



3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I felt it would be useful to write to you once more as we reach the school holidays.

### **Home learning**

Can I begin by thanking you again for your support for home learning. We have had lots of feedback about this, almost all of which has been very positive. As I said in my last letter, I feel we have come a long way in a short time. Nevertheless, we have had positive discussions in both primary and secondary this week about further steps we can take to ensure that the experience for both pupils and parents is as clear as it can be, and we will provide further communication in this regard shortly. Primary parents will also receive a letter from Mrs Marshall today covering some of these matters.

As well as some parents finding the range of approaches being adopted – particularly in the secondary – a little confusing at times, both primary and secondary parents have also commented that on occasion they and their children have felt a little overwhelmed by the amount of work coming home. I would far rather have this problem than one where parents were concerned about too little work, but I do nevertheless recognise that this can be a very real challenge. For parents, who themselves may be trying to continue with a job from home as well as dealing with the inevitable challenges of having children at home all day, it is indeed a challenge to maintain an oversight of schoolwork. In this regard I would make the following points:

- We will try hard in the coming week – particularly in secondary where there are multiple teachers – to provide a timely and simple overview of what is being set in each subject area in the course of the week. This should help parents manage this challenge a little better.
- We are also trying to get a sense of how well homes are set up for home learning in terms of ICT and would very much appreciate it if you could take a minute to complete [this survey](#). The data provided will support us in tailoring our offer to the reality of the situation in our families' homes.
- As a parent you should remind yourself, when necessary, that you are not your child's teacher, so should resist the urge to become frustrated where you feel you do not have the skills or the time to adequately support on a particular curriculum area. Teachers will aim to make all work accessible to pupils and provide a means for pupils to contact them for support. Please

do let us know though if you feel your child needs more support. Our main ask of you is that you try to provide an environment in which your child can engage with schoolwork and encourage them in whatever way you can – such as creating a timetable as some parent have – to engage in activities at several points throughout the school day.

- Home learning will be the art of the possible for both teachers and parents and I would urge you not to worry if you feel that your child has not undertaken all work set. In both primary and secondary we are already developed ways to measure pupils' engagement and will automatically contact home where we have concerns that any pupil is falling behind.
- For some at least there may be advantages to the current situation, and I would encourage you to seize these when they arise. Learning in a home context can take many forms and I hope that at some point you will all have an opportunity to learn alongside your children in a way which is fun and rewarding.

### **School holidays**

One thing that remains constant in these changing times are the dates for our school holidays which begin today and end on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April. This should be a break for both parents and staff from the current challenges of home learning and I would remind you that there will be no online presence of staff during this period.

### **SQA**

I realise that this has been a particularly anxious time for SQA pupils and their parents and you may be aware that the SQA made another significant announcement yesterday. Please find the latest SQA guide for parents and learners [here](#) which should support your understanding of these changes and what they will mean for you. We have already carefully considered these from the school's point of view and will take every step necessary to ensure that our pupils experience no detriment.

I do hope that despite the many challenges of these times, the forthcoming holidays will present opportunities for quality family time, and that your family will be safe and healthy.

Yours faithfully

**Mr John Devine**  
**Headteacher**