27 April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

**Head Teacher Update: Online Learning and progression**

As you know traditionally school changes timetable in the summer term following the SQA Examinations. Now the exams have been cancelled we are aware that many young people need school work to help them structure their time and focus on the future. Therefore, we are confirming today that we will go ahead with changes of courses on 11 May 2020 as follows:

**Current S4 and S5 Pupils who are returning to school**

All pupils currently in S4 – 6 will have no new work posted on line for them until **Monday 11 May 2020**. At this point young people will have access to Google Classrooms for their new courses. We are hopeful that by having this short break and a proper start to their new courses that young people will see a purpose to re-engaging with learning. We would ask for your support in ensuring that they do so. We hope that by the end of next week we will be in the position to share with young people confirmation by email about their course choices and the classrooms they have been allocated to. Thereafter they will be added to Google Classrooms by teachers. As previously explained to young people and parents/carers not all first choices can be guaranteed so young people will be contacted about their reserve choices individually if necessary.

This break in providing online work for pupils currently in S4- 6 will also give teachers time to prepare classrooms and work for their new classes; necessary as they adapt resources previously used in school for the on-line environment.

**Young people leaving school**

Those who plan to leave school on 31 May 2020 will already have discussed this option and will continue to have access to their Guidance Teacher and support staff until we return to school. There are a number of things we can do to support their transition to life beyond school. All young people leaving school will also continue to have access to their main Year Group Google Classroom. There are resources/courses that we can make available to them so that they can continue preparing for their next steps beyond school.

**Current S6 pupils**

I am aware of the acute disappointment felt by our S6 pupils who have missed out on their School Ball, their Leavers’ Lunch and the Awards Ceremony. We will continue to support them and consider alternative ways to mark their final year. Planning has begun for an S6 yearbook.

**Current S3 Pupils**

Pupils currently in S3 will be able to start their new National Courses on 11 May 2020. They will continue to have work posted online as they would in school up to that point. We understand from your feedback that many are focusing on subjects that they hope to be studying next year. We hope that by the end of next week we will be in the position to share with young people confirmation by email about their course choices and the classrooms they have been allocated to. Thereafter they will be added to Google Classrooms by teachers. As previously explained to young people and parents/carers not all first choices can be guaranteed so young people will be contacted about their reserve choices individually if necessary.

**Current S2**

Young people have made choices as they begin to narrow their curriculum in preparation for starting National Courses in S4. They will transition to these classes and courses on 25 May 2020. They may continue to have the same teacher in some cases – particularly in English and Mathematics. We hope that by Friday 22 May we will be in the position to share with young people confirmation by email about their course choices and the classrooms they have been allocated to. Thereafter they will be added to Google Classrooms by teachers. As previously explained to young people and parents/carers not all first choices can be guaranteed so young people will be contacted about their reserve choices individually if necessary.

**Current S1**

Young people currently in S1 would have had a minimal change as they progressed form S1 into S2 if we were in school. Therefore, they will remain in their current classes until further notice. There may be some adjustments to their subjects to take account of changes that would normally happen. For example, young people may be able to get a taste of Drama.

**Online Learning**

Thank you to those of you who have managed to complete the online survey to give us feedback on how the online learning is going. If you have not already done so, please complete this – it will help us make improvements in our provision and also offer you support. We will continue to monitor the use of Google Classroom by pupils and contact home if there are concerns – some pupils have not yet accessed it. In the meantime, if you are struggling because your child does not have access to a device please contact your child’s guidance teacher or the school email address at the top of this letter and we can help with this.

Aberdeen City Council has produced a number of resources to support on-line learning. Including this booklet which is also linked in the post on our website containing this letter. <https://docs.google.com/document/d/13tlw6EYfFdA3CjtBbG2m7cX4_JNj6wMGIul89Is0NhY/edit>

This outlines the way that our digital platform can be used safely by teachers and pupils to access on line learning. Teachers are continuing to learn and adapt the learning activities they post for young people. Some are making more use of Google Meet and others are posting pre-recorded videos explaining key points. However, we appreciate that this is also a steep learning curve for you as parents/carers. We are looking at the ways we can support you whilst remembering that most of you are not teachers and have other caring responsibilities, key worker responsibilities or your own work to do from home. For example, we are recommending to teachers that they post work once per week and use the assignment function in Google Classroom so that parents through Google Guardian are notified of work to be completed and due dates. This will continue to be monitored.

We will continue to do our best to support the wellbeing and learning of our young people and I will continue to post updates each week.

With kindest regards



Daphne McWilliam

Head Teacher