



BRIDGE OF DON ACADEMY

Be Caring Be Honest Be Respectful Be Your Best

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Head Teacher: Daphne McWilliam



8 January 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Head Teacher's Update – Friday 8 January 2021

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

- Arrangements for re-opening of School in January 2021: Scottish Government Guidance.
- Senior Phase (S4 – S6) Assessment and Reporting
- Online Learning from 11 January 2021
- Online Learning – NESCoI Courses S4 – S6
- Course Choice Procedures 2021
- Contact with school

I sincerely hope that all of you had a healthy and peaceful break from school in the last three weeks. Given the complete change in circumstances from the end of last term my intention is to continue with a weekly update for families.

Arrangements for re-opening schools in January 2021: Scottish Government Guidance.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-school-re-opening-arrangements-for-january-2021/pages/schools-opening-timeline/>

All young people have been on an extended holiday until Friday 8 January. The only exceptions are the children of key workers and vulnerable learners who have been allocated a place in school for childcare purposes.

Senior Phase Assessment S4 – S6

We had planned a period of assessment for pupils in S4 – S6 undertaking their National Qualifications (National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Courses) from 11-29 January 2021. This will not now be possible and given the uncertainty about how long this period of school closure will last, we cannot re-schedule this. We hope that there will be more information coming from the Scottish Government and the Scottish Qualifications Authority which will help us to make decisions over the course of the next 2 to 3 weeks so that we can plan how we gather, mark, check and moderate the evidence of young people's attainment in their courses.

In the meantime, it is important that we continue to gather evidence of their attainment in their courses as well as continue with new content and skills that have

still to be covered. This will depend on the nature of the course – all of which are different in terms of the requirements made by the SQA.

Online Learning: All Years

From Monday 11 January 2021 we will be returning to online learning from home for all young people except those who are vulnerable learners or the children of key workers, who will be accessing online learning in the school building.

The platform used for online learning in all Aberdeen City Schools is the Google Suite for Education: more specifically Google Classroom. All young people have the following:

- A Google e-mail address
- A Google Classroom code for each of their classes

In addition, there is a general Google Classroom for each year group from S1 – S6 through which Year Heads and/or Heads of House will communicate with young people.

Pupil work for each subject will be posted on each Google Classroom that pupils belong to so they will be able to follow their curriculum as long as they log into Classroom for work and also check their emails for individual communications from teachers.

Parents/carers will receive information about assignments their children are being asked to do if they are signed up as Google Guardians: this has been arranged by school staff using email addresses already provided by parents/carers. Please note that sometimes the work provided by teachers is not posted as an *assignment* with a deadline but rather as a resource and task which means parents/carers will not be notified of this. We have asked teachers, where possible, to post work as assignment but this cannot always happen because of the nature of the work being provided.

Young people will receive notification of all work that has been posted for them as long as they have not switched off the notifications and are checking their school Google email account. I will post further advice for pupils and parents/carers on the school website.

I know that it can be difficult for families: supporting your children with on-line learning whilst you are working or dealing with other caring responsibilities and this can result in challenging circumstances. In these situations mental health and wellbeing as well as staying safe are a priority. We have set up a system to monitor pupil engagement with their online learning. In the first instance teachers will try to contact pupils who are not handing in work or completing tasks. This will be followed up by Principal Teachers who will contact parents/carers to inform you; this may be by phone or email.

Careers Meetings

Our Careers Advisors, Gillian Shand and Ruth Bell, have held a number of one-to-one careers meetings with S3 to S6 pupils online throughout this session and these will continue to be arranged for pupils to take part in from home.

The dates and times for the Google Meets will be sent by Gillian or Ruth to pupils' school e-mail addresses, which should be checked at least once a day. In order to join the meeting, pupils simply need to log into Google and then navigate to the web page <https://meet.google.com>, where the meeting will be shown on the front page. Alternatively, they can find and click the link in the e-mail itself, their Google Calendar, or use the Google Meet app.

If for any reason pupils are unable to meet, or have missed their appointment, they must contact Gillian and Ruth to free up the time for someone else, if possible, and arrange another appointment.

Online Learning – NESCol Courses S4-6

Please be advised that further to recent national changes in respect of COVID restrictions, pupils who have been attending NESCol for Face to Face lessons should NOT attend College classes until at least 8 February. It is NESCol's intention to move all School Links pupils to online learning for the duration of school closures. Further information to follow, but in the meantime, pupils should re-familiarise themselves with how to access the College online learning platform, Blackboard. All lessons will continue online and so it is important pupils check for work or announcements posted by NESCol.

Pupils can access the link below with instructions on how they can access Blackboard: <https://media.nescol.ac.uk/Play/7724> or alternatively, they will find instructions on their Google Classroom.

Course Choice Procedures

Young people currently in S2 – S5 are due to begin making choices about what they will study next session 2021 – 2022. We are planning how this can be done remotely and have a number of meetings scheduled to discuss this with staff.

Our Careers Advisors are happy to speak to parents as well as pupils to discuss anything in relation to your child's course choice or career pathways. They are available every Tuesday from 2.30pm to 4.30pm via the following numbers: Gillian Shand 01224 024809; Ruth Bell 01224 024832.

The following resource from 'My World of Work' may also prove useful to parents: <https://cutt.ly/ejjg33l>

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 only 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 appropriately forwarded.

Pastoral Care

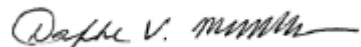
Crathes House	Mrs Napier
Drum House	Miss Smith/Miss Howard
Fyvie House	Mrs Marshall

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