



BRIDGE OF DON ACADEMY

Be Caring Be Honest Be Respectful Be Your Best

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Head Teacher: Daphne McWilliam



5 February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Head Teacher's Update – Friday 5 February 2021

I write this week to update you on the following issues:

- Senior Phase Part Time Return To In-School Learning For Practical Work
- Reports
- Signing Up as a Google Guardian
- Daily Attendance
- School closed to all pupils 15, 16 and 17 February 2021
- A Day in the Life of a Tea Powered Teacher

Senior Phase (S4 – S6) Part Time Return to In-School Learning For Practical Work

You will have seen the letter sent on Thursday 4 February from Eleanor Sheppard, Chief Education Officer following the First Minister's announcement on Tuesday of this week. As you will know from this any return to school will not be confirmed until Tuesday 16 February. However, in the meantime we have been making initial plans to establish with teachers which pupils need to be in school to complete essential practical work for National Qualifications. You will understand that we are required to keep the numbers as low as possible. When the planning is completed you will be updated.

S3 Reports

These are currently being checked and then have to be printed and packaged for posting at the end of next week.

Senior Phase Reports

These are currently being written by teachers. They are based on work that young people have been doing in-school and whilst remote learning.

They will contain the following information for all courses:

- A Target Grade
- A Working Grade
- Effort, Behaviour and Homework

- A teacher comment on how to bridge the gap between the target and the working grade.

Please note the target grade is NOT a predicted of their final grade – it is what a young person should be working towards and is of course aspirational. Working Grades may be quite low because we have asked teachers to be honest in their assessment of the progress young people have made and the reasons for this. These judgements will be based on a range of evidence available to the teacher such as classwork, homework and assessments completed in school and at home.

We have also asked teachers to provide advice and information on what needs to be done to make or maintain progress towards the target grade.

Signing Up As A Google Guardian

All parents/carers have been invited to become a Google Guardian for their child(ren) using the contact details provided to the school last year.

A number of parents/carers have not yet accepted this invite, and you may be unaware of how your son/daughter is getting on with their online learning. There may be a number of reasons for this.

To become a Guardian please locate the email previously sent to you by searching for 'Google Guardian' in your email search bar. There you will find a link which will allow you to sign up and choose if you would like to receive daily/weekly email summaries of your child's progress. **Please ensure you are logged out of your son/daughter's Google Classroom account on the device you accept this invitation on.**

If you can't locate this email or the link has expired, please contact the school providing your email address and we will resend an invitation. It could be that the email address we have for you is out of date or not been recorded accurately.

If you have accepted an invite but are still not getting daily/weekly updates you may need to uninstall and then reinstall the Google App on your device.

More information about Google Guardians is available in the Google Guardian page on this website: <https://sites.google.com/ab-ed.org/boda-gsupport/home>

Daily Attendance Sign-in Form

We still have a significant number of pupils who fail to sign in each using the Daily Attendance sign-in. We are required to submit these figures to the local authority, who in turn report these to the Scottish Government.

Signing in every day is important for both the school and the pupil as we do not want a child's school record to show an artificially high number of absences. This could have a negative impact when we write references for future employers and further/higher education establishments.

The young person's Guidance Teacher will often follow up a pattern of absences to check on the young person and see if any support can be offered to help with their online learning.

The unique user login is recorded when the pupil completes the form. These allow us to identify the pupils who have signed in and subsequently generate a list of pupils who have yet to do so. An absence for the day is recorded for pupils who have not signed in and a Groupcall text message sent to parents for information.

Please encourage your child to complete the form as quickly as possible each day to ensure our records are as accurate as possible.

Half Term School closed to all pupils 15, 16 and 17 February 2021.

Monday 15 February is a holiday for all staff and pupils and Tuesday 16 and Wednesday 17 February are in-service days. School will be closed to all pupils on these days, including the children of key workers and vulnerable learners. There will be no Google Meets as teachers will be involved in professional learning on these days. Pupils can, of course, if they choose, use the time to catch up with any work but I would advise that they use the time to reduce their screen time and do activities which support their health and wellbeing – get outside for a walk, make some pancakes, play board games, do a jigsaw puzzle or chill out with a good book.

A Day In The Life Of A Teacher

Last week the parent council members suggested that hearing about life as a teacher in lockdown would be interesting for them and give them a different perspective. Miss McBoyle, teacher of Spanish and French responded with the following:

A Day In The Life Of A Tea Powered Teacher

Where there is tea there is hope.

7 am, get the housework all done.
Then I'm ready to face the screen
With a tea at my side.

At 7.30, the laptop is on,
What can go wrong?
There's tea at my side.

First peep at my emails. There can't be that many.
Thankfully, there's tea at my side.

What? How? But!
Oh me, oh my,
I think I need another tea at my side.

'When is the Meet?' 'What's my password?' 'I'm locked out'

I definitely need more tea at my side.

Live teaching at 9, I'd better get ready,
Tabs ready, camera on and smile!
Time for yet more tea at my side.

'Would somebody speak, please?'
Those words just escaped me!
Why don't I have a tea at my side?

'My mic doesn't work.' 'My camera is broken.' A sea of avatars face me.
Oh my. I need more tea at my side.

There's wailing and gnashing of teeth. F...f...f...frozen!!
I honestly need tea at my side.

Back to the emails 'What's the code?'
'What's my name?'
I can't remember without tea at my side.

Live teaching again? How did that come about? I need more tea at my side.

Screens and screens. It's all about the screens, be they split, shot or presented.
I just want a tea at my side.

Time to breathe. That was better.
Emails. What now?
Better get that tea at my side.

Time to mark, answer emails.
I've work to assign.
I'm off for a cup of tea at my side.

Live teaching again. 'You're on mute!'
'Use the chat!'
Thank goodness for tea at my side.

4 pm. How did that happen?
Time for a departmental meeting.
Yip, time for a cup of tea at my side.

It's 7 pm and I've run out of mugs.
Ping! What's my username?
Better get that tea at my side.

Contact with School

You can telephone or email the school to let us know of any concerns you have or to alert us to your child not being able to take part in on-line learning due to illness. Please note that the school office is staffed on a minimal basis by rota and that phone calls may not be answered as quickly as normal.

When emailing 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

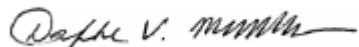
Crathes House	Mrs Napier
Drum House	Miss Smith/Miss Howard
Fyvie House	Mrs Marshall

Year Heads

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

I hope that you all continue to be well and, as always, please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further support.

Yours sincerely



Mrs D McWilliam
Head Teacher