



Executive Head Teacher:
Peter Bain MA (Hons), MSc.

Oban High School / Àrd-Sgoil an Obain
Tiree High School / Àrd-Sgiol Thiriod &
Tiree Primary School / Bun-Sgiol Thiriodh
enquiriesobanhigh@argyll-bute.gov.uk
enquirie@tiree.argyll-bute.sch.uk

16/08/2020

Dear Parent / Carer

I hope you and your families are all well.

Please find a brief account of our first week back and a few basic reminders of what to expect next week.

Week 1

It was obviously an anxious time for all pupils, parents and staff as we welcomed back our pupils to Oban High School for the first time in many months, the first time so many youngsters have been brought together in the one place and the first chance the S1s in particular have had to meet all their fellow new starts and hopefully future friends.

From the moment we gathered all our youngsters together in their clans on the Avenue as they eagerly awaited their first day at the big school, through to the huge sports event we held on a glorious sun-kissed Friday, most seemed to have a fabulous time. I spent a great deal of time chatting to our youngsters either in class, out at lunch or on the way to the train. Each had a happy story to relay.

I'm not so sure they wouldn't rather be down the beach to be honest but they definitely had an enjoyable experience by all accounts. For those who had a bump along the way, our staff and senior pupils were on hand to give them a wee lift or word of encouragement to ensure that we built the resilience they needed until the next happy experience.

For those S2 to S6 pupils we had in school meeting staff, working through timetables, new courses or reconnecting with their teachers and environment, they too seemed to welcome the extended transition opportunity.

My thanks to all our staff and many of our S6 pupils for looking after our new S1s throughout their Transition Week and giving them a wealth and breadth of new experiences. Thanks especially to Mrs Morrison for leading the programme.

Next Week

Fuller details of our return were sent out last week and can be found on the school website.

<http://www.obanhigh.argyll-bute.sch.uk/welcome>

The letters previously issued include all the links to the Scottish Government guidance which form the basis of the following guidance reminders.

All pupils must return to school on Monday 17th August...

... unless they feel unwell with Covid symptoms. The main symptoms of coronavirus (Covid-19) are a high temperature, a new continuous cough and a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste. In which case, they must not come to school.

All pupils should arrive at school no earlier than 8.45 (unless their school bus arrives early).

Pupils should arrive in full school uniform on day 1. They will receive a new timetable at their first My Time Class (details attached). On subsequent days, pupils should come to school on time, in uniform, with kit, and where they have PE, a change of clothing (ideally clan colours) and a towel to dry off. This is important because all PE will be outside, even if it is raining.

When travelling to school by bus, train, ferry or plane. All pupils must wear face coverings.

Parents are not allowed in the school / carpark / grounds (unless with a pupil with additional support needs AND having agreed this with Mrs Binnie in the Support Department beforehand). This will avoid adults coming into contact with children unnecessarily.

All Parent communication will be held over the phone or using Google Meet. Please email the school in the first instance, unless urgent, in which case you may phone. Again, this avoids having adults in the school unnecessarily. The only exception would be in a medical emergency.

The advice from the Scottish Government is that pupils should be encouraged to walk or cycle to school. If a parent has to drive a pupil to school, they should be dropped off at a safe place and walk the remainder of the way. This will allow pupils to spread out and not gather in large numbers.

When pupils enter and leave the school, and when they enter and leave every classroom, canteen area and toilet, they are required to use hand sanitiser. Basically, they will use hand gel constantly throughout the day.

There is no need to wear a face covering in school (unless there is a specific medical or activity need) but pupils and staff may do so if they wish.

To ensure that pupils are further protected we have re-written the timetable to avoid the usual 8 period day which necessitates multiple moves and crossovers by over 1000 individuals. We will now only move twice, for some classes three times a day. Basically, we are only moving pupils out of a traditional classroom where most of the teaching will take place, into specialist classrooms, for example Science, technical and Home Economics for example when the need arises.

Breaks will be held in classrooms. There is an unnecessary risk of mixing over 1000 individuals for the sake of a 15 minute break. Pupils should bring water and snacks with them to school for their morning break. They will not be able to buy food in the morning. Pupils will still be given a break from their studies however. They will also be allowed out to the toilet at any time during the day and not all together in a 15 minute window. Only one pupil per class is allowed out at a time.

Lunch has been split into two sessions. Each year group (S5 and S6 are taught in the same classes so will count as a single year group) will eat separately from one another. We are using our games hall and gyms as canteens, given we are not allowed to hold indoor PE anyway.

Pupils are allowed out at lunchtime. However, we strongly advise against this and would ask parents to encourage pupils to stay in school and either bring a packed lunch or order lunch from the canteen. Pupils will order their food first thing in the morning in their Block 1 class and it will be delivered to their class during block 3 just before lunchtime.

We will not generally accept cash. All monies required to pay for school lunches should be made online. We are aware that not all parents have signed up for this facility. Pupils will receive details on Monday which will allow parents to go online and pay for lunches.

Don't worry about sending your child to school with lunch money on Monday. They will all get whatever they wish for the first day or so and this will be deducted from their cashless catering card later in the week, after you get online using the information we send you on Monday.

On the (hopefully) rare occasion you cannot access your online account; or if you have no internet whatsoever, you may place lunch money in a sealed envelope with your child's name, class and the amount written on it. Your child can hand this into the office as they arrive and the money will be added to their cashless catering card.

The school day has been slightly amended to allow for a staggered finish. (We don't need a staggered start as pupils arrive at different times generally and stagger naturally.) S3, 5 and 6 all finish school at 3.20 pm. S1, 2 and 4 all finish at 3.30 pm.

This may seem like the pupils have less time learning. However, the time saved from not moving our pupils through an 8 period day ensures we actually gain teaching time as illustrated in the more detailed letter issued last week.

So, these are the basic reminders I thought useful to provide just before we all return on Monday but as I said earlier, if you wish to remind yourself of the fuller details issued last week or wish to re-read the Government information guiding these school based plans feel free to refer to my last two letters.

<http://www.obanhigh.argyll-bute.sch.uk/about/head-teacher-letters>

Given the length and detail of such crucial information provided to you, some parents and most pupils prefer the video versions and these can be found on our YouTube Channel. Please subscribe if you wish.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqVauXoUp5efv8sm1zBk0ig>

As always, if you have any questions or require any support at all, please feel free to email your child's guidance teacher or use the contact us section on the website.

<http://www.obanhigh.argyll-bute.sch.uk/contact>

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P A Bain', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

P A Bain
Executive Head Teacher
Oban High School, Tiree High School & Tiree Primary School