



# BRIDGE OF DON ACADEMY

*Be Caring Be Honest Be Respectful Be Your Best*

Braehead Way • Bridge of Don • Aberdeen • AB22 8RR

Tel 01224 707583

Web: [www.bridgeofdon.aberdeen.sch.uk](http://www.bridgeofdon.aberdeen.sch.uk)

E-mail: [bridgeofdon@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:bridgeofdon@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

**Head Teacher: Daphne McWilliam**



20 August 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

## **Head Teacher's Update – 20 August 2021**

I write to update you on the following:

- First week back at school
- Staff Changes
- Practical payments for HE, Art and Design and Design and Technology
- Mitigations in Place
- PE changing Rooms
- School Canteen
- Autumn Flu Vaccination Programme
- Public Health Procedures
- Lateral Flow Testing
- School Values and Expectations including
  - Pupils going off school Grounds
  - School Uniform
  - Senior Phase Pupils and Study Classes
- Pathway Planning

### **First Week Back at School**

I sincerely hope you have all had a summer which provided some rest and relaxation and a break from routine. I am sure that all the young people appreciated the chance to have a break from school routines and spend some time with friends and family as restrictions were lifted.

It has been lovely to welcome back all our pupils from S2 – S6 and to have our new S1 pupils with us for their first week. As I have worked with them at assemblies and met with them during break and lunch I have been impressed by their positive attitude and willingness to adapt to the new routines and rules in place. Despite not having senior pupils as guides they have, with the support of their teachers, been able to find their way around the school and arrive at their classes on time. We were able to organise the first day back to speak to all new S1 pupils in small groups to emphasise our school values and how these apply to all of us in our school community. There are many ways they can be honest, respectful, and caring and therefore be at their best every day. Arriving at school and each class on time and settling down quickly – removing jackets and getting their jotters and equipment out of their bags – shows teachers they are ready to learn. By using kind words and

being helpful and supportive to one another they show they care – about more than themselves and see themselves as part of this community. Finally, by following the rules set by teachers and the school such as keeping left, only using mobile phones in permitted areas, staying on school grounds when required all our pupils demonstrate their honesty and integrity.

### **Staff Changes**

I am please to be able confirm the following appointments to the staff:

Home Economics:	Miss Martha Rennie
Biology:	Miss Kaitlyn Frost
Support for Learning	Mrs Lynne Erskine

We do still have vacancies as follows but we are working our way through the recruitment process:

- Head of Braemar House
- Teacher of Physics
- Teacher of English

We have welcomed back Mrs Gillian Robertson (Miss Fraser) and Mrs Cara Walkden from Maternity leave and Miss Clare Dyer will continue with us in our Social Studies Faculty.

Our school library will now be in the capable hands of Mrs Penny Kennedy since the retirement of Mrs Gillian Marshall in the Spring.

### **Practical Payments**

As you know the Scottish Government's manifesto contained a commitment to support schools to eradicate payments for practical elements of the curriculum. From this session there will be no charges made to ay families for the following subjects:

- Home Economics
- Art and Design
- Design and Technology

The Scottish Government has allocated a sum of money to each local authority which will be distributed to schools to help defray the costs of these practical subjects which require the purchase of consumable resources.

### **Mitigations in Place from August 2021**

As I explained at the end of last term we have returned with the same mitigations in place but we are undertaking a review of these arrangements over the next four weeks in line with Scottish Government guidance.

- Separate entrances for each year group
- Continued use of hand sanitising gel on entering school and on entering and leaving each class.
- The wearing of face coverings (unless exempt) for all young people and staff: to be reviewed by the Scottish Government six week into the new term.

- The use of provided materials to clean desk and equipment under the direction of teachers.
- Staggered break and lunch times for S1 – S3 pupils and S4 – S6 pupils.
- Enhanced cleaning routines of multi-touchpoints

I have already begun discussions about these mitigations with staff and will ask the Parent Council to add this to the agenda for the first meeting which takes place on Tuesday 31 August 2021.

### **PE Changing Rooms**

We have reviewed the use of our changing rooms and have decided that **we will open them for senior pupils in S4 – S6 only from Monday 23 August 2021**. All young people in S4 – S6 will therefore be expected to attend school in full uniform and bring PE kit to change into for all PE lessons. We will monitor the air quality in the changing rooms using the CO2 monitors provided by the local authority and also put in place an enhanced cleaning regime.

### **Security Of Personal Belongings And Valuables**

To maintain good ventilation in the changing rooms the doors will be closed when young people are changing but then left open for the duration of the lesson. All young people will be reminded to store valuables in the trays provided by the PE staff which will be locked in the PE office. Alternatively young people can store valuables in their lockers.

### **School Canteen**

We have had a few enquiries from families looking to be able to load money onto Accord Cards - the following is the link you need:

[School meals: cashless catering | Aberdeen City Council](#)

The menus are available on the school website

<https://bridgeofdon.aberdeen.sch.uk/wp/information/school-canteen>

### **Autumn Flu Vaccination Programme**

The local authority and the NHS have set dates for the flu vaccination programme which will take place in schools. Our allocated dates are 4, 5 and 6 October. The vaccine will be administered via a nasal spray. More information can be found by using this link <https://www.nhsinform.scot/flu-vaccine/the-vaccines/the-child-flu-vaccine>

Paperwork will be issued to all families in hard copy next week and the return date will be 3 September 2021. I would ask for your support with this because the only way we can get them to you all efficiently is via your child(ren). We will send communication home via Groupcall when the forms are issued to allow you to check bags etc, just in case young people forget to pass them on. The forms are not available from the NHS in electronic format.

### **Public Health Procedures: Positive cases of Covid-19 among school staff and pupils**

You will have seen from Eleanor Sheppard's letter issued in the holidays that the Public Health Team will be taking a different approach to contact tracing and self-

isolation for the close contacts of a pupil or staff member who tests positive for Covid-19. The following comes from that letter:

*The [Scottish Government] [guidance](#) introduces an important change to self-isolation arrangements. From the start of term:*

- *Whole classes and large groups will no longer be required to self-isolate for 10 days if a member of the class/group tests positive*
- *Only the children and young people who Public Health believe are at the highest risk of being exposed to infection will be asked to self-isolate and take a PCR test*
- *A negative PCR test result will enable an asymptomatic learner to return to school and end their period of self-isolation.*
- *Only those returning a positive result or displaying symptoms will be asked to complete their 10-day isolation.*

*Families will still be advised of positive cases in their child's class and we ask that you remain vigilant to the symptoms of COVID-19 in order to limit any risk to our children and young people.*

*Further information can be accessed here [National Guidance on reducing the risks in schools](#).*

## **Lateral Flow Testing**

Taking a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test, ideally twice a week, helps with early detection of cases. LFD kits are available from school, Please contact the school by email to be directed to the documents to complete to order these for collection by young people.

## **Expectations: Our School Values:**

*Be Caring - Be Respectful - Be Honest - Be Your Best*

Our 'BODA Bs' are the basis of all our work in school and what we expect of our entire school community: pupils and staff and, I would respectfully suggest, our parents and carers. The rules we have in place – all of which can be read in the School Prospectus – are there to keep young people safe and to ensure the good order within the school so that everyone can focus on what we are here to do – learn together.

## **Pupils Going Off School Grounds**

### **Morning Break**

All young people must stay on school grounds for morning break. They should ensure that have their own Accord Card to purchase snacks in the canteen or take their own snack to school. There is no time at morning break for young people to be

able to get to the shops and back and be on time for classes. In addition, we are responsible for young people and can only supervise the school canteen and patrol school grounds: we cannot patrol the community to ensure young people are safe. Although we do make spot checks on the shops on Braehead Way and will direct pupils back to school. Persistent offenders will be put on detention at morning break.

## **Lunch Break**

### **S1**

Young people in S1 are expected to stay on school grounds at lunch time unless they go home for lunch.

### **S2 – S6**

Young people in S2 – S6 may leave school grounds to buy their lunch locally and we would expect them to be able to do this and return to class on time. Persistent lateness after lunch will be dealt with in the same way as lateness in the mornings: teachers will record this and it will be monitored.

We have a well-developed system for recording lateness and consequences for those who are persistently late. This includes keeping parent/carers informed. We will remind all young people about this system on our return to school in August.

The school grounds extend as far as the school playing fields but do not extend to the grounds of St Columba's Church. This area is out of bounds for all young people at break and lunch because we never know when there may be a funeral or service taking place which could be disturbed by the noise of young people congregating nearby.

School grounds do not include the skatepark or the playground beside the Alex Collie Centre. We also expect that young people will respect the local community by disposing of their litter responsibly.

## **School Uniform**

This [link](#) will take you to the page of the school website which has been updated and contains the details of Abstitch, our supplier of school ties and blazers. If you require any further information about the school uniform, please refer to my Head Teacher Update letter dated 11 June 2021. From Monday 23 August all young people in S4 – S6 will be expected to attend school in full uniform each day.

The uniform for **all pupils** is now a shirt/blouse and tie with plain black trousers/skirt, jumpers and shoes. Blue tie for S1 to S4, red tie for S5 to S6. Some families did have leftover sweatshirts with the school logo on them and these were worn during session 2020-21 – which we accepted was practical. These are no longer part of school uniform.

Abstitch supply our school blazers which are required uniform for those returning to school for S5 and S6. Pupils from S1 to S4 can also purchase blazers from Abstitch as many already do.

## **Senior Phase Pupils and Study classes**

### **S4**

Young people must stay in their study class unless they have a scheduled remote meeting for a college course, or they are signing out of school to attend college in person.

### **S5**

As above and in addition young people can sign out of study to work on a subject where they need the practical equipment, for example, Music, Art & Design, Graphic Communication or Computing Science. This must be with the permission of the teacher in whose classroom they are working who will supervise them. They must ensure that for all other study periods they have sufficient work with them to complete.

### **S6**

As above, and in addition, young people in S6 may sign out to go home to study which means leaving the school building entirely and not going to the canteen. This is good preparation for life beyond school when young people will be expected to organise themselves to attend university or college lectures at different times in the day as well as scheduling personal study time.

If young people have study first period in the day they may opt to come into school and sign out to return home. Alternatively, they can let us know by telephoning the school office from home that this is their plan. If neither of these options is chosen parents/carers will get a Groupcall to informing them of their child's absence.

In all cases young people must sign out personally from their study class and if going home (S6 only) also sign out at the school office.

## **Pathway Planning**

S4-6 - Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) is running a survey to understand young people's perceptions about their future working life and the opportunities available to them.

This is to give young people in this region a voice and the results will be used to help DYW support them.

It involves encouraging senior school pupils (S4-6 - we are targeting 16-24 year olds) to fill in an online survey that will take approximately 10 minutes. All responses will remain anonymous and no identifying information will be shared.

You can also use the following link to access the survey - <https://bit.ly/DYW-YPF-S>

## **Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Opportunities**

Young people also have access to My World of Work to find out more information about careers and pathways available to them.

Marriot Hotels is running a careers roadshow next week and will be in Aberdeen on Monday, 23 August from midday until 8pm at their venue on Overton Circle. Those

who attend will have the chance to chat with existing team members about the roles and opportunities that the organisation can offer.

More info and registration here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/marriott-north-cluster-careers-roadshow-live-fully-tickets-166631901503>

Further DYW opportunities can be found using the following link - <https://bridgeofdon.aberdeen.sch.uk/wp/?p=8171>

### **Contact with School**

When e-mailing please provide your child's name and registration class and a note of the nature of the concern so it can be forwarded appropriately. Until the recruitment process for a new Head of Braemar House is completed Mrs Napier, Mrs Marshall and Miss Smith will continue to support the young people they were responsible for in sessions 2020 -21. For our new S1 pupils in Braemar we will direct your enquiry to an appropriate member of staff to until the vacancy is filled in September.

#### **Pastoral Care**

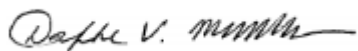
Braemar House	Vacancy
Crathes House	Mrs Napier
Drum House	Miss Smith
Fyvie House	Mrs Marshall

#### **Year Heads**

S1 and S2	Mr Haggarty
S3 and S4	Mrs Cruickshank
S5 and S6	Mr Jamieson

I hope that you all continue to be well and, as always, please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further support.

Yours sincerely



Mrs D McWilliam  
Head Teacher