



BRIDGE OF DON ACADEMY

Be Caring Be Honest Be Respectful Be Your Best

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Head Teacher: Daphne McWilliam



7 January 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Head Teacher's Update – 7 January 2022

I write to update you on the following:

- Testing and Self-isolation
- Mitigations
- Prelim Examinations
- SQA 'Your Exams' Booklet
- SQA 'Your National Qualifications 2021-2022'
- Learner Booklets
- North East Scotland College
- Free Bus Travel for Under 22s
- Access to Technology and Chromebooks
- Pathway Planning – Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Opportunities
- Severe Weather
- Contact with School

I am delighted that almost all staff and pupils have been able to return to school. I hope that the holidays were a time of rest and relaxation for you and your families. However, I am aware that it will have been a challenging time for some who had to deal with the impact on family time of positive test results and difficult decisions which had to be made.

We have now updated our school risk assessment in line with Scottish Government Guidance and this can be viewed on the school website. I have summarised below the mitigations in place to ensure that school is as safe as it can be.

I have also summarised the latest advice on Testing and self-isolation below.

Testing and Self-isolation

As you will be aware some rules have changed but **anyone with symptoms of Covid-19 must still book a PCR test and self-isolate until the results are known and then follow public health advice about how long to continue isolation.** In most cases this advice will be that, if they take an LFD test on day 6 and it is negative and another test 24 hours later on day 7 and it is negative, and providing they do not have a fever, they can leave isolation after the negative day 7 test. If

they have a positive LFD test on day 6 or 7, they must self-isolate for the full 10 days.

Symptoms are defined by the [NHS](#) as:

- a high temperature
- new, continuous cough
- change in sense of taste and smell.

Young people and school staff are being encouraged to continue with twice-a-week LFD testing.

If an LFD test is positive and the young person has symptoms, they should also book a PCR test and self-isolate until results are known and advice received about end date of isolation. If the PCR test is positive they will have to isolate for at least 7 days. If they take an LFD test on day 6 and it is negative and another test 24 hours later on day 7 and it is negative, and providing they do not have a fever, they can leave isolation after the negative day 7 test. If they have a positive LFD test on day 6 or 7, they must self-isolate for the full 10 days.

If your child has **a positive LFD test but does not display any of the COVID-19 symptoms** they must self-isolate immediately for 10 days but do not need to book a PCR test to confirm the diagnosis. As above, if they take an LFD test on day 6 and it is negative and another test on day 7 and it is negative, and providing they do not have a fever, they can leave isolation after the negative day 7 test. If they have a positive LFD test on day 6 or 7, they must self-isolate for the full 10 days

Household/close contacts

Children under the age of 18 and 4 months and adults who are fully vaccinated (2 doses and booster at least 14 days previously) who are identified as close contacts or live with someone who has tested positive can now take 7 daily LFD tests and report the results instead of self-isolating.

Provided tests are taken daily, they are all negative, and your child is not displaying any symptoms, they can continue to attend school. If during this time they have a positive LFD test or begin to show symptoms they should not attend school and should follow the advice above. If they are not taking the daily tests, they must self-isolate for 10 days. They do not need to take a PCR test.

Parents and carers will continue to get a letter notifying them if there has been a positive case in their child's year group. The letter offers advice on symptoms to watch out for and anything you need to do.

Please continue to keep us informed about positive test results and to follow all public health advice. We also appreciate you encouraging and supporting your child(ren) to follow the mitigations in place in school: this includes **providing them with a face covering for each day**.

Further Information on the school website [here](#) including the procedure if a young person becomes ill during the school day which remains the same and how to access LFD test kits through the school office.

Mitigations

Our latest risk assessment can be accessed on the school website using this [link](#). In line with Scottish Government advice, we have once again reviewed our risk assessment and are maintaining the following mitigations:

- Separate entrances for each year group which will reduce congestion at the beginning of the day, after break and after lunch. Any pupil arriving late after their allocated door has closed should use the main school entrance.
- Hand sanitising: pupils will be required to sanitise their hands on entry to school and at the beginning and end of each class.
- All pupils and staff (unless exempt) will wear a face covering throughout the school day and on school transport. This must cover mouth and nose.
- Enhanced cleaning: pupils, following instructions of teachers, will clean their desk at the beginning and end of each lesson.
- Enhanced cleaning in place for multiple touch points throughout the school day.
- The one-way system on the first floor will be maintained.
- Staff will maintain 2m distance from one another and where possible and practical from pupils.

Following careful consideration and discussion we have decided not to revert to staggered breaks and lunches for pupils. This reduces the number of teachers we have available to cover the classes of absent teachers. In addition, it would impact on our ability to provide extra-curricular activities at lunch times which have had such a positive impact on our young people's wellbeing.

Prelim Examinations

All S4 to S6 pupils now have copies of the prelim exam timetable which was posted in their year group Google Classrooms before the Christmas break. Study Leave will be given from Monday 17 January until Friday 28 January inclusive. Rooms and seat numbers will be issued via Google Classroom next week, along with important information on exam conduct. Pupils attending school for exams or revision sessions with teachers must wear school uniform.

None of our pupils have had the chance to experience an exam under SQA rules and conditions, other than pupils in S6 who would have had prelim exams in January 2020. The prelim exam diet for 2022 has been created to provide pupils with the opportunity to sit exams under the same conditions they will face in April/May in the hope that the element of familiarity will help them perform to the best of their ability. The prelim diet also allows us to gather evidence for the purpose of submitting an

estimated grade to the SQA using assessments which can run for longer than the time available during the normal school day.

To meet the SQA's exam requirements, pupils will be placed under the same exam conditions which will be imposed for the main exam diet later in the year. The information below is taken from the SQA's *Your Exams* booklet which is published each year and will be communicated to pupils next week, prior to study leave. I would urge you to discuss these with your child, especially the list of items which are prohibited by the SQA from being taken into the exam room.

Note that the SQA's list of prohibited items (see below) includes mobile phones and smart watches, even if these are switched off and out of sight. These items must be left at home, stored in a school locker, or left for safe keeping in an envelope at the school office. Failure to do so will result in the pupil being awarded no marks for the paper. Unfortunately, this has happened in the past. If a pupil realises that they have an item in their possession in the exam room, regardless of whether it's switched off or out of sight, they should hand it over to the exam invigilator before the start of the exam.

SQA 'Your Exams' Booklet

A copy of the SQA's *Your Exams* booklet which was published in February ahead of the cancelled exams for 2020 is available to view along with this letter on the school website. A new copy is expected to be published for this year's 2022 diet.

Arriving for your exam

You should be outside the exam room at least 10 minutes before the exam is due to start. If you are late, you must report to the teacher or lecturer in charge of SQA exams on the day. They will let you know if you can sit the exam.

Invigilators

The people who supervise exams are called 'invigilators'. Their job is to make sure your exams take place according to the rules and that the rules are applied fairly. You must listen to and follow any instructions the invigilators give you. If anything unexpected happens to you during an exam, such as feeling unwell, you should tell the invigilator immediately.

Writing your answers

You must use a pen with black or blue ink. Do not use gel pens as these can fade. It is important that the markers can read your writing. They will do their best to read your work, but they might not be able to award marks if your writing is difficult to read. When writing on unlined pages, try to leave a space of about 1 cm between lines. In some subjects, poor spelling and punctuation could also result in marks not being awarded. If you have any concerns about this, or about your handwriting, speak to your teacher or lecturer. Remember to cross out any rough work, or any unwanted answers if you make more than one attempt at a question.

Prohibited items

Prohibited items are things that you must not have with you at your allocated seat or desk in the exam room unless they have been approved by the SQA as part of an assessment arrangement for the exam you are sitting. Prohibited items include the following:



Mobile phones



Electronic devices such as iPods, tablets, smartwatches or any other device that stores information or can connect to the internet



Extra information - books, notes, sketches or paper, and anything written on your clothes or body



Pencil cases or calculator cases



Calculators, except for exam papers where calculators are allowed



Dictionaries, except for exam papers where dictionaries are allowed

Leaving the exam room

If you finish early or have done as much of the exam as you can, and you want to leave the exam room, raise your hand and ask the invigilator for permission to leave. If the exam is longer than one hour, the invigilator may allow you to leave after 30 minutes. If the exam is less than one hour, you must stay in the exam room until the end of the exam. Before you leave, you must give the invigilator all your exam papers, including any answer booklets, extra sheets, question papers and data booklets. You could lose all marks for the paper concerned if you don't give your exam papers to the invigilator before leaving the exam room.

Desks

In most schools and colleges, you will be given a desk or seat number for each exam. Make sure you know this number before each exam.

Fairness

Everyone should have a fair chance to do their best during exams. Cheating and causing a disturbance during an exam are unfair to other candidates. Examples of cheating and unfair behaviour (candidate malpractice) include the following:

- Having prohibited items with you at your seat in the exam room
- Pretending to be someone else or getting someone else to take an exam for you
- Disruptive behaviour in the exam room
- Using rude, abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or images
- Copying from another person
- Collusion – working with other candidates on an individual task that must be your own work
- Plagiarism – failing to reference sources properly or presenting someone else's work as your own

Any cheating or unfair behaviour can have serious consequences for your results and your future. This could include losing marks, getting a lower grade or having your qualification cancelled. Your school or college can explain more about this

SQA 'Your National Qualifications 2021-2022'

Pupils should now have been issued with a copy of the SQA's document *Your National Qualifications 2021-2022*, which can be viewed/downloaded at this address. https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/Your-NQ-2021-22.pdf

This has been discussed during PSE with particular attention drawn to the sections on *Plagiarism*, *Collusion* and *Language & Writing*. We would encourage you to read the document and reinforce the points made by the SQA.

Learner Booklets

Please find below the link to the Learner Booklets for Nationals 4 and 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. These booklets contain useful information for each subject giving details of what learning young people should be revisiting as well as other useful information such as websites or resources they can access. This is a great resource provided by class teachers to enable you, parents/carers, to support your young person at home in preparation for their assessments and estimate exams.

If anyone requires a hard copy of this document pupils should speak to their Guidance teacher.

Click this link to access the [Learner Booklets](#) from the school website.

North East Scotland College

The following is for the parents and carers of young people who attend North East Scotland College (NESCOL) for one or more of their courses.

College buildings will be closed from 5 pm on Friday 17 December 2021. Students were due to return to blended learning on Monday 10 January 2022, however, this is now not possible. However, we will offer all timetabled online classes during the week commencing Monday 10 January 2022, but if this is not possible, then work will be set and issued to pupils via Blackboard and e-mail.

The plan is to resume blended learning on Monday 17 January 2022, with a return to the on-campus activity that has been safely and successfully delivered during the session to date. This will be reviewed by the Leadership Team of the College on 6 January 2022, in line with the latest Scottish Government guidance and any change will be communicated through the usual channels.

The Supported Learning groups will be postponed until Thursday 20 and Friday 21 Jan 2022, or until further notice.

Free Bus Travel for Under 22s

Find out more about this on the school website [here](#).

Access to Technology and Chromebooks

S4 – S6

All young people should now have their allocated Chromebook to allow them to work remotely if they are absent from school for any reason. S5 and S6 will have their device from last year and all S4 devices have now been distributed.

S1

Devices are being distributed now and this should be complete by the end of this term. If your child is currently absent and needs a device to work from home, please contact the school office and we will try to issue their allocated device to you to support this. If not, they will be issued after the holidays.

All school devices should be transported to and from school each day in a suitable bag or carrier and be fully charged so they can be used in lessons.

S2 and S3

The long-term strategy is that all young people will be given their own device to use throughout their time in school. We are waiting to hear how this will be funded by Scottish Government. In the meantime, we need to know about the situation of our pupils in S2 and S3 if they had to work from home. A mobile phone would not be considered a suitable device to work on from home because the screen is too small. However, some may have access to their own or a family laptop/chrome book. If your child has no access to such a device, we ask that you let us know by

completing the Google Form [here](#). This information will help us to plan how we could support your child(ren).

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. This week the following have been posted:

- Virgin Media Virtual Event
- Experian Virtual Event

Lots more DYW opportunities can be found [here](#).

Founders4Schools January 2022 sessions

Founders4Schools is running a series of four 'subject choice for careers' sessions on Tuesday, 18 January, covering Maths, Humanities, STEAM and Business. More information and booking [here](#).

AAB's 2022 Apprenticeship Programme

AAB's 2022 Apprenticeship Programme is now open for applications, with opportunities across the organisation's Audit, Business Advisory and Payroll teams. Closing date is 1 March 2022, with training beginning in the summer. More info and applications [here](#).

Severe Weather

We have in place policies to ensure learning can continue when we have periods of bad weather.

All classwork and homework are posted on Google Classroom as assignments so parents/carers can see this using Google Guardian. If you need more help with the Google suite of resources, you will find the Google Support site under the *Parents* menu on the front page of the school website. You can also access it using this [link](#).

In severe weather conditions, emergency closure or other emergency circumstances, parents and pupils can receive up-to-date information via:

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

If we have an emergency during the school day and must send young people home early, we will contact parents/carers using Groupcall. Before we send young people home, we ask teachers to check that they have been able to contact home and will

be able to get into the house. If any young person has not been able to do this, we ask them to wait in school until we or they have made contact.

We have separate arrangements for our more vulnerable learners who travel to school by taxi whereby one of our support team will telephone parent/carer directly.

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

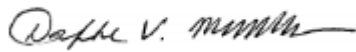
Braemar House: Miss Howard
Crathes House: Mrs Napier
Drum House: Miss Smith
Fyvie House: Mrs Marshall

Year Heads

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

I know that times continue to be challenging for many of you and would encourage you to contact us here at school if you think we can help. I wish you all well in 2022.

Yours sincerely



Mrs D McWilliam
Head Teacher