

Dear Parents,

Now that we are almost three weeks in to the new academic session I sincerely hope that your sons and daughters are enjoying being back at school, that they have settled well in to their new routines, and that they are enjoying learning with their friends and teachers. It is certainly lovely to see the school campus alive and full of activity once again.

This latest update contains, among other things, important information on social gatherings outside of school, the Sponsored Walk, a request for 'host families', and the opportunity to give feedback on our Covid-Safe reopening.

Social Gatherings:

As we all emerge from Lockdown, different countries within the UK have employed nuanced approaches to the easing of restrictions. Advice can change quickly and it can be difficult to keep pace with Government guidelines. Moreover, teenagers will always seek to be sociable and it is with this in mind that I would like to seek your support in ensuring your sons and daughters comply with the *ScotGov* guidelines on social gatherings outside of school hours. Whilst I realise that the vast majority of pupils and their families are wholly respectful of the guidance that is in place to keep us all 'Covid-Safe', there have been a number of reports of large gatherings of teenagers in and around Dollar. Just last weekend, a large gathering on Law Hill was brought to the attention of the police. This 'party' was clearly in breach of the *ScotGov* guidelines on social gatherings and caused upset and distress for local residents. These large get-togethers are also undermining our efforts to keep Dollar Academy Covid-Secure.

With the infection rate data beginning to show the beginnings of a 'spike', it is more important than ever that we are all aware of the current (08/09/20) guidelines.

Meeting people indoors:

If meeting socially indoors (for example in your home or in a pub, café or restaurant):

- up to 3 households can meet at a time, **up to 8 people in total**
- do not meet more than 4 other households a day, except for under 18s who do not need to observe this daily limit
- you can stay overnight
- stay 2 metres apart from people outside your household, except for under 12s who do not need to distance from anyone
- you can use the toilet in someone else's house

Meeting people outdoors:

If meeting socially outdoors (for example in a park, your garden or sitting outside a pub, café or restaurant):

- up to 5 households can meet at a time, **up to 15 people in total**
- do not meet more than 4 other households per day, except for under 18s who do not need to observe this daily limit
- stay 2 metres apart from people outside your household, except for under 12s who do not need to distance from anyone

In addition, the majority of local outbreaks throughout Scotland, including a number of small clusters of positive Covid tests in schools, have been attributed to social gatherings and parties. So far, we have had zero positive tests within our school population, and we would very much like it to stay this way.

With all this in mind, your help in ensuring your sons and daughters follow the *ScotGov* guidelines for social gatherings, and that they fully understand the consequences of not doing so, would be very much appreciated.

Covid-Safe Guidelines in School:

For the most part, it seems that our Covid-Safe practices at Dollar Academy are becoming embedded in our daily routines. Our pupils have adapted very well indeed and we are glad to see everyone back, learning, being with their friends, and having fun. At this still very early

stage in the term we would like to seek your feedback on how you feel your sons and daughters are settling in to the new academic session and Covid-Safe routines. Your thoughts, ideas and suggestions on how we can improve things further would be appreciated. With this in mind, if you would like to offer some feedback on our Covid-Safe reopening, please complete the following questionnaire: [Feedback Form](#)

Absence from school:

If your son or daughter is absent from school please continue to keep us informed, on a daily basis, via not@dollaracademy.org.uk. It would be appreciated if you could highlight to us whether or not they are absent for Covid related reasons and, indeed, whether or not they are absent because they have Covid-19 symptoms.

Sponsored Walk 2020:

It is with regret that I must announce the postponement of the Sponsored Walk, originally planned for 25 September 2020. As a school, we find ourselves at the interface of often conflicting and ever evolving guidance from a number of key external bodies, and despite our wish to bring our whole community together in pursuit of a shared charitable goal, the weight of evidence tells us that this is not the time to do so. We will look at rearranging this special event for June 2021.

Uniform:

As many of you are no doubt aware, newly purchased items of sports kit are sporting a discrete XXV logo. XXV is the sister company of Stevensons, who now own Aitken and Niven, one of our two uniform suppliers, and we have been collaborating with them in the design and production of our range of sportswear. Foremost in our thinking has been to provide high quality, practical and smart items of clothing for our pupils at affordable prices, and we are delighted with the results of that collaboration. We have no plans for radical changes to our sport and PE kit but with XXV's help we are modernising some lines and working towards uniformity in all areas. As ever, there will be a crossover period and no-one will be asked to purchase new XXV kit whilst their existing kit is still in good order. That said, the new navy mid layer tops have proved a great addition to our sports kit during the return to school period and the new coloured quint tops provide a bright, comfortable and practical top that can be worn in rotation with the regulation white Dollar sports top.

We have been pleased with the smart appearance of our pupils during the return to school phase and plan to continue with our current Covid-19 uniform guidelines for the time being. However, your assistance in ensuring your children always wear the correct Dollar uniform (PE or regular school uniform) to school each day, whilst also abiding by our existing guidance on appearance (eg no jewellery) is very much appreciated.

Parents of our Prep and Junior pupils are reminded that as we take their learning outdoors, waterproof trousers, spare socks, wellies and warm layers are essential.

Request for Host Families:

As we continue to develop our resilience against the continuing, and sometimes unpredictable, disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, we are looking for a number of 'host families' that might be willing to support members of our boarding community over the holiday period.

Looking ahead to the October break, and even the Christmas holidays, there are a number of our international pupils at Dollar Academy who are going to struggle to navigate the increasingly complex quarantine arrangements. Many will have to quarantine on arrival in their home country, and then again on their return to Scotland a few weeks later. Aside from the logistics of finding a place to quarantine in Scotland, it also means yet more time in isolation and away from their friends in school.

As you might imagine, a number of our boarding pupils are opting to stay in Scotland over the holiday period, and so we would like to ask if there are any Dollar families willing to host a Dollar boarder for the duration of the October break and/or the Christmas holidays.

Being a host family is not just about helping a Dollar boarder out in a time of need, but welcoming an international pupil into your family and home can make a positive difference to their experience of studying in Scotland. It gives pupils a much better insight in to what it is like to live in Scotland – and, for everyone involved, there is the opportunity to learn about other cultures and countries.

We are looking for host families to provide pupils with a safe and friendly home, and include them in family life. As well as helping our international pupils out, in this Covid world, this experience should provide a rich context to complement their time in the boarding house and the education they receive at Dollar.

If welcoming an International pupil into your home is something you and your family would be interested in, please complete the following on-line form:

[Becoming a Host Family – request for information](#)

We will always try to match up pupils with appropriate families based on interests, age, family circumstances etc. – and there will be a number of statutory checks that would need to take place. We will provide further information to any families that express an interest in hosting.

Kind regards



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Deputy Rector



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