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Ref: LM/fm

22 January 2021

Dear Parent/ Carer

### **Scottish Government Update**

You may be aware that the Scottish Government Update advised that the current measures that have been put in place have been reviewed and will continue until at least the middle of February. These arrangements will be reviewed again on 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

We will continue to deliver and develop our at home learning provision and monitor engagement and progress.

### **Tracking and Monitoring Processes**

I hope your young person is keeping well and managing to keep on track with their studies. I have been most impressed with the levels of engagement of our young people both at the daily check-ins and with their class teachers.

We all want to ensure that your young person is getting the best out of their learning. We have set-up monitoring processes to help us keep you in the loop with what is happening, in addition to normal reporting times.

### **Senior Phase Pupils**

Our first monitoring period was completed with seniors this week. We are aware of ongoing issues with technology and as such we have been contacting families either by phone or email where teachers have reported that they have not heard from a pupil. This has helped us find out if there is anything additional we can do to support.

The first point of call for pupils is always to e-mail their teacher directly using GLOW.

It is really important for seniors at this time to keep working through their course work online so that they are in the best place possible for any future assessments as well as helping staff to monitor and evaluate progress.

The next monitoring period for seniors is from now until 1<sup>st</sup> February. If you have any concerns before that time, please contact your young person's guidance teacher.

## **Broad General Education – S1 to S3**

Our S1 – S3 pupils have many more subjects than our senior phase pupils and as such may find it harder to keep up with all subjects every week. We understand this, so if they (or indeed you) are feeling overwhelmed, then it is better for them to have a go at some of their work even if they cannot manage it all.

Please also remember there are other learning resources available for pupils to use which are not online. There has been a lot in the media about BBC learning resources broadcast on the BBC throughout the day, your young person may enjoy watching these to get away from their device.

If any young person is unsure of what is expected, again ask them to e-mail their teachers who should be able to help.

## **Digital Update**

Some of our pupil digital champions met with Mrs Clarke (DHT) and Ms Alecio (PT Recovery and Equity) to discuss what was going well and gave advice on what they were struggling with. This feedback was discussed at our staff middle leadership group on Wednesday and was found to be very useful to help support further planning. The feedback included:

- Pupils prefer assignments to be set via assignments tab, class notebook or returned via email. Pupils do not like uploading their work onto the files tab as others can view or edit their work.
- Although pupils enjoy live lessons, they like PowerPoint voice overs to be prerecorded so that they can access at any time

As a result of the feedback from pupils, we have asked staff to do the following:

- Check their teams against their class lists to ensure all pupils are on the team.
- Archive or delete old teams so that pupils are no longer on them avoiding confusion.
- Accept pupils into the calls when they are waiting in the lobby in the live lessons. I am aware that there have been some issues with this, this week.

Mrs Clarke and Ms Alecio would also like to arrange a virtual meeting with any parent who would like to discuss our ongoing digital learning. If you would like to take part in this, please contact [kate.clarke@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:kate.clarke@aberdeenshire.gov.uk).

## **Digital Devices**

We are continuing to distribute both Chromebooks and 'dongles' to families where connectivity and a lack of suitable device is a barrier to learning. While we appreciate that connectivity may continue to be an issue, we will continue to work together to find solutions.

Thank you for your patience with this.

## **Additional Resources**

Essential stationary pick-ups are now available if you require, paper, jotters, pens pencils etc. Secondary pupils can pick up in the foyer of the Academy and also at Fyvie and Monquhitter Primary Schools. If you are not able to access these points, please contact Turriff Academy School office.

## **College Update**

College pupils should all now be linked with their College Course Lecturer and be completing all work set. It is very important that ALL Friday College pupils logon to their Live classroom first thing on a Friday morning (9.30 am). Now that we are back in on-line working ALL COURSE pupils should be logging on EVERY week. Mrs Chapman will continue to contact all Friday College pupils via Teams to support. If you have concerns, please contact [gw18chapmanlesley@glow.sch.uk](mailto:gw18chapmanlesley@glow.sch.uk)

Energy and Rural Skills pupils must attend the live lessons as notified in their Teams. If support is required please contact [nescol\\_ptateson@glow.ac.uk](mailto:nescol_ptateson@glow.ac.uk)

NESCol Engineering Year 2 pupils MUST attend all Live lessons, and complete all work to their deadlines. For support contact [k.youngson@nescol.ac.uk](mailto:k.youngson@nescol.ac.uk)

All Foundation Apprentice pupils should attend Live lessons as notified on their Team. Full attendance is important. For support, please contact your provider or [gw08bissetjane2@glow.sch.uk](mailto:gw08bissetjane2@glow.sch.uk).

Keep logging on, keep working and keep asking if you need support folks!

Please note that FRIDAY 29 JANUARY IS A HOLIDAY FOR NESCOL STAFF SO NO COLLEGE LIVE LESSONS WILL BE HELD ON THAT DAY. Please use this time to catch up on any outstanding College work.

## **Some Sad News.**

It is with great sadness I let you know of the death of Mr George Davidson one of our most loyal supply teachers. Many of our young people will have very fond memories of Mr Davidson who has been at Turriff Academy covering for absent staff since 2008. He was fully involved in the life of the school, be it running club, accompanying school trips, covering classes, taking part in end of year videos or simply having his lunch and chatting to pupils and staff. He always had a smile and a story to tell. We will all miss him. If you feel it appropriate, please pass this information on to your young person. If they wish some support or to talk with someone in school, please make contact with their guidance teacher. Our thoughts are with his family at this time.

## **And finally.....**

Thank you.

Take care all and stay safe.

Regards



Ms L Menzies  
Head Teacher