



Preston Lodge

High School

Dear student/parent/carer

14 August

Update: Re-opening our school

We've had a great week at PL, and it was a real pleasure visiting classes this week to thank our students for their impressive adoption of our new safety measures. Our students were a real credit to themselves and their families. We are therefore confident of safely opening our school to all students on Monday.

This letter provides a number of updates everyone should be aware of before Monday, with information that is only relevant to certain year groups appearing after that.

Using the shops at lunchtime

From Monday it will still be possible to visit our local shops to purchase snacks and lunch, but students now realise that it takes a lot longer than normal to get food in this way, with physical distancing requirements slowing things up. Our recommendation remains that all students would be best to either bring their own food and drink to school, or use our school canteen.

We are still keen, though, to support local businesses. To allow this to continue two staff will be present at the Preston Road shops each interval and lunch time, to ensure students keep to national guidelines.

Face coverings on buses

Our students have coped really well with the new bus travel safety measures, but on Monday those buses will be a lot busier. We have been asked to remind all our students that they **must** wear a face covering on school and service buses, and sanitise their hands before boarding.

Pupil drop-off

Park View became very congested at points this week, even though only a small portion of our students were in school on any one day, and we assume this is because more students are being driven to school. I would ask all families to drop students off in our Schaw Road car park from Monday, unless mobility issues mean that a Park View drop off is required.

Health and Safety

Almost all students brought a bag to school this week, and students without a bag will not be able to remain in school on Monday. However, to avoid any problems we will provide a bag for any student who needs one. This is a key safety measure, allowing students to keep their own school work in one place and minimise transmission, and we thank families for their support of this approach.

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A reminder to all students that the Home Economics door must not be used at the moment. National guidelines require us to minimise our use of doors, so all students must enter and exit the building through either the main door or the Maths side door out into the bus parking area.

You may have noticed that student access to water hit the news headlines this week. Although we had followed guidelines and indicated that our water fountains would not be operating this week, in fact, they were. On Monday we will advise all students that the water fountains are open and, as usual, only wide lipped bottles should be filled up to minimise risk of transmission. No student will be allowed to drink direct from the fountains and they will be sanitised throughout the day.

This week we have been asked whether or not school clothes need to be washed every night. National guidance suggest that, where possible, clean clothes should be worn every day, but we understand that on occasion this will not be possible.

Canteen food and payments

We start providing hot snacks from our canteen at interval and lunch time from Monday, as well as continuing with packed lunches. All food will still be on a grab 'n' go basis. From Monday it will also be possible for students to use the card recharging machines, but only if they have the right change – the office cannot give out change, other than in exceptional circumstances. We still recommend using the online [Schoolpay](https://www.schoolpay.co.uk) system, and if you do not have a log-in please contact our school office at admin@prestonlodge.elcschool.org.uk. They will be able to send you sign-up details.

Reorganisation of classes

This week an S2 and S3 register classes had to be merged with other classes, to rationalise some small class sizes. Unfortunately, we were obliged to carry out this work at short notice, once staff had returned to school, which meant students affected only received news of this the day before returning to school. We are sorry that this happened, but the timing of school return meant we could not avoid this.

Blended learning

All schools have to be ready for full or partial home learning to resume at any time, and we were pleased to hear that East Lothian Council have already started the process of purchasing IT equipment to ensure every child has appropriate digital access at home. We will update you as soon as we know more.

Our students also need to be mentally prepared for, and committed to, home learning in the event that it has to resume. We are already reminding students of this fact, because if it does happen again, we will all need to work together to ensure all students are maximising their learning at home.

Thank you for all the support you have given us this week. We really appreciated it, and I hope you have a very good weekend.

Yours sincerely,



Gavin Clark, Headteacher

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S1-3 students: 'Schools Of' programme

Now that we have returned the organisation and allocation of students to the 'Schools Of' programmes is underway. Over the next two weeks students will find out about the opportunities on offer, and make their choices. Until choices are finalised students will take part in stand-alone lessons.

S3 Schools will be coursed first, with students making their choices from the options below next Tuesday. Students will learn about the content of each School in class, and be asked to rank them from 1 to 6, either in class, or at home that evening after discussion with parents and carers.

The deadline for choices will be 9.00am on Wednesday, to allow us to allocate students to each School in time for them to start the following week. Spaces are limited in each S3 School and students will be signing up to that School for the year.

We will do our best to give students the School that they most want, but because places are limited, we cannot guarantee that they will get their first choice. Students will then receive a double period of their preferred School every Tuesday periods 4 and 5.

S3 Schools Of		
Curricular Area	School Name	Number of spaces
Languages	School of Film	10
Health & Wellbeing	School of Healthy Living	30
	School of Creative Baking	60
Science	School of Aspiring Scientists	40
Expressive Arts	School of Arts and Crafts	40
	School of Drama	20

S1 and S2 will choose their Schools Of the following week, with more information on the programmes available to follow next Friday.

S4-6 students: Re-coursing

Re-coursing is going well, but it is clear – as we expected – that the process will take longer than usual this year due to covid-19 measures. Our usual Course Change form has been replaced by one that does not require a teacher or parent/carer signature, to reduce the number of people handling the same piece of paper. As usual, students and parents/carers should discuss any course changes being made, but to ensure families are properly in the loop we will email each student's new timetable to parents/carers once the bulk of re-coursing has taken place. This may be towards the end of next week.

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S4-6 students: College Courses – Online Induction

Online college induction courses will take place on 25 and 27 August and on 1 and 3 September from 1.30-4.30pm. The induction is mandatory for all students who have a confirmed offer of a college course or Foundation Apprenticeship.

If any student has an offer and has not yet confirmed their place they should log onto the Edinburgh College website and accept their offer. Students who plan to decline their offer should make sure they have checked-in with their guidance teacher first.

Each student participating in the online induction will be timetabled to a PC in a supervised classroom and the induction will be delivered via the college online learning platform, 'Moodle', and Microsoft Teams.

The induction will:

- provide support with development of digital skills
- familiarise students with their course content & study requirements
- allow students to meet their tutors and engage with their college group.

Students will be provided with an electronic guide and instruction sessions will be timetabled to introduce and familiarise pupils with 'Moodle' and Microsoft Teams. This will enable students to undertake their studies safely online.

There will be opportunities at the start and end of each induction session for tutors to provide support, and answer questions.

S6 students: Advanced Highers and YASS courses

Although many Advanced Higher courses are now up and running, finalising all the Advanced Higher courses across the school has been made a little more complicated this year, as a result of us choosing to start some courses over lockdown that would normally be too small to run. Next week, as re-coursing progresses, we will make final decisions on which courses will run, and how they will run. In some cases we will take opportunities for online learning.

At the start of the new timetable we advised that we would have to rationalise all courses in August. We are working through that now, and hope to confirm what is running in the 'real' school towards the end of next week.

In May we said we would ensure an appropriate progression pathway for students whose courses could not continue. The very impressive Open University – Young Applicant in School Scheme (YASS) courses that our students participate in each year are perhaps the best example of a non-SQA course that provides outstanding preparation for further study beyond school. All S6 students and their families should take a look at what is on offer [here](#). Don't be put off by the mention of costs – it is covered by the scheme!

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