

St Matthew's Academy
Jacks Road
SALTCOATS
KA21 5NT
Head Teacher - Mr S Colligan
Tel: 01294 606680



Our Ref:

Date: 04/08/20

Dear Parent/Carer

Return to school update

You will be aware following communication from North Ayrshire Council and the announcement on Thursday 30th July that pupils will return to school on a full-time basis next week. I am sure that you share my happiness that our young people will have the opportunity to return to their school building and be with their teachers and friends. Staff are very much looking forward to welcoming the pupils once more and helping them to achieve their potential

Preparation for the start of term is ongoing. The school has been fully cleaned and appropriate safety requirements are being finalised. These include: effective hygiene and cleaning procedures; sanitisers at all entrance / exit points; a review of movement round the building to minimise “pinch points”; and revised risk assessments to ensure we have taken all appropriate precautions.

The session will start on Wednesday 12th August and we will be operating a phased return over the course of the week:

Monday 10th August - Staff Inservice Day

Tuesday 11th August - Staff Inservice Day

Wednesday 12th August – Only S1, S5 and S6 return to school

Thursday 13th August - S4 return to school (in addition to S1, S5 and S6)

Friday 14th August - S2 and S3 return to school, meaning ALL pupils are back.

Monday 17th August - All pupils are back as normal.

This model has been agreed following consultation with representatives from the Parent Council and is designed to support pupils' wellbeing as they return to school following what has been a challenging time for us all.

Due to the demands of school transport there will be no staggered starts and the timing of each school day will remain as normal. To maintain social distancing pupils will be asked, where possible, to remain outside the building until the bell sounds and then make their way to their period 1 class. This will be reviewed should the weather be inclement. The period timings will be the same as usual, as will the end of the school day. Parents who bring their child to school by car are asked to use the parent drop off point rather than the staff car park to minimise contact where possible. Those parents who require use of the disabled parking bays should, of course, continue to make use of them.

Pupils will be encouraged to follow social distancing advice wherever possible.

We would ask all pupils and parents / carers to support our school uniform for the coming session. Uniform builds community and a sense of belonging. I feel it is essential that we promote this sense of belonging to help our young people reconnect with their school.

Government advice is clear that schools should minimise external visitors. Therefore, adults will not be permitted inside the school without prior notice. Only visitors such as delivery drivers and peripatetic teachers will be permitted entry to the school. If you require to speak to someone, please call the school office and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

If your son or daughter becomes unwell you will be contacted and asked to put arrangements in place to collect your child. Any child who displays Covid-19 symptoms at home must not be sent into school. Please ensure you contact the school promptly regarding any absence and particularly should the absence be Covid-19 related.

The school canteen will be open at interval and lunch but a cashless system will be in operation. Parents are asked to make use of the Parent Pay system.

More information and answers to frequently asked questions can be obtained from the North Ayrshire website - <https://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-learning/education-learning-covid19.aspx>

On a different note, you will be aware that students received their SQA results today, Tuesday 4th August. Initial review of the data would suggest some excellent outcomes for our young people at all levels. S4 show a particularly strong set of results with S5 and S6 also performing well. However, some pupils may wish to discuss SQA appeals and changes to options based on their results and they are reminded that this will be possible on Thursday 6th August from 10am – 12:30pm. Parents, as stated above, are asked not to enter the building.

This has been a challenging time for all members of our school community. In the weeks and months ahead we will work together to ensure our young people can focus on their learning. Please be assured that our Catholic school will care and support them as we always do. The safety and success of our pupils and students remains our key priority.

Thank you to all members of our community for your support and kind words over the previous months. It is reassuring to know that we are all part of a community that cares deeply for each other. I am looking forward to welcoming all our young people back to Saint Matthew's Academy in the coming week.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Colligan

Head Teacher