

Please find below the answers to the many questions you will have. There will also be further posts on Google Classrooms. On the first week back all pupils will have assemblies - these assemblies will be delivered in class using Google Meet. Many of the questions below will be covered in more detail during these assemblies.

HOW ARE WE KEEPING YOU SAFE?

Will I be safe in school?

Yes, however it is EVERYONE's responsibility to keep our school safe. We have put in place measures to make buses, start of day, classrooms, break, lunch, moving in the corridors, toilets and end of day safe for you. As a community we can make this work but everyone will have to play their part. It is important that all pupils adhere to all the new rules and procedures put in place. No-one can think that this doesn't apply to them.

Do I have to wear a mask in school?

There is no requirement for pupils to wear a mask in school, however pupils are perfectly entitled to do so if they would prefer. Similarly, teachers are not required to wear masks but some may choose to do so.

Do we have to adhere to social distancing?

There is no requirement for pupils to adhere to social distancing. However, although this means that pupils do not have to adhere to the 2m rule, it is important that pupils stay apart from each other wherever possible. The school day has been adjusted to limit times when large groups of pupils will gather.

Teachers are required to social distance from each other and from pupils. This is very important and it is essential that pupils understand this and act responsibly.

STRUCTURE OF THE SCHOOL DAY

What will the structure of the school day be like?

We have slightly altered the structure of the day to allow for a staggered start, intervals and lunchtimes. The new times are attached as a separate document. These times will be kept under review as we settle back to school and there may be slight changes.

Arrival in school

Pupils should not enter the school building until 8.40. On arrival in school pupils must wash their hands, pupils should then report straight to their period 1 class – i.e. there should be no waiting about at the front of the school. Lessons for S1 - S3 will start at 8.50 and lessons for S4 - S6 at 8.55. Should a pupil arrive late to school, then they should report to the main office as normal.

Pupils in S1 - S4 should use the main entrance at the front of the school. Pupils in S5 and S6 should use the doors at the end of the CDT and HE corridor.

WHAT WILL THE TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS BE?

Can I walk or cycle to school?

Yes. In fact, if you are able to cycle or walk to school safely we would definitely encourage this. The bike shed next to the bus bays, and the bike shed in the leisure centre car park will both be open for pupils to use. These sheds will be locked during the school day to keep bikes safe.

If parents are driving pupils to school, they are asked not to drive through the school grounds but to drop pupils in the leisure centre or sports centre car park.

How will the buses work- will there be social distancing?

On school transport there is no requirement for pupils to adhere to social distancing or to wear a mask. However if pupils travel on public transport then they will have to adhere to the current government legislation. The buses are aware of the slightly changed school times. Hand sanitiser will be available on all buses. Pupils will be allocated a designated seat and must stay in this seat.

If pupils travel on public transport then they are required to wear a mask and to adhere to all rules and procedures.

What will intervals and lunchtime be like?

The structure of the day has been altered to allow slightly longer intervals and lunchtimes. This will allow handwashing and numbers in toilets to be managed.

During morning interval all pupils are required to stay in school. Pupils will be able to purchase from the school canteen or may prefer to bring in their own snacks.

Lunchtimes are now different for S1 - S3 and S4 - S6. Initially only pupils in S5 and S6 will be allowed out of school during lunchtime, this will be kept under review. We are liaising with local businesses to see where S5 and S6 might go during lunchtime if they choose to go down the street. Many small businesses do not have the capacity to cope with large numbers. We will be able to update S5 and S6 pupils on this as we get more information. Pupils in S1 - S4 can purchase food from the canteen or bring packed lunches.

There will be designated spaces around the school for pupils to go during intervals and lunchtimes.

S1	Outside (We are looking into providing some additional outside shelters)
S2	Canteen
S3	Games Hall
S4	MPH
S5	Gym and front foyer
S6	Library and senior social area

What if I feel unwell while at home?

Where children/staff have a high temperature, new continuous cough or loss or change to their sense of smell or taste, they should remain at home.

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/self-help-guides/self-help-guide-coronavirus-covid-19>

What if I start to feel unwell in school?

Notify your teacher immediately. We will remove you from the setting to an appropriate area in the school which has been identified to ensure you can be isolated but appropriately supervised until arrival of emergency contact. Emergency contacts will be informed immediately.

What systems and resources will the school have in place to support hand-washing?

Pupils will be asked to wash their hands when they arrive in school first thing. There will be spray, wipes and hand-sanitiser in every classroom and hand sanitiser at all entrances. Toilets will be well supplied with soap for hand-washing. Pupils will also be required to wash hands after intervals and lunchtimes - if you are timetabled to art, science or Home Economics you will be able to wash your hands in the classroom.

What cleaning will take place each day?

There will be additional cleaning in school. Cleaning will take place throughout and at the end of the school day.

How will the toilets work?

To avoid overcrowding, there will be no access between change of lessons. Soap will be available and there is a strong emphasis on hand washing after visiting the toilet. In terms of the cleaning of the toilets, this is likely to be ongoing throughout the day but not after every visit.

WILL THE SCHOOL LOOK DIFFERENT?

Will there be signs?

Yes, there will be lots of signage around the school to remind you of the new rules.

What will movement in the corridors be like?

We have devised a one way system around the school. There is clear signage and it is really important that you follow this. We will talk this through during 'assemblies' on the first day at school. It is really important that you adhere to all signage.

Will there still be lockers?

Yes, the locker system will operate as normal.

Do I have to wear school uniform?

The Dingwall Academy school uniform remains an important part of our school and our standards. However, we appreciate that it may have been difficult to get uniform this year. Below is the link to the council website that families can use to apply for a clothing grant. We will also be making our recycled clothing available. Primary 7 pupils have been given permission to wear their leaver hoodies from Primary School for the first term.

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools_-_grants_and_benefits/10/free_school_meals_and_assistance_with_clothing

What is the system for getting food at lunch and break-time?

Highland Council are looking at an app that will allow pupils to pre-order lunches. We will get more details of this to you as it becomes available. If you do bring your own snacks and packed lunches there can be no sharing of food. Pupils are also encouraged to top up their school meal card using the online system.

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/9/school_meals/2

WHAT WILL LEARNING LOOK LIKE?

What will my classrooms look like?

Some classrooms will look very different. All desks have to be rearranged to face the front with pupils sitting side by side. This will obviously change the set up in a number of rooms. There will also need to be extra space to ensure that there is 2m between pupils and the teacher, if the teacher is sitting at their desk or using the board.

This will obviously change how teachers are able to teach and it will feel quite strange at first. Teachers will be working with each other and sharing ideas on how to make learning and teaching work best in this new set up.

What will happen when I get to class

We want to minimise time in the corridor, your teacher will therefore direct you straight into the classroom and to your seat. You must sit in the seat allocated to you. When you arrive in class you will be expected to wipe down the table and chair you are going to use. Equipment will be provided for this. You must place bags on the floor, and not on the desk. Again it will take some time to get used to this, but hopefully it will quickly become routine.

Will I still get all the same subjects?

All subjects are still available, however there will be some changes in a number of subject and limits on what you can do. In PE, for example, a number of activities will not be possible and for the first term that aim is for all PE to be outside. In music, while it is impossible for some equipment not to be shared, this will need to be managed and cleaning routines put in place. In practical subjects, pupils often gather around the teacher to watch demonstrations, this will need to be done in a different way, perhaps using technology. Please be patient and understand that your teachers will be doing their very best to make the learning experience as positive as possible.

What equipment should I bring and what will be available in class?

You can bring pens, pencils, calculators and Chromebooks but there should be minimal sharing of equipment. If you forget your pen/pencil - the school office will have some resources that you can take. If you have to borrow from the office, then you keep what is given to you. You shouldn't bring anything extra to school that you do not need.

How will the pupil support department work with me?

If you receive additional support it will still be there. However, given the 2m distancing rules it may be difficult for staff to support in a way you might be used to. The important thing to know is that support is still there.

What if I have fallen behind while working at home?

It can be fixed. One advantage of Google Classroom is that activities and presentations remain accessible for a long time. At the end of last term, letters were sent home to any pupils where we had concerns. One of the reasons we are so keen to get pupils back into school, is that we are missing face to face contact. One major thing that we all learned during school closures was how it can be difficult to stay motivated. Hopefully having everyone back in school will help with this. We will also be looking at what additional support might be put in place to help anyone who now has large gaps in their learning. School closures also taught us a lot about taking responsibility, it is therefore really important that everyone does everything possible to keep up with class work.

Have there been any changes to the Promoting Positive Behaviour policy?

We will need to make some changes to the behaviour code to comply with the new ways we are all working. We also need to be clear what the consequences would be if a pupil were to deliberately break social distancing rules. However, we are confident that pupils will understand the seriousness of the situation and the importance of adhering to these new rules and procedures - remember that they are there to keep you and everyone else safe.

How do I get help with my Mental Health?

Your first route is through your Guidance Teacher and we will be addressing the impact of lockdown during PSE. We will be keen to hear the views and ideas of the Pupil Voice on supporting pupils. There is also lots of online support available for young people. We recognise that the schools closures have had a massive impact on everyone. [Coronavirus and mental health](#)

Will there be after school activities?

Not initially. To give plenty of time for the cleaning team to make our building clean and safe, all staff and pupils are expected to leave the building within 30 minutes of the end of the school day.

Will I still get my weekly music lesson?

Yes. Instrumental instructors have been working very hard during the school closures to ensure that pupils still get lessons. When we return to school it is likely that lessons will continue to be delivered online, your instructor will get a timetable to you. They are hoping to plan lessons for the days you are working at home.

Will we be able to use the library and social areas?

Pupils will have to adhere to the areas set for interval and lunchtimes so not everyone will have access to all spaces.

Can I get water from the drinks fountain?

Yes, but we are asking that no-one drinks directly from fountains, they should only be used for filling water bottles.

What if I have an appointment during the day and need to sign out or arrive in late?

The normal systems apply, you will be asked to check in with the school office. However, given the time we have all spent away from school, we would hope that everyone will do their very best to be in school as much as possible. If possible, appointments should be arranged for days when you are working at home.

Schools started back a week early this year, do we get this time back?

Yes, you are going to get an extra week next Summer. So the Summer holidays next year will be 7 weeks.

Will there still be prefects?

Yes. Prefects play an important role in our school. The role of a prefect will be different this year, however. We will work with the S6 pupils to reinvent this role and ensure that the leadership opportunity is still there for those who wish to take on this role in the school in their final year.

Will we still have assemblies?

It will not be possible to have year groups gathered in the MPH. However we can still get whole schools messages delivered via communications classrooms, Google Meets and video messages.

Can I still meet with my CSW/Social worker?

Yes but many of these meetings may well take place through Google Meets or some other platform. We do have offices that can be used for socially distanced meetings if required.

Do I need to bring hand-soap and hand-sanitiser?

It is not compulsory- the school will have adequate supplies. If you feel safer or more comfortable bringing your own, you can do that.

What if I need to go to the school office?

Please only report to the main office if absolutely necessary. You will be issued with one timetable, please take a photograph or a copy of it as soon as possible. If you need to phone home the office have a mobile phone that you can use, this will be wiped down between each use.

Please do not come to the office and ask for change; they will not be able to hand out money.

There will be lots more questions over the coming days and the next term. We will constantly be reviewing all our procedures, the priority being to keep everyone safe in school. We appreciate that you may be very anxious about coming back to school, or disappointed to read all these new rules and procedures. School will not be the same as it was before lockdown, but remember that all these changes are there to protect you and everyone else.

Thank you