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Dear Families,

17 August 2021

Return to School for Session 2021/22

I hope that this letter finds you all happy and healthy, having enjoyed a relaxing summer holiday and the surprisingly decent weather of recent weeks. We are excitedly looking forward to welcoming all of our pupils back to the Burgh tomorrow for what will surely be a far more regular year and, hopefully, a return to 'normal' school life.

As I'm sure you are aware, the Scottish Government recently confirmed that Scotland has moved beyond the Protection Levels system. However, they have also advised that the COVID-19 pandemic is not over and schools should continue to apply the mitigations that were in place at the end of last term, with these expected to remain for up to 6 weeks. With this in mind, I want to make you aware of the arrangements that will be in place to ensure the safety of all Burgh families and staff as we return to school:

Our **soft start** to the school day (8.55-9.15am) will continue this term and beyond. This has had a positive impact on all of our classes, and many of our individual children, with a much calmer and more settled beginning to each school day being enjoyed by all. Please remember that pupils can arrive at any time within this window and will then have an opportunity to ease into the school day in a relaxing and stress-free learning environment. In keeping with this, our bells will no longer ring at the start or end of the school day, and will only sound when it is time for children to come back inside from the playground.

Our regular school day (Monday to Thursday) runs from 8.55am until 3.00pm for pupils in Primary 1 and Primary 2, and until 3.20pm for pupils from Primary 3 to Primary 7. Pupils in P1 and P2 finish school at 12.20pm on a Friday, while pupils in P3 to P7 finish at 12.30pm.

To allow our new Primary 1 pupils to start school at a time when the playground will be quieter and less busy, we would like to invite our P1 families to arrive slightly later on the first day of the new term at **9.30am**. This will hopefully encourage the children to settle more comfortably into their new P1 routine and allow staff to support their transition into school. There will also be an opportunity for each P1 child to have their 'first day of school' photograph taken by our resident photographer, Miss Scott.

We are delighted to confirm that our Nursery will be returning to 1140hours this term, offering full time placements for all of our Nursery children. The new full time Nursery session times are as follows:

- **Monday to Thursday: 8.45am – 3.15pm**
- **Friday: 8.30am – 12.30pm**

We have reinstated our **school uniform expectations** this session and look forward to seeing as many of our pupils in the traditional red, black or grey (navy for P7s) Burgh school colours again this term. While new uniform items can be ordered at musselburghburghps.imagescotland.com, we would also like to

remind our families that we have a (very) large collection of used uniform in great condition in the school that is free to a good home. Our spare uniform rails will be accessible at the front entrance to the building throughout the school day from Wednesday 18th-Friday 20th August. Please feel welcome to come along and help yourself to any of these items.

From the start of the new term, the Burgh will no longer be operating a '**bubble**' system for our pupils in school, meaning children will be able to mix with their friends from other classes and year groups within the playground without being required to remain in allocated zones. Pupils will also be able to move more freely around their classrooms and the school building with far less chance of whole class groups being required to isolate in the event of a confirmed positive case.

All adults, including staff and visitors, will still be required to wear **face coverings** at all times when moving around the school environment, including the playground and outdoor areas. Additional **hand-washing and hygiene** measures will continue to be in place for all children and adults throughout the school day. Staff in East Lothian schools continue to take part in the **asymptomatic testing programme** as part of the package of COVID-19 risk reduction mitigations in schools across Scotland.

Physical distancing continues to remain critical and must be maintained by all adults within the school environment. For this reason, adults in the school playground will continue to be limited to P1, P2 and P3 parents only and we ask that only one adult per child enters the playground at any time. Adults must arrange to drop-off P4-P7 children out-with the school grounds, where they must also remember to wear face coverings and maintain physical distancing at all times.

Communication:

All visits to the school by non-staff adults, must be by pre-scheduled appointment only with a risk assessment in place. In order to reduce the number of adults within the building, all parents/carers are asked to contact the school by phone in the first instance or, alternatively, by emailing the school admin inbox. Please do not email your child's class teacher directly via their Edubuzz address as staff do not monitor these inboxes regularly and important information is likely to be missed. A member of the senior leadership team will always try to address any query as quickly as possible. If an appointment is necessary, we will arrange a suitable time.

Parental communication from the school will continue in the usual way with regular newsletters and texts. We will continue to use Twitter to share our good news stories and our Parent Council will also continue to share relevant information on Facebook. Updates regarding class-specific events will be shared through your child's class Google Classroom.

Health & Wellbeing

While we are all now very alert to the symptoms of the Coronavirus, it is important to point out there are other reasons your child may become unwell that will NOT be related to COVID 19 and we will continue to follow our regular procedures in these instances. **If your child is unwell in the morning please DO NOT bring them to school.**

Lunches

Finally, I am pleased to be able to confirm that, from the start of this term, all school lunches for pupils in Primary 4 will now be free. This is in addition to the existing free school meal support in place for pupils from Nursery to Primary 3. From January 2022, this will be extended to include all pupils in Primary 5. Please remember to order your child's school lunch in advance every week using the SchoolPay system. Login details for new pupils will be issued this week.

We look forward to welcoming you all back to the Burgh again very soon.



Jon Doyle
Head Teacher