

**Education Resources
Executive Director Carole McKenzie
Head Teacher Waheeda Huq
Strathaven Academy**

Our ref: LB/CD
Your ref:
If calling ask for: Ms Barr
Phone: 01357 524040
Date: September 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

We are now a few weeks into the new academic year and I would like to take this opportunity to share some key information with parents/carers of our S5/S6 pupils.

All pupils should now have finalised any subject changes resulting from their S4 exam results and have settled into their new classes. We understand that S5 and S6 can be challenging years as most young people will work towards exams. However, as a school we endeavour to work closely with our pupils and parents/carers to make learning manageable and appropriate to each individual.

We encourage our learners to take pride in being a part of Strathaven Academy and to ensure their conduct within the school and local community is both responsible and respectful. Our school vision 'Together We Thrive', along with our values of 'Responsible, Respectful and Resilient', give our pupils a sense of belonging where each learner is valued for the contributions they make. We make every effort to support, challenge and nurture our young people to ensure they develop key skills which will lead to success both in school and beyond.

Attendance and Timekeeping

In order to achieve qualifications and success in school, we expect all pupils to attend regularly and arrive promptly.

If your child has an appointment during the school day, please contact the school office to inform us prior to the appointment. Where possible, we expect pupils to return to school after an appointment, to ensure valuable learning and teaching time is not lost. Pupils are reminded to sign-in on return to school.

Pupils in S6 have some non-contact periods which can be used for private study in school or at home, driving lessons, exercise, etc. Pupils must sign out if leaving the building during the school day.

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School Dress

We appreciate your support in encouraging your child to attend school wearing full school uniform which includes white shirt/blouse, school tie, blazer, black trousers/black skirt/school tartan skirt and plain black footwear.

Online Platforms

Pupils should ensure they have joined all Google Classrooms for their new subjects as essential information and materials will be posted in these. Pupils should also be a member of their year group Google Classroom where we share information on events and opportunities.

We are currently working on the launch of a homework tracking app for all parents/carers and pupils to use as an online homework tool. Further information will be shared over the coming weeks.

Parentsportal.scot is a new digital service to help replace the traditional 'school bag run' by providing direct communication to parents and carers through a growing suite of online services. I would encourage all parents/carers to access this service to help us improve our communication with home.

To access parentsportal.scot go to <https://parentsportal.scot/home/>. If you have a mygovscot account, click the link to Sign In or if you don't have a mygovscot account, click the link to register. Once registered you will be prompted to link your child.

Support with career planning

Pupils in our Senior Phase will be encouraged by our guidance team and Skills Development Scotland to research and plan for future study and/or careers. Any pupil in S5 who is considering leaving school at the end of this academic session should ensure their guidance teacher is aware of their intention. We will then ensure each young person is fully supported to develop the experiences and skills required to make a successful transition. All pupils in S6 will be supported in making post school decisions and applications and in developing interview skills.

Senior Phase Winter Assessments

Winter assessments for S5/6 will be scheduled between Monday, 15 and Friday, 26 January, 2024. These important exams will provide learners with an understanding of their progress, allowing them to set targets, identify areas of strength and focus on areas for further study. More detailed information on these assessments will be issued to pupils during December.

Key Dates

Please find below key dates in relation to reporting, assessments and supported study. As a school, we value the support of parents/carers ensuring that pupils are revising regularly and making use of the resources available as they prepare for SQA examinations.

Date	Event
Friday, 1 December 2023	S5/6 Tracking Report Issued to Parents/Carers
Tuesday, 5 December 2023	S5/6 Parent Consultation Evening
Monday 15 January 2024	S5/6 Winter Assessments Begin
Friday, 23 February 2024	S5/6 Full Report Issued to Parents/Carers
Thursday, 29 February 2024	Senior Phase Tracking Evening
Tuesday, 2 April 2024	Easter School Supported Study Begins
Thursday, 11 April 2024	Easter School Supported Study Ends
Friday 19 April 2024	S6 Leavers Assembly
Monday, 22 April 2024	SQA Exams Begin
Friday, 31 May 2024	SQA Exams End
Monday 3 June 2024	S5 pupils return to school
Thursday 6 June 2024	S6 Prom

A full school calendar detailing school holidays is available on the school App. Please remember that SQA exams can take place on May bank holidays and the May inset day.

Our study support section on the school website is updated throughout the year with resources to help pupils prepare for assessments and a direct link is found [here](#).

Parental Engagement

We aim to help parents become fully involved in their child's education, feel welcome in our school and feel encouraged to express views and opinions.

This session, we have a number of activities planned that you may wish to join, including:

- Reading café
- Numeracy workshops
- Creative & Aesthetics showcase
- Christmas Concert
- Barista café
- STEM Family Challenge evening
- Mental Health Awareness workshop
- Sports Awards

In addition, you will have the opportunity to take part in evaluative activities that help to support our school improvement. Further details will be shared in due course.

If you are keen to play an active role in our school community, please consider joining the Parent Council or PTA.

Questionnaire

This session we are looking to examine the systems and processes that we use to ensure that young people feel both safe and included within our learning community. We would be grateful if you would take a few minutes to share your views on how well we accomplish this in Strathaven Academy. Scanning the QR code below will take you to a questionnaire that will allow you to give us feedback and, if you would like to do so, volunteer to become part of a range of focus groups. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school and ask for Mr Brown or Mr Dunn.



Standards & Quality Report

Our Standards and Quality Report for session 2023-2024 has been published on our school website and can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please don't hesitate to contact the school office if you require further detail or refer to our school website where we regularly post updates and key information.

I would like to wish your child every success in the coming session.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L Barr".

L BARR
Depute Head Teacher