

23 January 2020

Outcome of Recent Curriculum Review – Penicuik High School

Dear Parent / Carer,

I am pleased to write to you to report on the key outcomes of our major curriculum review carried out over November and December 2019.

We are grateful for the support and input of staff, students and parent/ carers who through their individual and group feedback have allowed us to begin to develop a new curriculum model and timetable structure. We had some very constructive feedback, not just on our curriculum model, but also in relation to; the pace and challenge in learning, levels of support young people receive to develop as successful learners and the level of career education and personal guidance.

Much of this additional information will be used to support our improvement agenda into 2020-21.

The aim of this letter is to summarise the key curriculum changes for parents and carers. Students will receive information at special assemblies in the first week of February.

Key Outcomes for 2020-21

1. At **S1/2** we have distributed the periods available across the eight curriculum areas to ensure breadth and no longer have the minor period. Additional single periods in S1 and S2 will be developed to offer inter-disciplinary learning and /or employability skills. Inter-disciplinary learning is where subjects are taught together within a stimulating context to allow rich and challenging learning. A new employability period would be designed to support meeting the Career Education Standard and the development of skills for life, learning and work.
2. In **S3** we have increased the breadth of choice, moving from **eight choices** including English and Mathematics to **nine choices** including English and Mathematics. We believe this will give students the widest possible opportunity to experience a range of subjects that supports progression in learning and possible career choice as they select S4 Courses.
3. At **S4** we have retained the opportunity to study **seven courses** – including the option of studying **seven National 5 courses**. This maintains the present breadth and is supported by the breadth offered at S3.
4. In the first year of development we will not have a full single senior phase. Only S5/6 will be timetabled together. This is to allow planning for approaches to ensuring we have both breadth and depth in our courses and that S5 or S6

students who crash National 5 courses can pick up additional teaching within the timetable. We will be looking at this more closely and consulting with staff in 2020-21.

- We will now have a timetable of **32 periods plus registration (10 minutes each day)**. All periods will be **50 minutes in length**. Technical work on the timetable will deal with the issue of subject areas that express a requirement for double periods. The structure of the day will change slightly to take into account the change in the number of periods but the change in timings of the school day is not drastic.

School Timetable from August 2020

32 teaching periods per week plus 10 minute registration period each day

7 Periods: Monday - Thursday

4 periods: Friday

Period timings – 50 minutes

Registration 10 minutes

Monday - Thursday	
Registration	8.30 – 8.40 am
Period 1	8.40 – 9.30 am
Period 2	9.30 – 10.20 am
Period 3	10.20 – 11.10 am
Interval	11.10 – 11.25 am
Period 4	11.25 – 12.15 pm
Period 5	12.15 – 1.05 pm
Lunch	1.05 – 1.50 pm
Period 6	1.50 – 2.40pm
Period 7	2.40 - 3.30 pm

Friday	
Registration	8.30 – 8.40 am
Period 1	8.40 – 9.30 am
Period 2	9.30 – 10.20 am
Interval	10.20 – 10.35 am
Period 3	10.35 – 11.25 pm
Period 4	11.25 – 12.15 pm
School closes	

In early February we will write to you again with details of the new Course choice process for all levels which will be electronic to help streamline the process. Course choice letters will give you a link to the course choice form and a unique PIN number to ensure security of the process. I note also, that choice this year at S2 into S3 will be a free choice to enable us to offer the best fit timetable based on students' needs and aspirations.

If you wish to discuss any of the information in this letter or have any concerns please contact me by email penicuik-hs@midlothian.gov.uk or by calling the school office during school hours - Telephone 01968 674 165

Yours sincerely

Craig Biddick
Head Teacher (Acting)