

## Grantown Grammar School

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THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL  
COMHAIRLE NA GAIDHEALTACHD

Mrs Claire McGonigal, Headteacher

Wednesday 17 February 2021

Dear Parent / Carer,

### **Update - continuation of remote learning, phased return to school, SQA, testing, surveys**

#### **Continuation of Remote Learning**

Although the First Minister confirmed yesterday that the partial phased return to school for some Senior Phase pupils will take place, this will only impact a small number of pupils at Grantown Grammar School. For the majority of pupils, the lockdown adapted timetable will remain in place. The next update for education and possible extension of the phased return will be announced on Tuesday 2 March. Any extension to the phased return will not start until Monday 15 March at the earliest. All pupils should continue to focus on building knowledge and skills, attend 'live' lessons which will be posted via Google Classroom assignments and contact their teachers, Guidance teacher or Mr Ross, Mr Wilson or myself if they have any concerns. We are here to help!

#### **Phased return for the completion of essential practical coursework**

We have reviewed the courses which contain practical work and, at present, will be inviting individual pupils who have not completed the necessary skills or need additional support to attend school at specific times. These pupils will be contacted this week with the exact time they should come to school and will be expected to attend. The courses include Modern Languages, Technical and Music. However, this will only affect a minority of pupils on these courses. All pupils on all courses should continue to build skills and knowledge which will be assessed when we return to face to face learning.

All pupils coming into school should wear a face covering at all times, maintain 2m social distance and also sign in at reception before going to their allocated classroom.

We will be reviewing the progress of courses with practical coursework on an ongoing basis and extending the pupils invited to attend school as appropriate.

#### **SQA**

The advice from the SQA remains that pupils should focus on building knowledge and skills as these will be assessed when pupils return to face to face learning.

The time to complete assessments has been extended by another two weeks as the final date for submitting provisional results is now **Friday 25 June**. This is the last day of term, however pupil work should be completed two weeks prior to this to enable staff to process grades.

Gradebooks will be updated to reflect ongoing progress this term but all pupils should be aware that provisional predicted grades, if pupils are currently green for being on target can go up or, less likely, down following face to face assessments. It is very important that pupils continue to work hard, complete and submit coursework, attend face to face lessons where possible and ensure that they are up to date with their learning. Please ask your child's teacher if he/she is unsure.

#### **Options Process**

The options process for pupils in S3 - S5, choosing their courses of study for 2021/22 is underway. Pupils will be asked to make an initial free choice via a Google Form posted on the S3-S5 Options Google Classroom on Monday 22 February. Pupils in S3 shouldn't worry too much about levels at this stage, whether pupils are studying N4 or N5 courses will be sorted out between August and October 2021. After this initial choice, Mr Wilson will draw up the 'best fit' options form and pupils will be asked to make their final selection later in the term. If pupils have any questions, they should contact their Guidance teacher or individual subject teachers for advice.

Options choices for S2 pupils will be made later in the year.

#### **Testing**

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All staff and senior phase pupils who attend school will be asked to participate in the lateral flow testing programme. This involves testing twice a week, on a Sunday and Wednesday night and recording the result on the NHS Self Test site. We will start to distribute the tests on Friday 19 February and next week. Please note, if pupils are not invited to attend school, they will not be part of the testing programme at the present time.

### **Surveys**

We will be distributing surveys to pupils, parents and staff this week to see how we can improve remote learning for all. Please return these surveys by Friday 19 February to enable us to implement changes, if appropriate and as quickly as possible for maximum impact.

Following feedback already given, we are increasing the amount of 'face to face' learning, have looked at improving feedback to pupils and will be having Pupil Council, Captain's Coffee, House Assemblies and tutor group meetings as well as more 'fun' events to keep in touch with you all. Please return the surveys, we really do value what you have to say!

### **Finally...**

I know that what we all want is a return to face to face learning. Staff are hugely missing pupils and I'm sure that pupils are missing school too. However, this small step towards a return to school with the limited numbers of pupils coming into the school building over the next few weeks is a step in the right direction. Days are getting lighter, the weather is improving and we'll be back complaining about early starts and enjoying cookies in the canteen before we know it. Keep calm and carry on, all shall be well.

Yours faithfully

*Claire McGonigal*

Claire McGonigal  
Headteacher