



NBHS WEEKLY UPDATE

Friday 14 August 2020

Welcome Back!

What a joy it has been to be back in school this week. My favourite moments have been those standing just inside the front door from 8.20 am, greeting pupils as they arrive back in the building after nearly five months away. I haven't half missed our young people! Meeting S1 classes as they toured the school was also a highlight, with lots of smiles, eagerness and excitement. From the staff's point of view, we have had three super days in school. Seeing so many smiles on pupils' faces and having lovely interactions with pupils in corridors tells me that the pupils are really enjoying being in NBHS, too. We know, of course, that some of our young people are a bit more uncertain and anxious about the return to school; we have a wonderful team of staff, particularly in pupil support and guidance, who are looking out for those young people and are ready to support them.

Staffing

We are delighted to welcome a number of new staff to NBHS and are really look forward to working with them as colleagues in our school community. There are also some changes to our existing staff.

- Administration Team - Mrs Fraser has joined the office team.
- Drama - Miss McGarrol has joined the department.
- English - Mr Collins has joined the literacy faculty and Ms Fruish has returned from her secondment at Knox Academy. Ms Rudman got married during the summer and is now Mrs Sands.
- Home Economics - Mrs Cairns will be teaching one day per week in HE, as well as her four days in art. Mrs McMillan has had a baby girl during the summer and is now on maternity leave. Miss Dryden has joined the department as a teacher, as well as Mrs Seddon as an auxiliary.
- Modern Languages - Mrs Morris has joined us as a teacher of German and Spanish. Mrs Higginbottom has changed her name to Ms Williamson.
- Maths - Mrs McConnachie and Mrs Simpson have joined the numeracy faculty.
- Music - Mr Shaw has joined the department.
- Physical Education - Mrs Lovett has returned from maternity leave.
- Psychology - Miss Hastie has joined us.
- Religious and Moral Education - Miss Graham has joined us.
- Science - Mr Goodlet has joined the faculty as a biology and science teacher, while Mrs Clutton has gone on maternity leave. Mrs Malamos will also be with us in biology, one day per week.
- Support for Learning - Mrs Johnston has had a baby boy and is now on maternity leave. Miss Gentleman is covering her maternity leave.

SQA

This has been a year unlike any other for many reasons, and certainly when it comes to SQA examinations and issuing of results. Parents and carers of our S5 and S6 pupils have received a letter from Mr McCallum, following the Education Secretary's announcement in the Scottish Parliament on Tuesday. The pupils received their estimate grades on Wednesday, their first day back in school. A lot of talk in the media this week has been about statistics, algorithms and data. What I would like to

say is something much more personal: I want to say a huge congratulations and well done to our senior pupils, who have worked so diligently throughout the year. I know their teachers share my delight at seeing our young people being justly rewarded for all that hard work. Despite the tough end to the year, the majority of our pupils continued to show huge commitment to their studies. They should feel very proud of their achievements. I know that there are some pupils who are experiencing disappointment; I want to reassure any S5 and S6 pupils in that position that staff in school will be here to support them and help them to find the right path ahead.

Return of Books

This is a plea from all teachers: please can pupils make sure they return all their text books to the relevant subject department, as well as any library books to Ms Wilson in the School Library. We are hundreds of books short in some subjects and we simply cannot afford to replace them. Please have a hunt under beds, in the back of cupboards, and anywhere else books might be hidden. If you know of any pupils who have left NBHS, we would be very grateful if you could pass this message on to them. From next week, there will be a box in the vestibule, just inside the main red door, for people no longer in school to drop off any books. This means there is no need to come into the school to hand over books. Many, many thanks in anticipation.

Water Dispensers

We encourage pupils to bring a filled water bottle to school. Water dispensers are now available for pupils to refill their bottles so they do not need to ask staff for water. Pupils will have to take care when filling their bottle that the neck does not touch the dispenser tap, so we recommend bottles with a wide neck. Enhanced cleaning of our three water dispensers will take place throughout the school day.

Physical Education

Following the note in my letter of 11 August, here is a message from Mr Macdonald about PE: Practical PE sessions will begin next week for most pupils, with classrooms being used in the event of adverse weather. Pupils should have received a 'PE guidelines' document through their google classrooms. This outlines the procedures within the PE department. As previously stated, their first time in the department will be classroom-based. We will use this time to reconnect, welcome them back and answer any questions they might have about the guidelines issued.

Lunchtime

Next week, the canteen will continue to offer cold food only via Grab and Go. From Monday 24 August our kitchen staff will add hot snacks to the menu. This means pupils will have to queue and we will be managing that carefully. We suggest that pupils consider bringing a packed lunch, thus avoiding the queue altogether. We ask parents and carers to keep payment cards topped up with funds online; the payment machines will be available for use on occasions where a pupil has only cash. With all pupils back in school, lunchtime will be very busy but thoughtful planning has taken place to ensure that things go as smoothly as possible. For example: Grab and Go stations are being used; extra areas are being set aside for eating, such as the Assembly Hall; year groups will sit in separate designated areas at lunchtime. We will encourage pupils to eat outside in small groups, either in the outdoor classroom spaces or on the grass around the pitches, unless the weather is particularly inclement. S1s must stay on the school campus at break and lunchtime for the present.

Communication

Just a reminder that if you wish to contact school you can email us at the address below, or contact your child's guidance teacher directly. communications@northberwickhigh.elcschool.org.uk

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