



Together Growing Succeeding

Newsletter 1 in Session 2020-21 4th August 2020

Hello to all our Pupils and Parents & Carers,

Welcome back! Also welcome to 'Together Growing Succeeding', our new Newsletter for families of The Gordon Schools. The name is our School Vision that guides our everyday actions and expectations as well as being a statement of what we are trying to be and do as a School. There is more detail about this at the end of this Newsletter.

This edition is all about our return to School next week and to let you know about how we are going to be managing this. Following last week's announcement from Scottish Government, we are implementing our 'Plan A', allowing for a phased return to School for all next week. The timings of our School day will remain as they are. Pupils should be in for the 08:50 warning bell and will leave at 15:45, with a one-hour lunch break.

Timeline

Monday 10 August	School Staff In-Service
Tuesday 11 August	School Staff In-Service + S2 & S6 Buddies
Wednesday 12 August	S1 pupils + S2 & S6 Buddies
Thursday 13 August	S1, S2 & S3 pupils & S6 Buddies
Friday 14 August	S4, S5 & S6 pupils
Monday 17 August	All pupils return together

Being Back in the Building

It will be really important for all our young people to be aware of other people's feelings when they return. There will be both young people and adults who are anxious about returning and the health implications of this. While young people are not required to social distance from each other at all times, we do need them to minimise group contacts and respect personal space. Any behaviour that is not respectful of the current pandemic or unsafe towards others will result in families being contacted and the young person being asked to return only when they can behave safely.

Staff will be maintaining a 2-metre social distance from pupils where this is possible and practical.

Classes may be organised so that pupils are forward facing, and pupils will be asked to separate out to a 2-metre distance in classes where this is possible.

We will not be able to hold our traditional daily Assemblies for pupils. The format will change to on-line presentations from the Rector and Senior Leadership Team until current Government advice changes.

Pupils will be asked to use outside areas as much as possible at Interval and Lunchtime. This will also be the case for moving between classes and different areas of the School.

We will be unable to offer the usual selection of extra-curricular activities upon our return but once we are more confident about health and safety for all, we hope to increase opportunities to participate over the course of the session.

School Catering

The Catering Service is developing an App to speed up and ease queuing in School. Details will be coming out to families as soon they have finalised this.

S1 pupils must remain in School for lunch unless they are going to their home to eat. Our Canteen will be open, and we would strongly advise all pupils to remain on School grounds during lunchtime and interval. Pupils will not be allowed to take-away any plated or hot food from the Canteen.

If pupils do go into the community then they must respect the rules that are in place in local shops and ensure that they wear a face mask in any indoor setting. They must not congregate in groups or break with 2-metre social distancing with any adults they encounter.

School Transport

TGS has today received our bus lists so the Aberdeenshire Passenger Transport Unit (PTU) will be in contact with families in the coming days to confirm your pick-up points and times. The key advice for all using School transport is:

- Dedicated school transport (including taxis) is seen as an extension of the school therefore, it is not necessary to maintain distance between children and young people of any age

- Children and young people must not board dedicated school or public transport if they, or a member of their household, have symptoms of COVID-19
- Where public transport (including buses & taxis) is required for school-aged children to attend school, the general advice and guidance from the Scottish Government and Transport Scotland should be followed. This currently includes the mandatory use of face coverings (unless exemptions apply) and the need for physical distancing with adults on the bus where possible
- The scientific advice is that face coverings are not necessary for children and young people on dedicated school transport buses and coaches. Those who wish to wear a face covering are, however, permitted to do so
- All passengers and staff should sanitise their hands prior to boarding dedicated school transport

School Uniform

We ask that families wash pupils' School uniform as regularly as they can. Ties are not recommended for pupils at the current time.

Bringing Equipment to School

TGS will routinely supply basic school equipment to all pupils. In the current situation however, to reduce the sharing of resources we would really appreciate if as many pupils as possible were able to bring in their own pens, pencils, rubbers, sharpeners, calculators and any other such equipment. Please note that no pupils who needs it will go without.

Entering the School Building

All pupils should ensure they sanitise their hands before entering the School building. We will provide as much **as** this as we can but if pupils can bring their own hand sanitiser to School, this would be much appreciated.

Current guidance states that parents/carers should not enter the School building unless they are requested to do so. Please contact us in advance if you need to come in to TGS.

TGS Vision

This guides our everyday actions and expectations and is a statement of what we are trying to be and do as a School.

An easy way to remember our Vision, is using the initial of our School: T G S

Our **Vision** is:

Together Growing Succeeding

Together

Is about treating one another positively, kindly and with respect. We are all a part of the School community, the Local Huntly community and beyond. Our actions here affect other local, national, and international communities.

We must consider what consequences our actions will have on others and on our environment, both locally and globally.

Growing

We need you to value and look after your health. This includes your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health.

TGS should be a happy place, with support for everyone to feel good about their health. We want you to develop confidence and resilience for life in and beyond School.

Succeeding

Success means being the best possible version of yourself that you can be. If you succeed with this, then you will learn as well and achieve as much as you can. Have a growth mind-set – explore new things and aim for future successes! At TGS we want you to be proud of your achievements and successes and we will celebrate those with you.

Contacting TGS

Please use the following to contact The Gordon Schools:

The Gordon Schools
Huntly, AB54 4SE

Phone: 01466 792181 (we are moving to Skype during Term 2 so this will change)

Web: <http://www.gordonschools.aberdeenshire.sch.uk>

E-mail: gordonschools.aca@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Term 1 Calendar

We will add to this during the Term. At the moment here are the key dates. A Family Calendar will be posted on the School website covering the entire School session 2020-21.

August 10 & 11	School In-Service days
August 12	S1 + Buddies only
August 13	S1, S2 & S3 + Buddies only
August 14	S4, S5 & S6 only
August 17	Full return to School for all
October 9	Last day of Term 1
October 26	First day back for all in Term 2

Finally...

The transition back to full-time schooling will be testing as we adapt to new requirements and ways of interacting with one another. However, my Colleagues and I are all really looking forward to welcoming your young people back to TGS next week. By using our Vision to cooperate and work together, we will grow into the 'new normal' and lay the foundations for succeeding in the learning as well as combatting the virus that lies ahead!

Best wishes to all and continue to stay safe 😊

Phil Gaiter
Rector
The Gordon Schools



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