# **People Directorate**

**Head Teacher: Mr George Docherty** 

Marr College Dundonald Road Troon KA10 7AB
Tel: 01292 690022

Email: marr.mail@south-ayrshire.gov.uk
Our Ref: Your Ref:

Date: 12/06/2020



# Dear Parent/Carer,

As we continue at pace with school recovery planning, I wanted to update you as much as I can. Senior staff have been able to return to school this week and have met with groups of teachers and support staff to prepare for our young people returning in August. Over the next two weeks, all staff will return to school at various points to prepare their classrooms or working areas. During this time, home learning tasks will continue to be set. Please continue to encourage your child to engage with the work set or get in touch with staff if there are any issues accessing the activities.

#### **Return to School Date**

Following the First Minister's announcement, it has now been confirmed that young people will come back to school from **Wednesday 12 August**, with Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> being a staff in-service day. As you know, this is a week earlier than planned for South Ayrshire and we understand that families and staff may have already booked holidays for this week. If you do have a holiday booked, please let the school know. Under the circumstances, it will be an authorised absence and pupils will be able to catch up on work missed on their return. A copy of the revised School Holidays for session 2020-21 is attached.

#### **Blended Learning**

Due to social distancing requirements, it will not be possible to have all pupils back in school at the same time. Pupils will attend on a part-time basis in smaller groups and when they are not at school, they will continue to learn at home. Staff have continued to make progress with digital learning and are delivering more and more live lessons, tutorials and check-ins, particularly in the senior school. Moving forward, we aim to use Microsoft Teams to deliver online content.

Thank you to everyone who completed our survey on the proposed blended learning options. There were 345 responses and the majority of parents/carers opted for young people attending for 2 ½ days per week. The full parent survey results are attached to this letter. 68% of school staff also opted for this model and a full proposal has been submitted to South Ayrshire Council for approval early next week.

Our proposal involves young people attending in House groups with staggered start/end times for S1-S3 and S4-S6 students. We are currently working on a timetable of rotations, which I am sure you will appreciate is a very complex task. We are also creating groupings to ensure siblings at Marr attend on the same day, though it will not be possible to co-ordinate the days with our feeder primary schools. I appreciate you will want to plan your own arrangements for August and will share House groupings and days with you as soon as I can. We are also working on health and hygiene procedures that must be in place to keep all our young people and staff safe.

As the August timetable is being developed, it is important that we work with the current class numbers to create groupings. For this reason, no further options changes will be made at present and young people should continue to engage with their current subject options. Requests can be emailed to <a href="mair.mail@south-ayrshire.gov.uk">marr.mail@south-ayrshire.gov.uk</a> or via Guidance teachers. As always, arrangements will be made for pupils who wish to re-opt following SQA results.

# **School Transport**

Education Services staff have been liaising with SPT for a number of weeks to plan school transport arrangements from August. A survey will be issued in the coming days to parents/carers of young people who access school transport.

# **Transition**

Parents and carers of new S1 students received letters earlier in the week indicating their child's House and class. Principal Teachers of Guidance are already making transition phone calls with parents/carers and young people continue to access all the transition information and activities via their Teams page and the school website. Feedback on the activities has been very positive and a P7 parent letter with Frequently Asked Questions will be issued soon. Unfortunately it will not be possible to have our usual 'bump up' days for the new S1 group in June. A programme of enhanced transition visits have been arranged by Mr Hobson and the Pupil Support team in partnership with primary schools.

# Uniform

We have continued to stay in touch with Ayrshire Schoolwear and will let you know as soon as they are able to open again. It is our intention to have a supply of ties available to purchase directly from the school. Payment will be via iPay and office staff will be in touch with further details for anyone who has not yet signed up to this system.

#### **ICT Access**

Scottish Government have announced additional funding to support young people with limited or no access to IT for home learning. Mr McLean is co-ordinating an audit of our current equipment and our IT needs for blended learning from August. Discussions are also taking place regarding the donation of IT equipment to support learners.

# **Youth Forum Survey**

A link can be found <a href="here">here</a> and on the attached QR code to a pupil survey which was written on behalf of the authority by the South Ayrshire Youth Forum. I would be very grateful if you could encourage your child to complete the survey, which will close on 17<sup>th</sup> June at 5pm. A QR code



Once again, thank you for your continued support in these ever-changing times.

Best wishes

George Docherty Head Teacher

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# Marr College - Parent/Carer Survey

Blended Learning Models – June 2020

# 1. What year group will your children be in from August? (Please tick all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	S2	29.28%	101
2	S3	26.96%	93
3	S4	18.84%	65
4	S5	21.16%	73
5	S6	18.84%	65
		answered	345
		skipped	0

2. Three blended learning models have been identified for the initial phase from August. Due to social distancing restrictions, it is not possible to have all pupils returning full-time. Our overarching aim is to maximise contact time with teachers and minimise the potential spread of the virus. Below is a summary of the blended learning models: Option 1 - Pupils attend each day for a half day (9-11.30 or 12.30-3pm). Lunch will only be provided for young people eligible for free school meals. Option 2 - Pupils attend for 2 full days and one 1/2 day per week (Mon/Tue/half day Wed or half day Wed/Thu/Fri). Option 3 - Pupils attend for the full week then work at home for the next week. The need for staggered start, end and break times will mean that the times of the school day will change and each day will be the same length. Please rank each option below in order of preference. Please drag the statements up or down into your preferred order (the numbers will fill themselves in as you move the statements - you don't need to use the drop-down menu)

Item		Overall Rank
Pupils attend for 2 full days and one 1/2 day per week (Mon/Tue/half day Wed or half day Wed/Thu/Fri)		1
Pupils attend each day for a half day (9-11.30 or 12.30-3pm. 1hr between for cleaning)	946	2
Pupils attend for the full week then work at home for the next week	785	3
The school can choose the model that best suits the school community		4
<sup>1</sup> Score is a weighted calculation. Items ranked first are valued higher than the following ranks, the		345
is a sum of all weighted rank counts.	skipped	0

# 3. If you have more than one child at Marr College, how important is it to you that they attend school on the same day?

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very important	22.03%	76
2	Not as important	12.46%	43
3	Not applicable	65.51%	226
		answered	345
		skipped	0