



Parental Update Letter – Return to School August 2021

Dear Parent/ Carer

I hope that you and your family have had a pleasant summer and that you have managed to have a break away somewhere or taken some time off to relax with loved ones and friends.

This parent update will cover key aspects of our return to school on Wednesday 18 August, 2021 and operational matters affecting you and your child. We also respectfully ask that you share this information with your child. At the beginning of this term we will be arranging to ask students to share their mobile number with us so we can start a new service to them where they will receive the same group call messages as their parent(s).

As you will be aware the Scottish Government has decided to keep a number of the mitigations we had in place last session for at least an initial six week period and we will outline these and any changes in this communication.

- **Arrangements for Wednesday 18 August**
- **Additional information for S1**
- **Covid 19 mitigations/health and safety arrangements**
- **Lateral Flow Testing**
- **SQA information**
- **Re-coursing**
- **Uniform**

Arrangements for Wednesday 18 August

S1-S3 students should arrive at 8:30am and enter via their separate allocated door (which will be clearly sign-posted). Registration will be extended until 9am.

S1 will be directed towards the Assembly Hall where they will meet registration teachers. They will then go to their registration class and be issued with timetables/relevant information.

Once S2 and S3 students have entered via their allocated door they should check display boards for their registration teacher and make their way to the correct classroom. During registration they will be issued with their timetables/relevant information.

S4-S6 students should arrive at 8:40am and enter via their separate allocated door (which will be clearly sign-posted). For Wednesday only S4-S6 students will attend their registration class. Students should check display boards for their registration teacher and classroom. Timetables and relevant information will be distributed.

Please remember this registration arrangement is for Wednesday only, from Thursday the S4-S6 school day will start from Period 1 (no registration).

Additional Information for S1

On Monday 16th August S1 parents will receive a Group Call notifying them of their child's Registration Class, Registration Teacher and their Guidance Teacher.

On the first day S1 **should arrive at 8.25am and** they will be taken into the Assembly Hall where they will meet their Registration teachers and the S6 who will be helping them in the first week. They will then go to their Registration class. Registration will be an extended one to allow for the issue of timetables and other information.

The first 3 days will be very much a settling in period.

On Wednesday S1 will spend the day off timetable taking part in "Getting to Know You" activities many of which will be similar to the activities we would have done at P7 camp.

Through August Guidance staff will have individual interviews with all S1 students to help the getting to know you process and to monitor how students are settling – this will allow additional supports to put in place as required.

Covid 19 mitigations/health and safety arrangements

The Scottish Government released updated guidance for schools which came into effect on 9 August. It states that:

- Local Authorities and schools **should continue to apply the mitigations that were in place at the end of last term**, with the exception of some modifications.
- This approach to **retaining mitigations is expected to remain in place for a period of up to 6 weeks** (until the end of September), following which further advice will be provided.

Specific arrangements are as follow:

- **All students must enter and exit through the designated front door** that will be clearly signed and sanitise their hands at the sanitation stations.
- The 2 metre rule remains in place for all adults in school and student must respect that distancing with all staff.
- All young people **will be required to wear a mask** in the school building– we will supply masks for those who do not have their own. Exemptions will only be given to those with medical reasons.
- **The staggered timetable (see the end of this message) will continue to be used for all levels** and they will follow their new 2021-22 timetable.
- **There will be the same supervised staggered interval break and lunchtimes** using the same venues as June (please see end of this message). Students are reminded that they must remain in these areas if on site. S1 students are not permitted to leave the school grounds at Interval or lunchtime unless they have permission to go home for lunch or have an appointment. S1 parents/carers should phone (01968 674165) or email penicuik_hs@midlothian.gov.uk to make this request. **Please note** - this grants permission for your child to go home, not to purchase their lunch from local shops.

- **Students should bring a bag. They should also bring their own lunch and water.**

Additional supplies of water are available in school but there will be no formal lunch service. Students in receipt of the free school meal allowance will continue to receive BACS payments.

Staggered Timetable and Break/Lunch Venues:

Monday – Thursday S1-3		Monday – Thursday S4-6	
Registration	8.30 – 8.40 am	Registration	None
Period 1	8.40 – 9.30 am	Period 1	8.40 – 9.30 am
Period 2	9.30 – 10.20 am	Period 2	9.30 – 10.20 am
Period 3	10.20 – 11.10 am	Interval	10.20 – 10.35 am
Interval	11.10 – 11.25 am	Period 3	10.35 – 11.25 am
Period 4	11.25 – 12.15 pm	Period 4	11.25 – 12.15 pm
Period 5	12.15 – 1.05 pm	Lunch	12.15 – 1.00 pm
Lunch	1.05 – 1.50 pm	Period 5	1.00 – 1.50 pm
Period 6	1.50 – 2.40pm	Period 6	1.50 – 2.40pm
Period 7	2.40 - 3.30 pm	Period 7	2.40 - 3.30 pm

Friday S1-3		Friday S4-6	
Registration	8.30 – 8.40 am	Registration	none
Period 1	8.40 – 9.30 am	Period 1	8.40 – 9.30 am
Period 2	9.30 – 10.20 am	Period 2	9.30 – 10.20 am
Interval	10.20 – 10.35 am	Period 3	10.20 – 11.10 am
Period 3	10.35 – 11.25 pm	Interval	11.10 – 11.25 pm
Period 4	11.25 – 12.15 pm	Period 4	11.25 – 12.15 pm
School closes		School close	

Lunch venues

Year	Break	Lunch
S1	Front of school (pavements only, keep off the grass) <i>Assembly Hall- if bad weather</i>	1:05 -1:30pm Bitesite 1:30 – 1:50pm Front of School (walkways only, weather permitting) If bad weather - remain in Bitesite.
S2	Bitesite	Green seats
S3	Green Seats	Old gym
S4	Bitesite	Bitesite
S5	Green seats	Green Seats
S6	Common Room	Common Room

S1 Lateral Flow Testing

Lateral Flow Testing remains a key feature of the Scottish Government's Guidelines for the Re-Opening of Schools.

Please note: Testing is entirely voluntary, though it is encouraged, and it is the decision of the parent/carer and the student as to whether they take part in the programme.

Tests are carried out at home under parental supervision and school staff are not part of the process.

On **Wednesday 18th August** students will be issued with the new, updated consent form and the schedule for collecting test kits in school. We would ask that if you wish your child to take part in the programme that you complete the form and that your child returns it to the school office. Once it has been logged that you wish your child to take part in the programme, they will be able to collect kits in the time slot allocated to their year group.

Students should undertake the tests twice per week usually Sunday and Wednesday. All information on how to do the tests along with instructions for recording results and what to do in the case of a positive test are in the test kits.

SQA Results and Appeals

On 10 August 2021 all students should have received their SQA results via post or text. If there are any concerns relating to their SQA results, please email penicuik_hs@midlothian.gov.uk. Your query will be forwarded to the appropriate member of staff.

The appeals registration service is now closed. However, your teacher can submit an appeal on your behalf until Friday 27 August. For the priority service, your teacher should submit an appeal before Tuesday 24 August. Our [frequently asked questions](#) provide more information on the 2021 appeals process.

Senior Re-coursing

While coursing should be complete for most students due to the fact that provisional results were known to students prior to the summer break, we are aware that some students may, for a number of reasons, wish to make changes to their chosen courses. Changes can only be made where there is capacity in the chosen class and need to be discussed with guidance staff. To aid this there will be a limited number of re-coursing appointments with Guidance staff on Tuesday 17th August. If you would like to make an appointment to come into school please contact the school office after 10.30am on Monday 16th August. (The office will not be able to take appointment calls before then). Appointments will be on a first come first served basis

Return to Uniform

Last session we signalled a move back to [full school uniform](#) at the start of the new session and that remains our policy. **From Wednesday 18 August 2021** we are requesting that all students arrive at school in the correct uniform. The present school uniform policy was introduced into Penicuik High School with the full support and agreement of pupils, parents and staff and therefore we do expect it to be followed.

The uniform is as follows:

White shirt or blouse

Black V neck jumper or cardigan

School tie – All S1 will receive a free tie on Wednesday 18 August

Black trousers or skirt

Black shoes

School Blazer – if purchased

We feel that a strong uniform policy and insistence on a high standard of uniform supports a positive school ethos and we therefore respectfully request parental support in this matter. Please email the school or send a note if your child has to wear a non-uniform item for a short period of time and we will give them a uniform pass. It is the responsibility of all students to go to the office to get a uniform note and they will be challenged by staff if they have not got a note.

If your child has incorrect uniform on at school without the proper permission they may be asked remove the item where appropriate. Repeat offenders will be referred to Guidance staff or Senior Management Team.

From time to time the senior management team will carry out a uniform blitz to check on adherence to the agreed uniform policy as agreed via the Parent Association.

All new S1 students will receive our traditional blue and white junior tie free of charge on Wednesday 18 August 2021

Returning S4 will also receive the new senior tie free of charge on Wednesday 18 August 2021

Please also note - Outdoor clothing must be removed in all classes. Football scarves and colours are not allowed in school. Clothing should not have any offensive logos or wording. Leggings (except for PE) and ripped/ torn jeans and skirts **are not permitted as normal uniform**.

There are some exceptions to this rule:

While students can now have PE in an outdoor or indoor setting we are still not able to provide changing facilities due to a lack of ventilation under the prevailing guidance.

As was in place prior to the end of term, if a student has PE on a particular day they may wear their PE kit to school for that day only. *We will be making spot checks on this aspect of uniform as some students were wearing non-uniform when they did not have PE.*

Appropriate should consist of;

Suitable footwear (trainers), sports leggings/shorts or tracksuit bottoms, T-shirt and Hoodie/Sweatshirt/Jacket as necessary. No crop tops or vest tops permitted.

We realise that some parents have come under financial pressure due to the Covid 19 pandemic and we are very keen to help. You may be eligible for a clothing grant. Please follow the link below.

https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/855/school_meals/117/free_school_meals_and_clothing_grants

There is now also a parental initiative across all Midlothian schools to support uniform swaps through a Facebook site called Midlothian School Uniform Swap Shop. You just need to ask to join and either offer uniform or request uniform items.

If this sudden change in policy is of concern please contact the school to discuss how we can help.

Blazers

Quite a number of a parents have taken advantage of the on-line Blazer ordering process through Academy Uniforms and if you made an order in July you should now have been contacted to pick up your child's blazer. If you still wish to purchase a blazer please contact the school. There will be a further drive to encourage uptake closer to the winter term. All S5 and S6 prefects will receive a free blazer this session which will be returned when they leave school.

I hope this information answers any questions you have about the return to school. If you have any further queries please contact us via our office email: penicuik_hs@midlothian.gov.uk

Regards

Craig Biddick

Head Teacher