



24<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers of Years 7 to 9,

I am writing to update you on a few matters and clarify a few points. I am aware that the media can present rather mixed and confusing information, so better you hear it directly from me.

We have been really pleased to be allowed to welcome Year 10 students back into school over these last couple of weeks. We finally received the guidance from the Department for Education and that enabled us to review our plans and ensure our risk assessment was fit for purpose. The GCC Health and Safety unit also reviewed our plans and gave us very positive feedback.

Since then, Year 10 students have been attending one session a week (a quarter of the year group at a time) and during that time have had individual mentoring sessions with their tutors in addition to having access to school computer suites to complete their online learning. It was right that we prioritised Year 10 as they are partway through their GCSE courses and it is vital that they are well prepared for Year 11 and completing their GCSE courses in summer 2021. We have been really impressed with the Year 10 attendance and also their positive mind-set. Over the next two weeks, Year 10 students will have sessions in English, maths and science in addition to their option subjects, so that they can benefit from subject specific expertise and guidance in the limited time we have available.

The government has just recently changed its guidance and they are now permitting secondary schools to invite other students into school for a face-to-face meeting, so long as we maintain reduced numbers in school as a whole, and that class sizes are small. Due to these restrictions, we do not have the weeks available to see all students, so we have had to make some difficult decisions around which year groups to prioritise.

After much discussion, we have decided upon prioritising Year 9. Students in Year 9 have just been informed of their option subject allocations and have just begun preparatory work for their GCSE courses. We want Year 9 students to have a session in school before the summer holidays, to ensure they are clear about expectations in Key Stage 4 and understand the importance of these final two years at Maidenhill. I will be writing to Year 9 parents and carers shortly giving specific details, including all the health and safety measures that are in place to make Maidenhill as safe as possible for students and staff. The first Year 9 group will attend school on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July.

We are also offering students who will become Year 7 in September, the opportunity to have a morning at Maidenhill before the summer holidays. We recognise that the current Year 6 have not had the usual transition preparations such as Maidenhill staff meeting them in their primary schools and nor have they had the opportunity to come to Maidenhill as a whole year group for their Discovery Day. We know how stressful and worrying the transition from primary to secondary school can be for students and families, so we wanted to facilitate a morning for them when they might meet their Learning Community Leader, some teachers, tutors and Learning Support Assistants.

I know that students and parents/carers of Years 7 and 8 may be disappointed that they are not allowed to return to Maidenhill before the summer. It has been one of the strangest and most challenging times for schools and families and I thank you for your support during this time. We have been working hard to fulfil all the requirements placed upon us by the Department for Education. The current restrictions regarding numbers of students in school at any one time, have meant some difficult decisions have had to be made. I hope you will understand the rationale we have used in our decision-making.

We have been particularly impressed with Year 7 and 8 students' home learning and your sons/daughters are really benefitting from your ongoing support as well as the hard work of the teachers and staff. We are really looking forward to seeing all students in school again.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "P. Wilson". The signature is written in black ink and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Mrs P Wilson  
Head Teacher