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Headteacher Miss Lynn Black



17 September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

### School Updates

As we embark on the long holiday weekend I want to update you on how we are progressing in school with our new protocols. As a team we are very proud of how our pupils have adapted to the new procedures and to wearing masks; for the vast majority of pupils this is now just part of school routines and their co-operation is making school life as smooth as it possibly can be.

We have had a few concerns raised by members of the community regarding the way the pupils enter and exit Tesco, with some large gatherings of pupils being part of their concerns. This can be intimidating and it is understandable that other customers can feel uncomfortable in this situation. Concerns regarding house parties where large groups of teenagers are gathering has also been raised.

I would be grateful if you could reiterate the Scottish Government guidance with your child, particularly in light of the changes which came into force on Monday. When in the community pupils over the age of twelve should not be in groups of more than **six** and from more than **two** households. Understandably this can be confusing for pupils when education establishments are different and these rules do not apply in a school setting. However, with cases of Covid-19 rising, it would be really sad to think our hard work in coming so far could be undone.

### Staffing Updates

I have some updates and changes to our staffing which I would like to share with you. Ms Donoughue, Depute Head Teacher has now started her maternity leave and in her absence Mrs Semple will now be DHT Pupil Support and have responsibility for pupils in Livingstone House. We wish Ms Donoughue best wishes for this exciting next chapter and we look forward to seeing her and her new baby soon!

Mrs O'Neill will now be acting Principal Teacher Inclusion and Wellbeing and we have a teacher of wellbeing, Ms Mitchell, joining us in the next few weeks.

We have recruited a Maths teacher in a fixed term post and they will join us in October.

Finally, we are in the process of recruiting a Depute Head teacher and the final part of the recruitment process takes place next week.

### **Pentland Provision**

A new provision will open as part of Beeslack Community High school for pupils who have complex social needs. The provision will initially be capped at 8 pupils in total and it will be based in the top floor of Glencorse Primary school for this session.

The provision was already planned as part of the new school provision on the A701; however, the need for a suitable provision to meet the needs of these young people was required earlier. As a result of this we have Ms Hughes (Depute Head Teacher with responsibility for the provision) two teachers, three youth workers and three learning assistants joining our staff team. Some of the team have already started and are working with the pupils on their transition to the provision and others will be joining us in the coming weeks.

### **School Catering**

We intimated that we would review the current provision for school lunches at the September holiday weekend. The current situation will continue with **no catering** available in school until the October break when it will be reviewed again. Pupils should continue to bring a packed lunch with them and will have access to their base classroom to eat lunch. **We continue to recommend that all S1 pupils stay in school for lunch.** A number of S1 pupils have decided to take themselves out of school grounds at lunchtime, however this goes against our recommendation.

S2 – 6 pupils can continue to go home or access local amenities but please be mindful of the Scottish Government Guidelines regarding wearing masks and social distancing.

**Midlothian Council will continue to make BACS payments to all families where pupils are entitled to and in receipt of free school meals.**

### **NHS Lothian FAQs**

Also included as part of this update are the most recent Frequently Asked Questions for Parents and Carers from NHS Lothian. We will continue to post all new updates to guidance on the School website.

Thank you again for your continued support and I hope you all have a restful weekend.

Yours sincerely



Lynn Black