 1231	1231 - 1321	1321 - 1413	1413 - 1505
18 mins	52 mins	52 mins	15 mins	52 mins	52 mins	50 mins	52 mins	52 mins

## 6. Use of the PE changing rooms

The latest advice from the Scottish Government has confirmed that all PE activities can return to normal. This is excellent news for a range of reasons, but one the main consequences is that we can return to using PE changing rooms in school. Pupils will be required to wear face coverings at all times and additional cleaning measures have been put in place between uses.

**To be clear this means that we return to the expectation that all pupils will arrive at school wearing their school uniform and change into PE Kit when required.**

**Pupils who have PE on Tuesday will receive a Groupcall following this letter to let them know to bring a PE kit.**

## 7. Expectations around school uniform

As I detailed in my last update of last session, there is an expectation that pupils who attend Harlaw Academy will adhere to our dress code.

Please can I take this opportunity again to remind you that our current dress code requires pupils to adhere to the following uniform standards:

### S1-3 Pupils

- Black tailored trousers or skirt
- Harlaw Academy polo shirt
- Harlaw Academy sweatshirt

### S4-6 Pupils

- Black tailored trousers or skirt
- Blue or white shirt with school tie
- Harlaw Academy Blazer

Our full uniform information can be viewed here; <https://harlawacademy.aberdeen.sch.uk/uniform/>

## 8. Outlook for the next six weeks

It has been made very clear to school that there is an expectation a number of the protocols and mitigations we continue to live with will be reviewed over the next six weeks. With that in mind, I hope to be able to provide further updates in the coming weeks as and when the further relaxation of restrictions occurs.

As always, please can I take this opportunity to say thank you for your continued patience and support as we navigate our way through this ever-changing situation. I wish you and your families they very best for the session to come!

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ross McLaren". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R' and a distinct 'M'.

Mr R. McLaren  
Headteacher