



BRIDGE OF DON ACADEMY

Be Caring Be Honest Be Respectful Be Your Best

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Head Teacher: Daphne McWilliam



10 June 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Head Teacher's Update – 10 June 2022

I write to update you on the following:

- Calendar Dates
- Change of Timetable
- The Cost of the School Day
- Uniform S1 – S4
- Senior School Uniform
- Parent Council
- Support for Families
- Take a Break
- CFINE Food Bank Collection
- Pathway Planning – Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Opportunities
- Contact with School

Calendar Dates

Last Day of Term:

Friday 1 July 2022

In-Service Day

Monday 22 August 2022

First Day of Term

Tuesday 23 August 2022

Change of Timetable

Week one is now complete, and any updates or changes required for individual young people's timetables have been made.

We have an approach to timetabling which is time consuming but worthwhile. We take all the choices young people make in the different subjects and create a brand-new bespoke timetable each year based on those choices. Young people's choices based on their chosen pathways through and beyond school drive the timetable and so their curriculum. This year 100% of young people moving from S2 – S3 got their first choices and 97.1% of young people moving into S4 to S6 got their first choices.

We do our best but sometimes because of limits on class sizes or staffing we are not able to meet 100% of the choices young people make.

The Cost of the School Day

As you know we want to make sure that all young people who attend Bridge of Don Academy feel included in all aspects of school life. Cost should not be a barrier to participation in every aspect of school life for any young person or prevent them from having the same educational and social chances as their peers.

“Education is free but a lot of school things are not.” (Member of the Children’s Parliament, age 11)¹

As we begin preparations for next session, I can confirm that the following is all in place to ensure that school things have no cost attached at Bridge of Don Academy.

- No charge will be made for any aspect of a course or programme of work a young person is following. This includes no charges being made for materials, consumables, or equipment in practical subjects.
- Young people who are entitled to free school meals can access food items which can be eaten outside of school – so young people can socialise with friends.
- Young people who bring packed lunches can eat these alongside their friends in the canteen – no separate areas.
- Uniform has been planned to cost as little as possible whilst keeping young people safe and ensuring that families are not pressurised into buying expensive fashion items for wearing to school.
- Heads of House will have sensitive discussions with families they know well to offer help which will be given sensitively, with a minimum of fuss and in complete confidence.
- Learning boxes including a variety of stationery items are in all teaching areas and young people can access these items freely.
- All trips associated with the curriculum to support learning will be free of charge for all young people.
- We no longer ask young people to bring a £1 on non-uniform days: we are looking at other ways we can raise funds for the school fund.
- Activities Week (S1 – S3) is planned to offer a range of trips and activities some of which are free of any cost.
- As with uniform items our Heads of House contact families to discuss sensitively the ways we can support them so their children can participate fully
- All S1 pupils experience the same rolling programme of Activities to ensure equity.
- For pupils in S2 – S3 a range of activities will be on offer from those which cost nothing to residential trips which have a higher cost.
- The grants and financial support available to families are highlighted.
- Payment plans are available for residential trips and as much notice as possible is given so families can spread the cost.
- All young people in Scotland have access to free bus transport.

¹ <https://cpag.org.uk/scotland/CoSD/toolkit>

Plans for the future:

- To use the toolkit linked below² to support discussions with staff and pupils about what else we could do to ensure that cost is not a barrier to participation in school life.
- To invite the views of parents and carers on what else we can do: I will issue a questionnaire at the beginning of the new term.
- To ensure young people are given an opportunity to learn about poverty and its impact on families.

Uniform S1 – S4

The details of school uniform are on the school website [here](#). As I have previously intimated the uniform is planned to keep costs as low as possible for families. All items except the school tie can be purchased from shops and outlets of a family's choice.

We understand that washing machines break down and that young people have growth spurts and need new trousers or shoes which puts financial pressure on families. If your child(ren) cannot attend in uniform for a valid reason, please just let the school know. We also understand that fuel costs and unforeseen expenses can put extra pressure on families who may just need help in the short term. Please let us help where we can – contact your child's Head of House directly or just email the school and we will do what we can to support the purchase of appropriate uniform items.

Senior School Uniform

Pupils who have been accepted for return to school in S5 and S6 are expected to wear Senior School uniform, which comprises school blazer, white/black shirt, red senior tie, black trousers/skirt and black shoes.

Our blazers and tie are available from Abstitch in the centre of town. Their address is: 35 Ann St, Aberdeen, AB25 3LH, telephone number 01224 639152. Their opening hours are Monday to Friday from 9am until 4pm.

Blazers are measured to fit and are easily kept. They are light and practical and can be washed at home.

² <https://cpag.org.uk/scotland/CoSD/toolkit>

We have been informed that a large number of our seniors have been into Abstitch over the study leave but more stock is due in on Monday.

Prices as of 27 May are:

School tie: £7.50

Blazer: £33 to £39, depending on size



Parent Council

The last meeting of the PC for this session took place on Tuesday 7 June 2022 remotely. Members of the PC will also be attending the Primary 7 Parents' evening which takes place on Tuesday 21 June 2022 to encourage new members to join the PC and the 100Club.

The group is made up of parents/carers of children and young people attending school in almost all year groups who are interested in finding out more about how education works but also keen to support the school.

The next meeting of the Parent Council will be in person in school on Tuesday 30 August 2022 at 19.00.

Support for Families

We are all affected by the rise in the cost of living including fuel costs. I have posted on the school website a Finance Postcard detailing how families can access free help and support to ensure they are getting all the benefits and financial support they are entitled to. Use this [link](#) to access this or contact your child(ren)'s Head of House for support in accessing this.

Take a Break



The Scottish Government funded [Take a Break Scotland](#) administered by Family Fund, opened for applications on Tuesday 3rd May 2022 and will remain open until 5:00pm on Monday 20th June 2022. This fund supports families of children with disabilities.

CFINE Food Bank Collection

The final collection of the year will be on **Monday 27 June 2022**. Times are challenging for many of our families now because of rising fuel costs and the cost of living so I am aware some of you may not feel able to contribute. But because there

is also an increasing demand for the services of foodbanks for the same reasons it is important to give this chance to contribute to those who feel they can. This is for our own community here in Aberdeen and so whatever you can contribute will, I know, be appreciated by CFINE. As always, we will be collecting non-perishable food and essential items as detailed below. To find out more use this [link](#).

In addition, Miss Strachan has a collection tin in her room (G17) for small change that young people may wish to donate which we will then use to purchase items for the foodbank.

<i>Yes please</i>	<i>No thank you</i>
Tinned Food Cereals Pasta Condiments and spices Juices Toiletries Nappies	Fresh Food Frozen Items Refrigerated Items
	

Collection points are located throughout the school as follows:

- Admin block - Assembly Room
- Ground Floor - Home Economics classroom
- Ground Floor - G17 (Miss Strachan's room)
- First Floor - F12 (Miss Devlin's room)
- Top Floor - T3 (Mrs Lees' room)
- Staffroom

Pathway Planning – Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Opportunities

DYW opportunities are regularly available on Google Classroom and the school website for young people to see.

The opportunities available to our young people can be found [here](#).

Contact with School

When e-mailing please provide your child's name and registration class and a note of the nature of the concern so it can be forwarded appropriately.

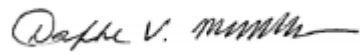
Pastoral Care

Braemar House: Miss Howard
 Crathes House: Mrs Napier
 Drum House: Mrs Walburn
 Fyvie House: Mrs Marshall

Year Heads

S1 and S2: Mr Haggarty
 S3 and S4: Mrs Cruickshank
 S5 and S6: Mr Jamieson

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Daphne V. Munn", followed by a horizontal flourish.

Mrs D McWilliam
Head Teacher