

5<sup>th</sup> March 2021



## Plans for part-time return to school from 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021

*Dear Parents,*

As you are no doubt aware from the media, assuming covid statistics continue to head in the right direction, there will be a part-time return of secondary pupils to school from Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March. Thank you for bearing with us while we have awaited detailed government guidance on the procedures to be put in place to ensure this can happen safely and worked on how to implement this in a way which is feasible given our school facilities, number of pupils and transport arrangements.

There is detailed information below on what will be happening. I appreciate it's quite a long document, but we have tried to answer all the questions you might have. The key question which is not answered here is which "cohort" your child is in for their days in school. Arranging 330 pupils with different option choices into groups which fit into classrooms at 2m distance, and onto school buses, is quite a job, and we have a few final areas to clear up before notifying parents on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. Further information for parents who use Key Worker Childcare will be sent out early next week and we will be in touch with those whose children have been coming in to school for support. Please discuss this document with your children, and if there are any unanswered questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards

*Jane Partridge*

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## Stromness Academy arrangements

### Mon 15<sup>th</sup> March – Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2021

These arrangements apply for the 3 weeks from Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March to Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April, when school finishes for the Easter holidays.



The current government plan is that school will resume full-time when we return from the Easter holidays on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April, though this is not yet confirmed as it will depend on whether there is a rise in the covid statistics as a result of the partial return to school. The next government update, when we expect to hear more about plans for after Easter, is due on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March.

## Covid restrictions

New requirements:

- 2m distancing is required between everyone in school at all times.
- Face coverings are to be worn at all times, including in classrooms and on school transport.
- Senior Pupils and staff are offered twice-weekly at-home covid testing.

Continuation of existing requirements:

- Zero tolerance of covid symptoms – pupils with symptoms must not attend school. If symptoms develop during school the pupil will be isolated and parents contacted to take them for a test.
- Frequent hand sanitising/washing
- Respiratory hygiene – use tissues when coughing/sneezing and bin them
- Frequent cleaning – pupils required to clean their own desk/chair/equipment after use

## Days in school

All pupils will be in school at least once per week for the three weeks, with Senior Phase (S4-6) pupils prioritised for time in school.

Because of the requirement for 2m distancing, the number of pupils in the building has to be limited. We are therefore splitting pupils into smaller cohorts to attend school on a rota basis as follows:

Senior Phase (S4-6) are split into two cohorts, attending school on alternate days:

	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri
w/c 15 <sup>th</sup> Mar	SP1	SP2	SP1	SP2	SP1
w/c 22 <sup>nd</sup> Mar	SP2	SP1	SP2	SP1	SP2
w/c 29 <sup>th</sup> Mar	SP1	SP2	SP1	SP2	SP1

Please note the Senior Phase pupils who attend classes at Orkney College in Kirkwall on Fridays are NOT required to attend school with their cohort on Fridays. Please see further information about Orkney College and Navigation School classes below.

BGE pupils (S1-3) are split into three cohorts, attending school every third day:

	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri
w/c 15 <sup>th</sup> Mar	BGE1	BGE2	BGE3	BGE1	BGE2
w/c 22 <sup>nd</sup> Mar	BGE3	BGE1	BGE2	BGE3	BGE1
w/c 29 <sup>th</sup> Mar	BGE2	BGE3	BGE1	BGE2	BGE3

## How do I know which cohort my child is in?

Individual notification will be sent to parents on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March.

## Lesson Timetable

On the days when your child is in school, they will be following their normal school timetable. Over the full 3 weeks, S1-3 pupils will have had 1 week of their normal timetable, while S4-6 pupils will have had approximately 1 ½ weeks. This aims to provide a reasonable balance of time allocated to all their different subjects, and to get pupils back into a relatively normal school routine.

## Learning at home

When they see pupils in school, teachers will set homework to be done on the days when pupils are not in school. However, we will not be able to provide live lessons or support for pupils who are working at home, as teachers will be fully occupied teaching the other cohort(s) who are in school.

## Orkney College/Nav School Courses

Colleges have different government restrictions to schools. At the time of writing, covid restrictions for Orkney College and the Nav School mean they are unable to run courses in person for Stromness Academy pupils. Pupils who are taking Orkney College/Nav School courses on Wednesdays and Thursdays should attend school if their cohort is rota'd to do so; they will have all their other lessons in school that day and will be given space in school to complete work set by their college tutor during their college time. Pupils who are taking Skills for Work courses at Orkney College on Fridays and the extra Nav School lesson during Friday Activities are not required to attend school if their cohort is rota'd on that Friday – they should complete any remote work set by their college tutor at home.

## Transport

School transport is operating as normal, though pupils are advised to be at their pick-up a little earlier, as fewer pupils to pick up means the bus may get round a little quicker.

Pupils are required to keep 1m distance from other pupils and to wear face coverings whilst on school transport.

## Arrivals

As pupils are required to keep 2m distancing, we are using different entrances and gathering areas for pupils before school. Pupils will have morning registration and notices in these areas before moving to lessons. Pupils are welcome to remain outside of the building, keeping 2m distancing, until 8:50 if they wish.

Year Group	Entrance	Area to wait in until lessons start
S1 & S2	Main Entrance	Dining Room/Red area
S3	Theatre back door	Theatre
S4	Gym back door	Gym
S5-6	Main entrance	Games Hall

## Timings of the day

The timings of the school day will be shifted in order to stagger lunch, break and finish times; this allows us to provide more space for pupils to keep 2m distance at these times.

<b>BGE (S1-3)</b>	
Registration	8:50 – 9:00
Period 1	9:00 – 9:50
Period 2	9:50 – 10:40
Period 3	10:40 – 11:30 (S1 leave at 11:25 to stagger Dining Hall queue)
Break	11:30 – 11:45
Period 4	11:45 – 12:30
Period 5	12:30 – 1:15
Lunch	1:15 – 14:00 (pupils should vacate the dining hall by 1:45 for cleaning)
Period 6	14:00 – 14:45
Period 7	14:45 – 15:30

<b>Senior Phase (S4-6)</b>	
Reg	8:50 - 9
Period 1	9:00 – 9:50
Period 2	9:50 – 10:40
Break	10:40 – 10:55
Period 3	10:55 – 11:45
Period 4	11:45 – 12:30
Lunch	12:30– 1:15 (pupils should vacate the dining hall by 1:05 for cleaning)
Period 5	1:15 – 14:00
Period 6	14:00 – 14:45
Period 7	14:45 – 15:35

Parents of pupils in S1-3 should note that their break is later than they are used to. It will therefore be important that pupils eat breakfast. If your child does not wish to eat breakfast before leaving the house you are advised to ensure they have a snack with them to eat on the bus or on arrival at school to keep them going until 11:30. Breakfast will be available in the Dining Hall for S1-2 pupils only due to space restrictions. Older pupils are welcome to bring a snack to eat in their gathering area before school starts.

## Food

Breakfast will be available in the Dining Hall for S1-2 pupils only due to space restrictions. Older pupils are welcome to bring a snack to eat in their gathering area before school starts.

There is normal service in the Dining Hall at break and lunch times. A 2m distanced queuing system is in operation.

Pupils in S2-S6 are permitted to leave the school premises at lunch time. They must abide by restrictions in force in the community if they choose to do so. At time of writing, these are:

- Young people aged between 12 and 17 can meet up in groups of up to 6 at a time outdoors and are not subject to the 2 household limit.
- Physical distancing is required.
- Face coverings are required in shops.

Local shops also have their own restrictions in place based on available space.

## **What to bring**

Pupils should bring a schoolbag with:

- Their planner and timetable
- Schoolbooks and jotters for the subjects they have that day
- Pens and pencils
- A water bottle – this should come filled from home, and can be refilled in school
- Snacks – especially if they are in S1-3 as break is later than usual
- PE kit if they have a timetabled PE class – please note we are currently required to hold all PE lessons outside and dress appropriately.

Pupils are welcome to bring Scottish Government Chromebooks and other devices of their own into school to use for private study. If they wish to use them in the classroom this must be agreed with the teacher.

## **Laptops**

If your child has been lent a Stromness Academy laptop for remote learning, they should return it on their first rota'd day in school, so that IT facilities are available for classes. Chromebooks issued from the Scottish Government do not have to be returned; these are for the pupil to keep and use throughout their school career.

Pupils are welcome to bring Scottish Government Chromebooks and other devices of their own into school to use for private study. If they wish to use them in the classroom this must be agreed with the teacher.

## **Key Worker Childcare**

Key Worker Childcare continues to be available during this period to parents who have applied to Orkney Islands Council and confirmed as eligible.

As the school focus returns to providing classes in person, we are stretched for space and staffing. We would therefore ask parents to support us by only using Key Worker Childcare when they are working, and only for pupils who are too young to be left unsupervised at home.

To make space for lessons in school, Key Worker Childcare is moving to Stromness Community Centre. Further information will be sent to eligible parents, who will be asked to reconfirm their requirements once they know which days their child is due to be in school.

## **Pupils currently attending school for support**

If your child attends school for support at present, their Guidance Teacher will be in touch to discuss arrangements for this period.

## **At-home Covid testing**

Regular at-home covid testing using self-test kits is being offered to all school staff and Senior Phase pupils (S4-6). This is an extra element to our efforts to reduce infection, aiming to identify people who have covid but are not showing symptoms, and avoid them coming into school and passing on the infection.

If your child is in S4-6, you will have been sent information about this programme on 17<sup>th</sup> February. The letter to parents can be found on the school website [here](#). If at all possible, test kits should be collected from the school in time for the first test to be done before your child returns to class.

## **What if my child is worried about coming back?**

We appreciate that some pupils may be anxious about returning, especially if they have had very little social contact this year. We are very much looking forward to seeing pupils in person again and are doing everything we can to ensure that school is a safe and welcoming place to return to, but if you have concerns or need to update us on your child's mental or physical health please contact your child's Guidance Teacher.

Your child may be worried about returning because they have found it difficult to engage with remote learning, and we are very aware that the media talk about children needing to catch up on lost learning will be adding pressure, and older pupils may be anxious about impending assessment. If your child is concerned about missed work, please reassure them that teachers will be focusing on making the best use they can of the time we now have in school, and with each class only a half or third of its normal size we will have more time to give individual support based on what pupils have managed to do at home. If your child has outstanding work, please encourage them to contact their teachers to find out what is the most important task to focus on this week, to put them in the best position for re-joining their class. Teachers can be contacted by email or via Teams, or through Guidance Teachers or the School Office.