



Viewforth High School

## Head Teacher Update

# UPDATE



I hope this update finds you and your families well.

Today we welcome our senior pupils back to school after the SQA exam period. The seniors will participate in their Senior Phase Induction, learning more about the leadership opportunities available to them, participating in team building activities and working with peers on a range of challenges. Their new timetables will be shared and they will be told about our new Digital Devices policy which begins on Tuesday of next week.

Yesterday our S1 - S3 pupils received their new timetables in advance of the timetable changing next week. If your child was absent yesterday, they can collect this from the support hub today or from any of the Deputies on Tuesday. The S1 - S3 pupils also had assemblies focused on the new Digital Device policy, the change to the school week which begins on Tuesday and uniform expectations for next session. Please see further information below regarding the new timetables.

Our Bronze Duke of Edinburgh participants completed their practice expedition on Monday and Tuesday, walking and camping along the Fife Coastal Path. The young people did incredibly well and although tired, were in high spirits and really enjoyed the experience. Members of the public who were also staying on the campsite praised the young people for their exceptional, responsible behaviour - well done to everyone involved.

Our Silver Duke of Edinburgh participants completed their training day in advance of their silver expedition and despite the torrential rain this week, both groups were incredibly lucky with the weather.

The Art department have been very busy with Ms Gibb leading a Junk Couture experience for pupils in S1 - S3. This is a global challenge and the day provided young people with an insight into what the challenge entails before we launch the Junk Couture club next session. By the end of the day, the pupils had created two outfits - one out of newspaper and the second out of recyclable junk. Keep an eye out for the summer newsletter where you will see photographs of the fantastic work.

On Wednesday, members of the Art department led a trip for senior pupils to the Duncan of Jordanstone Degree Show in Dundee. The young people also had the opportunity to visit the V&A Kimono exhibition. What a great day with lots of learning.

This morning our PE department will lead the last of our sports heats in advance of our Sports Day on Wednesday 19 June. Let's hope for some good weather on that day!

## New Timetable

All pupils were issued their new timetables on Thursday (new S2- S4) and Friday (new S4-S6). There was a follow up at registration today too for those who were absent. If there are any issues with timetables, please see Miss McNamee on Tuesday 4 June during the period that they have the class that is a cause for concern.

## Digital Device Policy



The Digital Device Policy will begin on Tuesday 4 June. The policy is being implemented as we are aware of how much of a distraction mobile phones are to learning. We are seeing a number of instances where parents are calling their children when they are in classes. We would ask parents to phone during break and lunchtimes so that lessons aren't disrupted. If, however, there is an emergency, messages can be taken to pupils via the school office. More information about the policy can be found here<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup><https://viewforthhighschool.co.uk/digital-learning/digital-device-policy/>

## Online Safety



Mobile phones are a great way for children and young people to keep in contact with their parents, carers and friends, especially as they begin a new school year. However, issues may arise if our children and young people excitedly share their mobile phone number with other pupils in their new school year group and even wider, as they perhaps join 'WhatsApp' group chats or other social media group chats.

This can lead to your child or young person sharing their mobile phone number with a whole year group and being included in what could amount to over one hundred school pupils on single group chat! The reality of this is that they don't all know each other, they will all be from different backgrounds, they will all have different levels of online awareness and they will most likely be seeing messages, images and even video footage shared in the group which you, as a parent or carer, would not like them to see but which is out with your control. This situation can be difficult to manage and could be distressing in relation to what is read or seen. Coupled to this, peer pressure could lead to bullying.

WhatsApp is by far the most used messaging App although there are many other similar messaging Apps, and it allows users to send instant messages only to contacts that they have added to their WhatsApp account. Only people who have a WhatsApp account can send and receive messages through the app. Messages can be sent 'one to one' or within a 'group conversation' and for all messages sent, WhatsApp sends "read receipts" to tell sender if the message was delivered, read, seen or played. These settings can be changed, see the 'how to guide for parents' link below for more information. In relation to a group chat on any social media platform, even those as a parent or carer you are involved with, you have no control what will be sent, seen or shared so it is worthwhile having a conversation with your child or young person about this.

We know peer pressure can lead to people of any age doing something they otherwise would not do, online or offline, so this awareness during your child or young persons' early years is very important.

Our colleagues at Internet Matters have created information resources below to inform you of how the social media platform "WhatsApp" operates and how you can put measures in place to protect what your child or young person sees on the app and awareness on the apps security settings.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/whatsapp-safety-a-how-to-guide-for-parents/>

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/monitoring-apps-parents-guide/>

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/social-media-advice-hub/>

## OnFife - Have Your Say

We invite parents and young people of all ages to participate in our Relevant Kirkcaldy survey, which will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Building on previous community feedback, this survey aims to understand how OnFife can enhance its programmes and services at our three Kirkcaldy venues: Adam Smith Theatre, Kirkcaldy Galleries, and Templehall Library. Whether you're a parent nurturing your child's creativity or a young person passionate about cultural events, we value your input. Your feedback is crucial in helping us develop relevant programmes, services, and events for all ages in Kirkcaldy. We are hoping to reach as many parents and young people as possible to gather feedback. Parents, if you are willing, we would love to have older high school aged youth fill out the survey as well. Click <https://www.onfife.com/creative-communities/>

## Cost of the school day



As a school we work to ensure that all young people can attend without having to worry about the cost of anything in school. This also includes things that they might need to help them attend school. There are a range of services we offer that all young people are welcome to use.

- Breakfast Club – open from 8.20 – 8.40 daily in the school café
- Sanitary Products – our Support Hub have a range of sanitary products that are free to take if needed. Many classrooms have these in class as well for young people to help themselves. These are signposted in the classes.
- School uniform – the Support Hub has a range of uniform that young people are welcome to have if needed. This includes shirts, trousers, tights, socks and jerseys among other items. Whilst pupils can ask themselves, if parents would prefer, they can phone and ask for this support on their young person's behalf.
- Toiletries – we also hold a stock of toiletries for anyone who may need them this includes shampoo, shower gel, deodorant, toothpaste and toothbrushes.
- All families who are eligible, are encouraged to apply for free school meals. You can check your eligibility and to apply via this link: [Free school meals and school clothing grants | Fife Council](https://www.fife.gov.uk/kb/docs/articles/education2/schools-in-fife/free-school-meals-and-school-clothing-grants)<sup>2</sup>

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- Also, your child may be eligible to apply for Educational Maintenance Allowance if they are over 16. You can check eligibility and apply via this link: [Education Maintenance Allowance | Fife Council](#)<sup>3</sup>
- S4-6 students are also reminded that there is a stock of study materials held in the Depute Head Teachers' office that they are welcome to use. This includes cue cards, post-it notes, highlighters and resource guides.
- Whilst all young people are encouraged to come equipped for school with their own pens and pencils, if they need anything like this they can be provided at school.

If you, or your child, have any concerns around costs associated with school you are welcome to contact the school and speak with their Principal Teacher of Guidance.

Fife Council provides a range of supports related to cost of living. More information can be found about this here: [Benefits and money advice | Fife Council](#)<sup>4</sup>

Alternatively, the our Fife Council website has a range of advice and links to support available for families.

## Mobile Phones

We are working to reduce the amount of time young people are spending on their mobile phones during lessons. To support us with this, it would be very helpful if parents / carers could refrain from messaging your child(ren) during lessons. If there is an emergency, please call the school office who will arrange for your child to be contacted. If it isn't an emergency, please limit the communications to interval (**10.25am - 10.40am**) and lunchtimes (**12.55pm - 1.40pm**).

## Viewforth HS Parent Council



The Parent Council meeting dates for this session have been confirmed and you can find these below. If you would like to attend a meeting either online or in person, please contact [viewforthparentcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:viewforthparentcouncil@gmail.com)<sup>5</sup> The meetings begin at 6pm.

<sup>3</sup><https://www.fife.gov.uk/kb/docs/articles/education2/schools-in-fife/funding/educational-maintenance-allowance>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.fife.gov.uk/kb/welfare,-benefits-and-money-advice>

<sup>5</sup><mailto:viewforthparentcouncil@gmail.com>



Monday 10th June - this meeting will now take place on **Monday 17th June**

## Key Staff



Your child's Guidance Teacher plays a key role in supporting them to achieve success throughout their school career. They will monitor attendance, time keeping, behaviour and progress and will liaise closely with both your young person and the family home. If you have any questions or concerns, please get in touch with the relevant Guidance Teacher below.

### **S1 and S2**

Mrs Campbell for classes 1C1, 1C2 and 2C1

Mrs Stewart for classes 1F1, 2F1 and 2F2

Mrs Hughes / Ms Barr for classes 1F2, 1M1, 2M1 and 2M2

The Depute Head Teacher with responsibility for S1 and S2 is Mr Kowbel.

### **S3 and S4**

Mrs Beesley for classes 3F1, 4C2 and 4F2

Mr Bowman for classes 3F2, 3M1, 3M2, 4F1, 4M1 and 4M2

Ms Harris will support 3C1, 3C2 and 4C1

The Depute Head Teacher with responsibility for S3 and S4 is Ms McNamee.

### **S5 and S6**

Mrs Lara Robertson

The Depute Head Teacher with responsibility for S5 and S6 is Mr Wilson.

## Contact details



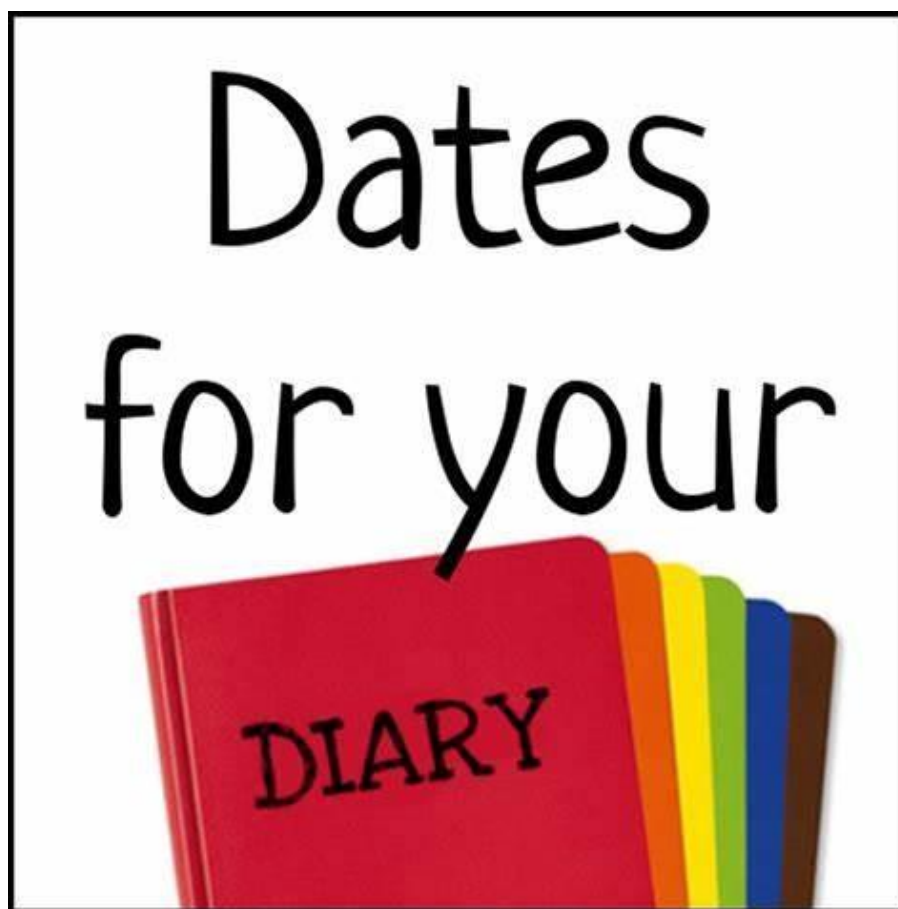
There are a variety of ways you can contact the school and we would encourage you to get in touch if you have any questions or concerns.

As we continue to work to improve pupil attendance at school, a reminder that if your child is unwell or has an appointment and is unable to attend school, please telephone the school office on **01592 583408** and select **option 1** for the attendance line. If the line is engaged, there is the facility to leave a message. Alternatively, you can send a text message to **07860 030879**, stating your child's name and the reason for the absence. If your child does not arrive to class, you will receive a Groupcall message informing you of their absence.

If you require support with your child's attendance, please contact your child's guidance teacher who will be happy to provide support and advice.



Dates for your diary...



**Term Dates 2023/24 (all dates are inclusive)**

Summer    Monday 15th April 2024 - Friday 28th June 2024

**Respect - Equity - Ambition - Community - Health**