

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope our young people had a pleasant break over the October school holiday, and that all Braes families are doing as well as possible at this time. We look forward to our new term, knowing that while the situation we are in is constantly evolving, our young people have the maturity and sensitivity to be able to handle the current circumstances.

Please see below an update on a number of matters:

Friends at Braes

The next meeting of Friends at Braes takes place this evening (Monday 26th October) at 6.30pm, online via Zoom. Details of the link to the meeting can be gained from FAB chairperson Leah Currie at friendsatbraeshigh@gmail.com. Friends at Braes is a very supportive and positive group, offering significant levels of help to the school in a variety of ways. New members/attendees are always welcome!

COVID-19 procedures

We are grateful for the support of parents/carers in dealing with the current situation. As a reminder, it is essential that people do not attend school if symptomatic. Please remember that if you, or any member of your household has COVID-19 symptoms, you should isolate immediately, as should all in your household. The person with symptoms should arrange a test, either by visiting www.nhsinform.scot, or by calling 0800 028 2816. Only those people in the household with symptoms require to be tested. There is no need for others in the household to be tested, unless they are also symptomatic. If the test result for the symptomatic person is negative, and they are not already isolating as a 'close contact' of a confirmed case, they can return to school or work when they are well enough and have had not a fever for 48 hours, assuming also that they are not quarantining for foreign travel reasons. The rest of the household can end isolation straight away.

We have also been impressed with our young people's ability to adapt to the new procedures and expectations. It has been encouraging to see the overwhelming majority of our young people taking responsibility by bringing their own face coverings to school. We would strongly encourage pupils to ensure they have a face covering with them to reduce the numbers the school issues each day. We do have a small supply to issue to pupils should the need arise. As a reminder, face coverings should also be worn on school transport as well as when required in school.

As has happened both in Braes and in many schools and other establishments across Scotland, it is possible that a positive case of COVID-19 could affect someone in our school community directly. If so, the school will liaise with NHS Test and Protect, and follow their guidance to communicate directly with all parents/carers and pupils directly affected. Groupcall SMS messages, emails and follow up telephone calls would all form part of this direct communication. In addition, general communications would be issued to all parents/carers.

SQA Arrangements for 2021

Kevin Smith, Depute Headteacher, will be in contact with parents/carers shortly with a general outline of arrangements for SQA assessment in 2021.

Parking

I would ask that all parents/carers, if they are dropping pupils off in the school grounds, do so at the designated drop-off area at the front of the school. Likewise, it would be appreciated if cars did not park on any raised kerb areas when awaiting pupils for collection, as these are pedestrian spaces for young people.

We have received concerns from local residents regarding parking around the local area at the end of the pupil day. While I am sure that Braes parents, when driving and waiting around the school, do so in a considerate and sensible manner, it is of course in everyone's interests for all to continue to do so.

Winter weather

The default position for young people during lunchtimes and break times is that they spend time outside the school building. Pupils can access the school canteen and dining spaces to eat and drink. Thereafter however, young people should then be outside in the fresh air at these times and we would recommend pupils having an appropriate outdoor jacket to wear. As we move into the colder months, we will of course monitor weather conditions and ensure that pupils have access to indoor spaces should the weather be too inclement.

Finally, we look forward to seeing our young people back in Braes this term, working together to build respect and earn success.

Yours faithfully,

Iain Livingstone