



Portlethen Academy

Learn and Improve. Get Involved. Think of the Consequences. Respect All.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMUNITY WE ARE COMMITTED TO THE WELL-BEING OF ALL OUR PUPILS

Questions asked during the P7 Parents' Information Evening (week beginning 15th June 2020)

1. What type of device will the children need to work on? I believe most work is done on laptops.

Yes, mostly laptops and desktop PCs. iPads are used for some research activities and interactive apps.

2. Are the programmes used compatible with Android & Apple devices?

Yes as most programmes are web-based.

3. Is homework able to be monitored by parents or do we have to rely on the children telling us?

At the moment, Microsoft Teams does not have a parental engagement option so it would rely upon communication between parent and pupil.

4. My child is dyslexic – what support will be put in place for them?

Information regarding pupils' needs is shared from Primary Staff. The Support for Learning Faculty collate this to share with Academy staff. Teachers will be aware of pupil needs and be able to support in class – through differentiation of material and using a variety of learning/teaching styles. In some classes there are Pupil Support Assistants who support staff and pupils in a variety of ways. Support for Learning teachers are also in classes or in the Support Centre to give specific support. In addition, they will be encouraged to use laptops and speech to text programmes to allow them to become as independent as possible in class.

5. When will bus passes and Young Scot cards be issued?

The company that make the Young Scot cards is currently not functioning as it would normally as a result of Covid-19. The purpose behind asking for passport style photos in the Fact File task (for those in zone) was to help us speed the NEC process up once they are up and running. It also meant we had photos for our Admin system to help staff get to know the pupils. For bus passes – the transport company will be in touch with those who require/have registered. They are unsure how it will work this year but will let us know as soon as they know the what and how.

6. When will children find out the 'smaller' group they will be attending school in?

We are currently working on what the smaller 'bubbles' and we hope to communicate this to parents and pupils before the end of term.

7. What do sets and classes mean?

DCT (Daily Contact Time) classes are classes of no more than 20 pupils. DCT itself is a 15 minute period of time, mid-morning, where registration takes place, whole communications can happen and broader skills can develop. Pupils will be in their DCT classes for most practical subjects such as Art, Music, Design & Tech, as well as HE and PSE. For subjects such as Maths, English, Languages and Humanities subjects, pupils will become part of a slightly bigger class, known as a set. These are known as 1.1, 1.2, 1.3. These sets are made up of pupils from two or sometimes three DCT classes. Although a pupil may not have all their friends in their DCT class, they may find there are a good few more when they are in their sets. One of the major factors in creating the classes is the language your child has learned in

Primary. 1.1, 1.2 and 1.5 are Spanish and the other three (1.3, 1.4 and 1.6), French. Having said that, all pupils do both languages, but to aid their progression, there is a focus on the language they have been learning already. 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are made up from A and B classes (Auchlee and Bourtree) and 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6 are made from C and D (Cookston and Downies).

8. Further to media reports and comments from John Swinney will children be wearing school uniform?

If pupils have PE on the day they are in school, they will be asked to wear their PE kit which should consist of tracksuit bottoms and a t-shirt (no football shirts), otherwise pupils will be asked to wear black and white. No school tie is necessary at this point.

9. Will there be catering facilities, or will children be expected to bring a packed lunch?

We are still in discussions with the catering staff to find out what service can be offered. We will communicate this to parents as soon as it is clear but it is likely to be a reduced service that is pre-ordered and taking the form of cold 'grab-bags'.

10. With social distancing measures will children be allowed out of school at lunch time?

It is likely that pupils will be allowed outside at lunchtime as we cannot expect them to be inside all day. Social distancing is still a concern as pupils will not be supervised outside. If the weather is particularly inclement, the pupils will be inside but in classrooms that will ensure social distancing.

11. Is Portlethen Academy considering temporarily dropping subjects for S1 for example Drama?

Currently, due to numbers that can be facilitated safely in certain practical rooms and staffing, Home Economics, Design & Technology and RMPS will not be delivered to S1 in school. Online Learning for these subjects will still take place however. The reason for this is to allow pupils in the senior phase and S3 who have chosen these courses to be given at least the potential of doing some practical work which involves doubling up of teachers.

12. Is there any consideration in using community halls for lessons?

Not at the moment, no, as the local community halls would not necessarily be equipped with relevant resources or facilities. It would also require more staff which we do not have at our disposal.

13. Will the work set out on MS teams include video lessons?

Some teachers do offer online video help sessions but because there is no facility within Microsoft Teams to record these yet, they are not taking place as we cannot guarantee all pupils or staff would be able to log in at the same time. Many teachers are sharing voiced-over PowerPoint presentations that give explanations and details to the work set.

14. How will my child catch up on the missed school time? She is dyslexic and we were worried that moving to the academy was going to be hard enough for her without the restrictions and planned delays.

Staff are aware that there are likely to be gaps in learning and will ensure the work they set is clearly structured. In most Teams, there is a 'questions and help' channel where pupils can ask for help. Many classes have Pupil Support Assistants in them too for support and Support for Learning teachers are aware of all dyslexic pupils and will be on hand to support too.

15. Has the council considered delaying the year e.g. pupils redoing their previous year P7? With only 1 week of actual lesson and 3 weeks at home, this will result in a major impact on their learning.

The council have not considered this. If this was to be decided, it would be made a national level, not regional.

16. On my child's first day commencing academy, where will they go? I.e will they enter the school and wait at reception and be greeted by someone, or do they make their own way to the hall for example?

Detailed information of where pupils access the building will be shared before the end of this term. A video will also be shared showing expectations within the building.