



Dear Parent/Carer,

Date: 22/03/2017

I write to advise you about a number of very important changes that affect all young people attending Charleston Academy.

SCHOOL TIMETABLE

Charleston Academy moved to a 4.5 day week last June ahead of all other Highland Secondary Schools doing likewise for August 2017. Within Inverness, all of the Secondary Schools have been asked by the Head of Education to adopt a unified school day and curriculum structure. The model adopted is essentially the one we already operate here. However, from the change of timetable on 5 June 2017, our lunch break will be extended by 5 minutes until 2pm and the school day will finish 5 minutes later at 3:40pm. We will still finish at 12:25pm on Fridays. These timings will be operated by all Inverness Secondary Schools.

LATENESS

Recently there appears to have been an increase in the number of young people arriving late for school. It must be emphasised again that the school day begins formally at 8:40am. All young people must be in their Register class by this time. A warning bell sounds a few minutes before this. Please ensure your child is in school ahead of this time and ready to begin lessons.

CAR PARK

Parents dropping young people off for school must not use the school car park to do so. The turning circle at the bottom of Charleston View should be used for this and young people can then walk in through the back gate. Similarly, after school, parents are requested not to enter the school car park but to arrange a convenient pick up spot somewhere around the school, away from zig-zag and other yellow lines. Our car park is too busy to allow this area to be used safely as a drop off or pick up zone.

SECURITY

Following a security breach in the community building last year, a number of security enhancements have been installed in school for the safety of all young people and staff who use this building. These will soon become operational. This includes the securing of the perimeter fence and allowing access to our two buildings by controlled key-fob entry. This means that the front door now has a video and intercom entry system which will be in use at all times. Only staff who work in the school can access the building this way. Pupils currently using the front door who access the school through the car park will no longer be able to enter this way and SHOULD NOT be doing so. Visitors to the school will have to use the intercom and then report to reception. Within school a number of other security enhancements will mean that the movement of young people around the school will be more restricted.

It is more important than ever that our young people arrive in school on time, all of the time, prepared and ready for lessons.

APPOINTMENTS

Due to forthcoming internal moves in the school it is regrettable that guidance and to a lesser extent the senior management team will no longer be available for short meetings on request. Our policy has always been that appointments about your child's education should normally be made in advance and always with your child's guidance teacher in the first instance. This remains the case but we will now no longer be able to see parents first thing. Aligned to our enhanced security arrangements we need to control who accesses our building more tightly. Therefore all parents are respectfully asked to ensure that they do not come into school without first phoning and making an appointment. Other than in an urgent or emergency situation, parents arriving in school without an appointment will be asked to make one for later that day or week.

SQA EXAMS

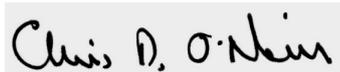
All parents should be aware that the Government have asked that the formal internal assessments for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses be removed. This begins with National 5 in Session 2017/18 and will affect young people entering S4 in June. This cohort of young people will no longer have formal internal exams but will have an enhanced final exam instead at the end of their National 5 courses in 2018. Arrangements for this are still being finalised by SQA and we will update you in due course once the final details have been made available to us. Less formal but equally important assessments will still be administered by staff for Tracking, Monitoring, Target Setting and confirmation of Levels but these will not form part of the overall course award.

DIARY DATES

We approach the end of another very busy term and school finishes for the Easter Break on Wednesday 5 April at 3:35pm. We re-open on Monday 24 April and SQA exams begin on Tuesday 2 May (immediately after the May Day Bank Holiday). Thursday 4 May is an In-Service Day (changed from June 5) due to Local Council elections. The school is closed to all pupils except those sitting SQA exams that day (Music).

Thank you for your continued support this session. We value your partnership and cooperation in ensuring we are best placed to provide a high quality education for all of our young people at Charleston Academy.

Best Wishes for a Happy Easter.



C O'Neill
Rector