



# Knox Academy

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Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

## **New school session – Wednesday 18 August 2021**

I hope you and your families have had an enjoyable summer break and your young people are excited about the prospect of returning to school next week. We are so looking forward to welcoming all of our S2-S6 pupils back to school and also very much looking forward to meeting all our amazing new S1 pupils. It will be fantastic to have all the school community together and feel that buzz around the building again.

This letter will cover arrangements for the first day back and the health and safety procedures we have put in place to reduce the transmission of Covid-19. Please take time to read this information carefully and to discuss it with your young person at home. Thank you.

The arrangements for the first day are as follows:

### **New S1 Pupils**

Our new S1 pupils should assemble at the playing fields, at the back of the school, between 8.20 and 8.25am and stand beside the S6 pupil who is holding their class name up. If for any reason your young person has forgotten their class, please contact the school office during Monday 16 or Tuesday 17 August and a member of our office team will be most happy to remind them of this so they are prepared for their first day. At 8.30am, the S6 pupils will take them to meet their registration teacher, who they will meet every morning with from 8.30-8.40am.

At registration on the first day, which will be extended until 9am, pupils will be issued with their school timetable for the rest of the year. They should make a copy of this at home. Now that most pupils have mobile phones, they can also take a photo of it just in case they mislay it. All S1 pupils will also be issued with their new school tie, which is a present to all our pupils starting at Knox Academy. This tie has the school crest on it and also a diagonal stripe below the crest, which is in the colours of the House they are in – Green (Garleton), Yellow (Lammerlaw) and Red (Traprain). Their register teachers will also take some time to go over the health and safety procedures across the school to reduce the transmission of Covid-19 and to keep everyone safe.

The S6 pupils will accompany the S1 groups to and from classes over the first week and until they get used to the school layout. Beyond the teachers and staff, the S6 provide another friendly face they will get to know at an early stage of their schooling and this relationship has always remained a strong one throughout S1.



During your young person's time at school, their registration teacher will be their first point of contact for any 'quick' questions regarding such areas as absences or their school timetable. If further advice or support is needed, pupils and parents/carers should always contact their young person's Pupil Support Leader or House Team (which includes the Depute Head Teacher) in the first instance by emailing:

Ms Adam/Mrs Falconer (Garleton) [garleton@knox.elcschool.org.uk](mailto:garleton@knox.elcschool.org.uk)

Mr Meekison/Mr Russell (Lammerlaw) [lammerlaw@knox.elcschool.org.uk](mailto:lammerlaw@knox.elcschool.org.uk)

Mrs Doig/Mr Illingworth (Traprain) [traprain@knox.elcschool.org.uk](mailto:traprain@knox.elcschool.org.uk)

If you do not have email, please phone the school office on: 01620 823387.

Our [school handbook](#) is also a great reference for parents/carers.

We would also like to encourage our S1 pupils to stay on campus at break and lunchtimes during S1 unless they are going home for lunch. This allows them to socialise with their wider year group at this time and participate in some of our lunchtime clubs, which we hope to have up and running very soon.

### **S2-S6 Pupils**

When our S2-S6 pupils return to school, they will follow the school timetables they followed for the last fortnight in June. If anyone has forgotten their timetable, that is not a problem, and they should contact their Pupil Support Leader (through their EduBuzz email) on Monday 16 or Tuesday 17 August so we can arrange to email this to them so they know exactly what to bring to school on Wednesday 18 and can start the term positively with all the necessary equipment. On the first day they should report to registration as normal. This will be extended until 9am to allow teachers to recap the health and safety procedures with these year groups.

### **Covid-19 Health and Safety**

Most of the mitigations that were in place last term in all secondary school will remain in place for the first six weeks of the new term (end of September) and the Scottish Government will review these during this time. The detailed guidance for schools can be found [here](#).

The main change to the mitigations that were in place last term is an updated policy on self-isolation, contact tracing and testing for children and young people aged under 18 (U18) in regard to their close contacts, which results in the ability to remove contact groupings in schools. Under this new approach only those close contacts aged under 18 who are at the highest risk of being exposed to infection will be directly contact traced by Test and Protect, and asked to self-isolate until they have received a negative PCR test. Test and Protect will focus on identification of household, overnight (sleepover) or clear, prolonged close contacts. Schools will no longer be as extensively involved in supporting contact tracing. They may be requested by Test and Protect to support identification of any adult staff or clinically vulnerable U18s who are not fully vaccinated and who have had unusually close or prolonged contact with the identified positive case.

PE (indoors and outdoors), Dance, Drama and Music will resume as 'normal' again with ventilation and hygiene being the key factors for reducing transmission.

## Knox Academy's Mitigations

Although there is no longer a stipulation for 2M physical distancing between pupils in classrooms, we have set up our classrooms to give as much space between desks as possible to support the reduction in transmission. Other safety measures and requests are bullet pointed below and I would appreciate if parents/carers go discuss these with their young person prior to school starting on Wednesday 18 August.

Safety measures to remain in place:

- Pupils should **all** wear [school uniform](#) so they are easily identifiable and dressed appropriately for school (smart and functional as well as supporting our approaches to community and equity). They should also bring a cosy fleece/outdoor jacket to put on should they feel cold in class as we have enhanced ventilation in all classrooms and social areas/dining room.  
A cosy/waterproof jacket will also be needed for outdoor learning/breaks/lunches. Support with uniform can be found [here](#). No hooded tops, ripped jeans or leggings should be worn (as per our uniform policy).
- Face coverings for all staff and all S1-S6 pupils (unless exempt). These are to be worn in class, corridors and social areas but may be removed for eating and drinking. Pupils should provide their own face coverings.
- Pupils should arrive at school (ideally) from 8.20 onwards to give a 10 minute arrival window and avoid gathering in groups – they should go straight to their registration class. We appreciate those on home/school transport may arrive earlier. If they are late in arriving pupils must sign in at the office.
- Pupils on home/school transport must wear face coverings on this (unless exempt). There will be no physical distancing on home/school transport.
- Classrooms are as physically distanced as possible and all have seating plans for track and trace purposes
- Hand sanitising on entry and exit to school and on entry/exit to all classrooms
- Pupils clean their work stations on arrival to classrooms
- One way system in corridors (with the exception of a few areas that are lined off for two way travel)
- Individual toilets – accessed as required by pupils during class time (communal toilets at the dining room and social area to be open at break and lunch). Hand washing facilities are also available here
- Enhanced cleaning throughout the day and electrostatic fogging once a month
- Pupils leave the school by the nearest exit at break, lunch and the of the day to reduce crowding
- At the start of term there will be a smaller selection of food available at breaks and lunch in our Food Court and, as best as possible, pupils should bring something for their break and also a packed lunch. Free school meals will be available at the Food Court.
- We ask all S1-S6 pupils to remain on the school campus at break time and S1 at lunchtime too (see above – unless going home for lunch). If pupils are going out at lunch time to local shops they must ensure they wear face coverings to access shops (unless exempt).
- Identified wet weather areas for pupils at break and lunch – separate year groups (S1 (near end)/S2(far end) Games Hall); S3 (Social area); S4/5 (Assembly Hall); S6 (Library)
- Parents/carers are still unable to come into school during the Covid-19 recovery (unless by prior arrangement and risk assessed). All communications must be via email or telephone.
- If your young person was previously shielding or has a health condition, please contact Mr Illingworth [sillingworth@knox.elcschool.org.uk](mailto:sillingworth@knox.elcschool.org.uk) to ensure we can support their return to school

## Requests:

- Pupils should bring their own stationery to avoid sharing and a Chromebook or laptop if they have one available (please do not feel the need to purchase one if you don't have one)
- Pupils should bring a full water bottle – this can be topped up during the day at our water dispensers
- Pupils should ideally bring a packed lunch which can be eaten outside if dry. Pupils will be asked to have break and lunch outside if dry to stretch their legs and also to reduce the transmission of Covid-19 as evidence shows that transmission is reduced outdoors.

## **Lateral Flow Devices (LFD) - Test Kits**

Following a request from public health officials and Scottish Government, East Lothian Council is asking that all secondary pupils restart twice-weekly (at-home) Lateral Flow Device (LFD) testing in the week before they return. Ideally, your young person should take their second weekly test either in the morning before they leave for their first day of school or the evening before.

It is really important that results are recorded online, whether positive, negative or void. Full details of how to record their results are included in the test kits. This helps public health experts understand what levels of COVID-19 are, and can inform policy on things like mitigations in schools. In the event of a positive result please also email [covidinschools@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:covidinschools@eastlothian.gov.uk).

Testing can help reduce the risks of COVID-19 outbreaks in schools. This, in turn, can help reduce the likelihood that staff or children and young people will have to self-isolate.

We provided test kits to pupils prior to the summer break, which can be used for these purposes. If your young person did not receive a test kit, or they have run out of tests, you can access them in a range of different ways. Kits are available free of charge:

- Order online for delivery to your home. [Visit Gov.uk to order](#)
- Collect kits from your pharmacy or nearest test site. You can find out details of test sites in East Lothian from our website [www.eastlothian.gov.uk/covid](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/covid)
- Take a test at a local test site, which may be better for those who need assistance when testing.

Once our young people return to school, test kits will be available on a daily basis from our school office and they should collect these before they run out of them. All young people must have completed [an e-consent form](#) (or their parents/carers must have if under 16) to allow them to collect kits from the school. If you or young person completed a consent form last year there is no need to submit a new one.

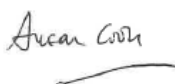
If a young person tests positive using an LFD test kit they should self-isolate and book a [PCR test](#). These test kits are for those who are asymptomatic only. If a young person has symptoms they must self-isolate and book a PCR test. They must not attend school.

If a pupil shows symptoms whilst at school we have a self-isolation room and parents/carers will be contacted immediately to collect them and to book a PCR test. The room they were in will be fogged to reduce transmission for future classes.

I appreciate that there is a lot of detail in this letter. S2-S6 pupils are all familiar with these mitigations as they were in place prior to the summer break so they should cope admirably with these. We will all support our new S1s finding their way with these and guide them positively. We have a great ethos and community at the school and we all do our utmost to keep each other safe, happy and achieving. Hopefully in six weeks time more of these mitigations can be removed. However, reflecting on this time last year there is a real feeling of moving towards a much more 'normal' year at school, with pupils being back fulltime, no mass self-isolation and after school /sports clubs all starting to resume. It feels a very exciting time for our school and community.

In the meantime, enjoy the rest of the summer break and the time you have with your family. We are looking forward to welcoming all our young people on Wednesday 18 August, bright eyed and bushy tailed and keen to see their friends, teachers, staff and, of course, to embrace the wonders of learning.

Best wishes



Susan Cook