



NBHS WEEKLY UPDATE

Friday 21 August 2020

A Message from Mrs Rodger

Well, that's our first week over with the full school opening. I have to admit to a sleepless night last Sunday, wondering what the week would hold with around 1000 young people in the building. I should have known not to worry: our young people and staff have been amazing, and it's a joy to have everyone back. Walking round the building during lesson time, it has felt almost normal – catching snippets of lessons and seeing great teaching; being impressed at the insightful questions pupils ask; hearing laughter, banter and fun; guiding lost S1 pupils to their classrooms; valuing the enthusiasm of S6s to help with the smooth running of the school. Some things don't change.

And yet, things are not normal. We must remain aware that we are still in the midst of a global pandemic and the health, safety and wellbeing of our pupils and staff is our top priority for now. I am hugely grateful for all the work that staff are doing to deliver high quality teaching while being mindful of health and safety issues. I want to thank our pupils, too, who are following the safety and hygiene procedures we have in place, mostly without question, and despite it being an inconvenience at times. The staff really appreciate how well our young people have adopted these measures.

Health and Safety Around the School

We would like to remind parents and carers that **any pupil showing COVID-19 symptoms must not attend school**. If your child is showing symptoms, you should keep them off school and book a test online through NHS Inform at www.nhsinform.scot or by telephoning 0800 028 2816. More guidance on this will be sent to parents next week by East Lothian Council.

As part of our approach to reducing COVID-19 transmission, we are encouraging pupils to wear face masks/face coverings in and around school, especially in corridors, which are busy at the changeover between periods. We would appreciate it if you would reinforce this with your child, though we do understand that it is personal choice whether to wear a face mask in school. Pupils can also wear face coverings in lessons if they wish.

We are also encouraging **all** pupils to be outdoors as much as possible and to go outside to the courtyard gardens or playing fields at break and lunchtimes (if dry). This is a measure put in place to prevent large groups/gatherings indoors and therefore an enhanced measure to reduce transmission.

Transport Issues

If your child has any issues with the home to school transport service, the ELC Transport Team would welcome comments or queries. Just email them on transportservices@eastlothian.gov.uk, leave your telephone number and someone will get back to you.

Still on the issue of transport, but this time from a safety point of view, we have had reports of pupils coming off school buses on their way home at the end of the school day and walking out onto the road from behind the bus. This is extremely dangerous and a matter of huge concern. We will be emphasising to pupils that they must wait until the bus has moved away before crossing the road and we would appreciate it if you could reinforce that message with your child.

Also, can you please remind your child that they must wear a face covering on home to school transport and **remove it only once they are off the vehicle**; if they have an exemption card, they should have it ready to show the driver. Standing at the bus turning circle in the mornings, we are concerned to see that some pupils are not wearing face coverings as the bus pulls in. Face coverings are now mandatory on public transport and, in East Lothian, on all school transport. We will continue to emphasise this in school and appreciate the support of parents and carers in reinforcing the message.

Hot Food

We are delighted to be reintroducing a limited menu of hot food at lunchtimes from Monday. The success of this will depend on pupils sticking to the routines we have put in place. The presentation below has been shown to all pupils. Please note in particular that the smart card top-up machines will not be operating in school, so pupils must add money online if they wish to use the canteen. If the lunch offering is successful, we hope to reintroduce hot food at breaks too.

[Presentation](#)

Physical Education

All classes are operating within the government guidelines, with practical sessions now in full swing. PE kit should be brought on timetabled days; only in adverse weather conditions will pupils use indoor classrooms. Pupils have been contacted through their gGogle classrooms or have liaised with their teacher about registration areas, changing rooms and activities on offer.

SQA Update

Following the First Minister's announcement on 11 August that all pupils were to be awarded the grades that were estimated by the school, SQA have confirmed that new certificates will be issued in the week beginning 7 September for those pupils who have had revisions to grades. The school conducted extensive quality assurance during the process of submitting estimates in order to ensure that these estimates were robust, holistic professional judgements based on pupils' attainment in all aspects of the National Qualification courses they were pursuing. Teachers rigorously followed the SQA guidance on producing estimates. The quality assurance both in school and at authority level was extremely thorough, with senior leaders and East Lothian Quality Improvement Officers involved throughout the process before the estimates were signed off.

SQA provided an update on appeals on 14 August, in which they make reference to 'exception' considerations: the stipulated, exceptional grounds for the school's consideration. You can find this by following the link:

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/94840.html>

Staffing News

Our piping instructor, Davy Barnes has now retired. We would like to thank him for all the support and encouragement he has given our pipers over the years, pipers who haven delighted us as the opening performers at many concerts. We warmly welcome new piping instructor, Ciaran Ross. Also in music, cello instructor Fiona Smith will be taking maternity leave from next week and we send her our good wishes. We look forward to welcoming Andrew Huggan as our new cello instructor.

Dress Code

We are delighted that so many of our young people are following the school dress code, despite clothes shopping proving to be a challenge during lockdown. In a previous update, we suggested that pupils wear a plain black jersey in school as we are keeping rooms well-ventilated with open windows and doors. Most pupils do have a jersey, but some of these jerseys are not plain black, as stipulated in the dress code. Pupils should not be wearing coloured jerseys or jerseys with logos. We hugely appreciate the support of parents and carers in ensuring that our pupils follow the school dress code.

Nut-Free School

For those of you who are new to the NBHS community, please be aware that our school is a nut-free zone as we have a number of pupils with an allergy to nuts. Please ensure that if your child is bringing a packed lunch or other food into school it does not contain nut products.

Budding Reporters

During lockdown, the humanities faculty were approached by the BBC to provide mini interviews with S1 students about their experience of lockdown, detailing their 'highs and lows' for a Newsround episode. A number of the current S2 pupils submitted footage and the BBC used a selection of it in Newsround programmes during May and June. Sofia Roper, now in 2G2, entered a video outlining her highs and lows and this caught the eye of a BBC editor. Sofia was then asked to become a BBC reporter and was given the task of interviewing Hollywood mega star ANGELINA JOLIE about her new Disney film, *The One and Only Ivan!* You can watch the interview here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/53849286>

The humanities team are very proud of all our pupils' efforts in submitting video clips for Newsround. We feel that Sofia did a great job during her very high profile interview of a Hollywood A-lister!

One of our new S1 pupils, Louise Martin in 1G1, is a very keen golfer. She was disappointed not to get the opportunity to watch some of the best women golfers in the world at the Ladies Scottish Open at The Renaissance Golf Club last week. However, she made up for that by getting the chance to interview Carly Booth (Scottish Professional Golfer) and Julia Engstrom (Swedish Professional Golfer) before the start of the championship. Her insightful questions to her interviewees gathered lots of information, including that both golfers see Rory McIlroy as a role model, as well as their thoughts on playing in mixed competitions with male golfers and what they'd be doing if they weren't professional golfers. You can read the full transcript of the interview on the Active East Lothian website.

Angus Blacklock in S5 is also making a mark in sports journalism. Earlier this year he undertook a Sports Media & Journalism course through Youth Football Scotland (YFS) and has since been recruited as an official Youth Media reporter with YFS. Angus has been producing articles for the Youth Football Scotland website and has also set up his own You Tube channel, AngusJB, where he has been interviewing past football players and others in football-related roles.

School Library

The school library is open, accepting book returns as normal and loaning books out to pupils via a "click & collect" system. We do have a significant number of books overdue, approximately 650 spread across S2 to S6: this is mainly due to an uptick in borrower demand just prior to the sudden closure of school. Could all pupils please have a search at home for any library books and return

them as soon as possible? There are returns boxes available across the school, with the main return point just outside the school library. At present, pupils are able to borrow books from the school library by submitting their request through Book A Book. There is no need to request a specific book: pupils can submit a general request for a certain genre/author/style and Ms Wilson, our librarian, will select items for pupils to try. They will then be given a time to collect their items. The Book A Book form is available at: <https://forms.gle/eacu5Bc45cu314Zr5>

Communications

At the current time, most school communications will be sent by email. Previously, these were only sent to the main parental contact but we have updated our system to facilitate the emailing of each communication to both parents. If you have not provided us with your email address, or if you do not want to receive these communications, please let us know by emailing communications@northberwickhigh.elcschool.org.uk

Just a reminder that if you wish to contact school you can email us at the address above, or contact your child's guidance teacher directly.