



# Milne's High School

Education & Social Care

West Street, Fochabers, Moray, IV32 7DJ

Telephone: 01343 820611

Email: [admin.milneshigh@moray-edunet.gov.uk](mailto:admin.milneshigh@moray-edunet.gov.uk)

[www.milneshighschool.org.uk](http://www.milneshighschool.org.uk)



Dear Parent

It is a pleasure to extend a warm welcome to all families – whether new or returning - as the 2019-20 session gets underway. I would like to take this opportunity to provide key updates for parents and urge you to carefully read the contents of this pack before returning the required documentation. I would very much appreciate your support in enforcing some of the key messages outlined below to ensure the wellbeing of all our school community.

## School Improvement

We have an aspirational Improvement Plan which will be available on our website alongside our new Standards and Quality Report by the end of next week. This was devised from a range of evidence, including feedback from parents and has undergone significant consultation by our parent council.

## Uniform

We continue to see an overwhelming majority of pupils come smartly dressed to school. Unfortunately, a very small minority continue to ignore repeated requests to wear the correct uniform with a few still wearing jeans, leggings and non-black footwear. We will maintain our focus in this area during the coming session and very much seek your support to ensure that all students wear the uniform as required. Cost to parents has been a huge consideration in our uniform policy and we believe that we have made this affordable while promoting an ethos of being smartly dressed while contributing to the safety of the school campus.

## Keep in touch

It is essential that we hold up to date contact details for each student as there are times when we need to contact parents at short notice. We encourage good communication with parents and ask parents to contact the school office in the first instance with any queries. We regularly update our school website and have a Twitter account @milneshigh to publicise our achievements.

Last session we introduced a Facebook page and school app. The app is designed to improve communication of daily notices to the school community. The app was originally called “Secondary School App” however its name has now been changed to “School App for Parents”. It is available to download for Apple and Android devices from the App Store and Google Play Store respectively.

Many of our consultations with parents are in electronic format and it is helpful if we have up to date e-mail addresses for all parents. We also have a new mobile phone policy for the school available on our website or on request from the main office. Please take time to review and discuss this with your child in order to encourage responsible use of communication devices so that they are a positive and not a distracting force in school.

## Parental involvement and the parent council

There will be an open consultation for parents on Monday 9 September from 5.45 pm until 6.45 pm just before our Parent Council meeting which begins at 7.00 pm. Joining the parent council allows you the chance to have a greater say on how to further improve the school and you will be made very welcome should you choose to stay for the meeting. The open consultation is an opportunity for parents to talk to me individually

about any issues concerning school improvement. Please come directly to my office and if I am engaged with other parents, then let me know that you are waiting.

### **The role of the Guidance Teacher**

The Guidance teacher is the named person for our students. For Spey House, the Guidance role is provided by Mrs Sparkes with Tynet House provision overseen by Mr McGuire. For some students with additional support needs, their named person will be the Principal Teacher of Additional Support Needs, Mrs Burchell, and these parents will be informed separately. If you are in any doubt then please contact the school office and they will direct you appropriately.

### **SQA attainment**

I am pleased to report that so many of our young people celebrated excellent results in last session's exams, particularly our higher students who have attained some of the best measures on record. The support of staff and parents is greatly appreciated in this success. There are some students who may be disappointed with their results and they will be supported through the course choice process and in classes to ensure that they have the best chance of success this session. In response to continued parental feedback, parents will continue to receive monthly tracking reports for students in S4-6 and termly for S1-3, rather than an overall report. This allows better use of staff time to provide more face to face evening appointments. Tracking of pupil progress is a high level improvement priority and we ask that all parents consider giving us their views on tracking by completing the following survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/3NX6LLC>

### **Our vision, purpose and values**

Last session, there were opportunities for parents, pupils and staff to have their say on re-designing the vision, purpose and values of our school. An updated statement was launched in January to guide the work of the school. This is available on our website and is a nice summary of what this school is trying to achieve and what is required of everyone in the school community. All policies including those relating to student behaviour are designed to ensure high standards and pupils were reminded of these expectations at the assemblies last week.

### **Our local community**

We continue to be a positive and valued part of our local community. Last session, there were less complaints from members of the public regarding the conduct of our students out with school. These were generally about the thoughtlessness of dropping litter, the use of foul or abusive language and walking on the road with no regard to oncoming traffic. We seek your continued support and encouragement to ensure that your child upholds the school values around the local community at all times.

### **Health and Safety – dropping off and collecting students**

Despite repeated reasonable requests, we continue to witness regular incidents which endanger the wellbeing of others as parents use the main car park as a drop off point for their children at the start and end of each school day. Once again, I respectfully request that parents are considerate in this matter and use the turning circle adjacent to the school from where it is safe to walk to the school. Of course, this does not apply to parents dropping off youngsters with limited mobility or those who are required to carry unusually heavy equipment eg. a large musical instrument.

In addition, I have previously written to parents to request that students are collected from evening events or school trips in a timely fashion. Although there was considerable improvement last session, some evening events and trips still required a member of staff to wait with a young person for a period of time after the conclusion of the event for parents to collect their child. It is essential that **all young people are collected no more than ten minutes after the conclusion of an event or return of a trip.**

## **Foodbank**

Many of our families and indeed the school itself is a beneficiary of the Moray Foodbank. The Parent Council are working on a poverty proof policy and as such we limit the amount of fundraising that we do as a school community to avoid pressurising already stretched resources. One of our nominated charities is the foodbank and I would urge all parents who are in the position to donate to consider doing so on a monthly, termly or even annual basis. There is a basket outside the main office which is collected every Tuesday therefore this would be the best day to bring in non-perishable items.

## **Moray Schoolbank**

A collection point for the Moray Schoolbank has recently been installed at the entrance to the Milne's Learning Centre. Donations of clean, good condition, used school clothing are accepted along with any new items.

## **Free School Meals**

It is important that this entitlement is used where necessary. We have added a section on our website with frequently asked questions about free school meals and invite parents to call the office and speak to their child's guidance teacher or any member of the Senior Leadership Team concerning this matter.

## **Schools for the Future**

Next week, a team from Moray Council's Education department comprising of central officers and senior leaders from other schools will visit as part of the council's strategy to ensure that education is sustainable in our local community. We are looking forward to this visit on Monday 2 and Tuesday 3 September to showcase all the improvements that the school has made in recent years and to benefit from essential and worthwhile feedback from this external scrutiny exercise. A sample of pupils, parents and staff will be selected for focus groups and all parents are invited to meet with any member of the team on request at the school office.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all the school community a good term and thank all parents for their ongoing support. Should there be any concerns then please let us know about them as soon as possible by contacting the appropriate guidance teacher in the first instance or by telephoning, e-mailing or writing to the school. I look forward to seeing parents at some of the forthcoming events.

Yours sincerely



Trish Cameron  
Head Teacher

## **Key dates for the diary:**

Thursday 12 September – Tempest Photographers – Individual and family photographs

Monday 16 September – Inservice Day – School closed to pupils

Tuesday 17 September – Inservice Day – School closed to pupils

Monday 23 September – New S1 Open Evening

Friday 11 October – End of Term

Monday 28 October – Start of Term

**DISCLAIMER: This letter and any attachments are solely intended for parents of Milne's High School students. This must not be copied or re-distributed in any way.**