



Parental Update Friday 27th March

Dear Parent/ Carer,

We are nearly at the end of week 1 of an everchanging national situation and I am sure we are all taking time to adapt to what is becoming the 'new normal'!

Learning at home

I hope that you and your families are remaining safe and well and thank you all for your patience in working with us in finding solutions to support learning at home. Like you, our staff are feeling the frustrations of slow internet speed and systems crashing, however they are continuing to develop and make learning available. In addition to GLOW and Teams, staff will also be using the social media platforms of Turriff Academy Facebook and Twitter to share learning opportunities. In order to do so, it is important that communication back and forth is through our usual channels: our young people should use their GLOW e-mail addresses to contact teachers, as they will not reply to individual social media chatter. Parents should use the e-mail contacts already distributed to yourselves.

Please remember to take time out. It is ok for your young person not to be working on classwork all day every day. They may well have other wide and varied interests that they want to spend more time on.

It is important that we all look out for each other. Our guidance team is having weekly 'check ins' with your young person, which involves a simple thumbs up to them in response to messages on the PSE Team for their year groups. Year heads are also keeping in touch that way. Many pupils are also starting to email or chat to their teachers about course work which is great to see.

Communication

As Turriff Academy has been closed since Wednesday, I am conscious that we have not had phone availability for parents. The vast majority of parents and pupils are using e-mail communication, however in the event of this not being possible, the following temporary phone numbers can be used:

07769 283624

07769 283625

This service will be manned by office staff Monday – Friday (9.30am – 10.30am) during term time until further notice. Please note that office staff do not have access to computers and as such will ask the following information:

Your name and preferred contact number

Your young person's name, year group and house

The nature of your query.

They will then contact the appropriate member of staff who will get back to you in due course

SQA

I know that many of our seniors are still anxious with regards to what is happening about their qualifications this year and Mrs Clarke (DHT and SQA coordinator) is liaising with colleagues in terms of moving forward. At this point in time I have no further updates. However, Mrs Clarke will be in touch when she knows more. The SQA are announcing updates on its website as and when they have information

Barcelona June 2020

Mr Forsyth has been liaising with the tour company with regards to the National advice on foreign excursions post Easter. At this time, there is no updated advice, however it is looking ever likely that this trip will not go ahead. The final decision will be made before we break up for Easter. We are trying to ensure that any potential financial loss is kept to a minimum. Letters explaining the situation fully will be sent out to parents in due course.

Free School Meals

You will be aware that up until now, families have been asked to collect from the Turriff Hub this week. There has been a change to this, please see details below:

'Families eligible to receive statutory free school meals are to receive a payment to cover the cost of these (£12.50 per child per week) directly from Monday (30 March). Payments will be sent in four-weekly instalments and the first is due to reach families next week. The payments will include the holiday periods'

Families who have already applied and are in receipt of free school meals, should have already been contacted by Aberdeenshire council.

If financial situations change in the weeks ahead, I would urge all families who feel they would be entitled to receive support for this to apply.

Key Worker childcare

If you have not already done so and think you may be eligible for Key Worker childcare, please complete the link below. A central Aberdeenshire team are continuing to review need and look at provision.

<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/schools-covid-19/keyworkers-form-covid-19/>

.....and finally

Thank you all for helping to ensure that our young people are social distancing themselves. As the nights get lighter and the weather gets warmer, this will continue to be a challenge. However, to help protect us all please remind them to 'bide at hame'!

Take care all, stay safe and I will be in touch again next week.

Kind regards,

Ms L Menzies