



BRIDGE OF DON ACADEMY

Be Caring Be Honest Be Respectful Be Your Best

Braehead Way • Bridge of Don • Aberdeen • AB22 8RR

Tel 01224 707583

Web: www.bridgeofdon.aberdeen.sch.uk

E-mail: bridgeofdon@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Head Teacher: Daphne McWilliam



7 December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Head Teacher's Update – Monday 7 December 2020

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

- School Canteen
- SQA: Assessment Period in January
- Christmas Jumper Day
- S4 to S6 Chromebooks

School Canteen

Now the weather is much colder and wetter than it has been, more young people are making use of the school canteen at break and lunch. It goes without saying that we expect the same high standard of behaviour from young people in the canteen as we expect as they are moving around the school. They must observe social distancing as far as possible and not be gathering in large groups. They must remain seated whilst eating and then when finished go outside to get some fresh air – weather permitting. We would appreciate your support in reinforcing this message at home to ensure the wellbeing of all at this challenging time.

No pupils should be off school grounds at morning break and pupils in S1 must remain on school grounds for break and lunch. A member of the senior leadership team and volunteer staff are on duty at break and lunch in the canteen.

SQA Assessment Period

We are still waiting for the SQA to confirm the submission date for National 5 grades to be submitted by schools. We anticipate this will be in May. We are still expecting there to be Higher and Advanced Higher exams, however as you know a survey of parents across Scotland has been undertaken by the National Parent Forum of Scotland to gather views on the impact of periods of self-isolation on the learning and progress of young people preparing for these exams.

Our approach to assessment has been planned to:

- ensure that robust evidence-based judgements are made on pupil progress and attainment
- deliver a fair assessment of each pupil's attainment and to ensure that no pupil is disadvantaged

- evidence pupils' progress throughout each national qualification course
- capture pupils' attainment which reflects breadth and depth of knowledge
- provide assessment evidence which stands up to external scrutiny by the SQA

Ongoing assessment will take place in subject classes throughout the session. Evidence will be generated by:

1. **Timed class assessments** which consolidate pupils' knowledge and understanding of a particular topic/unit and/or which assess progress in skills over time.
2. **Assessments** which replicate, as far as possible, "the standard, duration, format and security of SQA question papers." **SQA Guidance on Gathering Key Evidence.** These assessments will reflect the breadth and depth of the course and allow pupils the opportunity to apply their skills, knowledge and understanding in an **unseen** situation. The first of these assessments will take place as follows: some assessments will take place in **Assessment Weeks** as indicated below. There will be no study leave. Teachers will not issue homework during these weeks.

| ASSESSMENTS | DATES |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| National 5/Higher/Advanced Higher | Monday 11 January to Friday 29 January, inclusive |

There will be a further assessment period for National 5 Higher and Advanced Higher which will be planned when we have further information from the SQA.

These assessments will be conducted during class time, following SQA examination procedures. For example: pupils will not be allowed mobile phones in the classroom while undertaking an assessment. Again, there will be no study leave.

Christmas Jumper Day Friday 11 December 2020

Make the World Better with a Sweater



Young people can wear – as part of their school uniform – a Christmas jumper. Please note this is NOT a dress-as-you-please day, so if young people choose not to wear a Christmas jumper we will expect them in school uniform. The link to the Save the Children website is below and the suggested donation is £2. We cannot collect in cash but suggest that families who wish to make a donation to this worthwhile cause do so through the link below.

<https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/christmas-jumper-day>

Christmas Lunch

Christmas lunch will be served in the school canteen on Tuesday 15 December.

S4 to S6 Chromebooks

Distribution of Chromebooks to all senior pupils in S4 to S6 continues. When parents/carers have accessed the link in the contact letter the Terms and Conditions will be detailed, which I will not repeat here. However, it is worth pointing out the following:

- The Chromebook should be brought back and forth to school each day so it can be used for learning in class. A suitable protective bag should be used for protection.
- The device should be brought into school with a full charge each day as we do not have spare chargers and sockets to charge all the devices in school.
- Please report any damage. We understand that accidents happen and are keen that young people have a working device.
- If technical help is required, this should be done through school.
- Devices are monitored and can be locked remotely.

The sooner the Terms and Conditions form is completed, the sooner device can be issued and young people have access to a fantastic resource to support their learning.

CFINE (Community Food Initiative North East)

Please keep the donations coming for this very worthwhile local cause. Collection points are located on each floor and at the school office and assembly room. Donations of tinned and dried foods and other non-perishable items are most needed.



Clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ypgbo19ly9k>

Weather Arrangements: A Reminder

Our staff were reminded last week about the procedures regarding school closure or late starts due to the severe weather. It is extremely rare for the school to be closed, but in the event of severe weather during the night or in the early hours of the morning, the following options are all possible:

- open school one hour later than normal for all pupils and staff;
- open school one hour later than normal for non-bus pupils and staff;
- open school for non-bus pupils and staff;
- close school to all pupils, open to staff;
- close school to all pupils and staff.

30% of the teaching staff live in outlying areas and, despite leaving home earlier when there's bad weather, can still be held up due to increased traffic or unsafe road

conditions. If we do not have enough staff available to cover classes, the opening may be delayed by one hour to give colleagues the chance to arrive safely to school.

The decision to cancel buses is ultimately down to the transport companies who will assess the risk to pupils and drivers.

In the event that the school is closed or opens later than normal, we will notify parents via:

- The School Information Line (0870 054 1999, PIN code 011020)
- Aberdeen City Council's School Closures website (<https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/school-closures>)
- School website
- Groupcall

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daphne V. McWilliam'.

Mrs D McWilliam
Head Teacher