



Brechin High School

#ProudtobeBrechin

Weekly Update 15.03.24

Message from the Head Teacher

The Parent Voice meeting this week was full of positivity and constructive conversation. Thank you to all the parents and carers who attended, it was great to see so many of you; and in particular to Julia Curtus and Liz Addison who have been working hard to support our Parent Voice group and the school. I was really pleased to be able to give a Head Teacher's report about school improvement and 'sticky issues' and look forward to this being a feature of future meetings so we can work together to support and challenge our young people.

At the meeting I shared information about our support for pupils around attendance, the work being done in ASN to support different pupil needs, work on pupil voice and the UNCRC, and work to upskill pupils with knowledge of local employment trends and opportunities. We talked about progression pathways, ensuring our curriculum in the BGE articulates well with the senior phase and the importance of high expectations for learners. I re-shared the information about school & faculty attainment.

We discussed behaviour and I shared the work being done in school, including a link to the school Relationships and Behaviour policy. We also talked about the way families can support their young person including:

- Communicating with us – help us get things right by contacting us if you are unhappy or unsure about something
- Monitoring social media/phone use
- Knowing what your child gets up to in the evening (More issues in the campus in the evenings than during the school day)
- Modelling the sort of behaviour we expect from our young people – particularly around dealing with conflict, positive message about school and social media use
- Supporting your child to learn to cope with challenge – that is much better to come first in a loving home environment rather than having to learn that in school. Uniform is a good starting point, have the conversation about uniform and implement that basic expectation at home. Our young people need support about being asked to do things they would rather not, but it is an important part of their learning and maturing.

I gave a further update about staffing. We currently have two vacancies in the school, one in English and one for PT Science. Both have been advertised. In the last couple of weeks, following successful interviews I have appointed three staff –an English teacher and a Maths teacher who have start dates to be confirmed. I am also delighted that Ms Thompson has accepted a permanent position with us. Ms Thompson has been with us since May on a temporary basis, she has been covering the English vacancy as well as working in Mathematics, and she has become a valuable part of our staff team. We have more interviews scheduled in the next few weeks.

When I was appointed, the overwhelming request from pupils was around IT. Since June, I have been working with Mrs Hutton (Business Manager) and Mr Miller (Senior Technician) in school, as well as the authority IT team to find a way to bring Brechin High School into line with the other schools in the authority, and across the country. This has been an enormous piece of work, with a lot of planning involved to make our move away from the 'Brechin only' platform we currently use to 'Glow' as smooth as possible. This will involve collecting in all pupil Chromebooks to reconfigure them. We will take the staff and pupils through each step of the process when needed, but I wanted to alert everyone to the fact that this big change is coming soon. The plans prioritise not impacting on upcoming SQA exams and finishing courses.

Finally, I was very pleased to share that we have a new school website – it is in its infancy so please be understanding that it doesn't contain a lot of information yet. Just like my plea a few weeks ago – please get in touch if there are things you feel would be helpful to have included on the website. Our intention is both to ensure the website is easy to navigate on mobile devices and make it easy to find the information that parents need.

[Brechin High School Website](https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/an/brechinhighschool/)

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Road Safety

Several parents/carers brought up the sometimes dangerous behaviour of people dropping off and collecting pupils – please use the drop off area by the astro pitches. Do not stop on the double yellow lines, the top of Duke Street, or the disabled bays (unless you have a blue badge) The traffic is designed to flow round the car park, and the crossing are in place to support this. Most of our pupils are quite capable of walking from the astro to the school building and back. Please help keep all of our children safe and the traffic moving.

Anti-Bullying

Mr Mawhirt shared the work he has been doing with pupils, parents and staff to refresh our anti-bullying policy. Details will be found on the school website very soon. Please find attached.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Brechin High School



Who is this for?

All pupils in Brechin High School must follow the anti-bullying policy and should know what it is. This is the pupil-friendly version, it has been changed to be easy to read, and to only have the important information. The full version can be found on the school website.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is repeated behaviour that purposely makes someone feel hurt, threatened, frightened or left out. Bullying can involve many types of behaviour, such as:

- Physical (hitting, kicking or pushing someone)
- Speaking (name-calling, threatening or spreading rumours about someone)
- Emotional (making someone feel left out or like they are the 'smaller' person)
- Online (through any site: sending or sharing rude and upsetting messages or images)
- Belongings (hiding, stealing, damaging or breaking someones belongings)

Bullying should not be something that is '*just part of life*'.

Bullying is NOT an argument between two people and is normally NOT one, single, incident.

What should you do?

- Follow our school values and treat other pupils with respect.
- Challenge people who are bullying others, where you feel you can.
- Speak to friends, family or a trusted adult about any bullying you are worried about.
- Report bullying to any teacher, when you see it happen.

What happens next?

When bullying is reported, the Pupil Care & Support Teacher of the person affected is contacted. They will then go through some steps to take action, depending on how serious the bullying is, this may change. Parents of both the person affected and the person who is bullying will be contacted, as well as a deputy head teacher. All bullying that is reported to a teacher or member of staff will be recorded on the school system.

Article 19 - Protection From Violence, Abuse and Neglect

Article 28 - Right to Education

Article 29 - Goals of Education

"At Brechin High School we treat everyone with respect - bullying of any kind is unacceptable.

Our school is a place where everyone should feel safe, happy and included."

Friendliness | Achievement | Inclusion | Trust & Respect | Honesty

Supported Study at Brechin High School

Expressive Arts

Art & Design, Music, Music Technology and Photography at lunchtimes and after school Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays by arrangement with class teachers.

Health Improvement

- Cake Craft - Wed Lunch
- Practical Cookery - Mon Lunch
- Health and Food Tech - Thurs Lunch
- Fashion and Textiles - Wed Lunch
- Higher PE - Wed Lunch

*Pupils are welcome to arrange other times with their teacher if they can't make these

Language & communication

	Lunchtime			Afterschool		
	Level/subject	Teacher	Focus	Level/subject	Teacher	Focus
Mon	AH/N5/H English	Mr Colquhoun	All coursework	N5/H/AH (All L&C Faculty Subjects)	Ms Nicol	Self Study/homework
Tues	BGE English & French	Ms Nicol	Homework			
Wed	AH/N5/H Spanish & French	Mr Mallén (by arrangement)	Exam practice/ Grammar/Talking			
Thurs				N5 English	Ms Nicol	Folio
Fri	All Levels	Ms Nicol (by arrangement)				

Mathematics

Course	Day	Time
Nat 5 Maths (virtual)	Tuesday Thursday	Starting at 6pm
Nat 5 Maths (f2f)	Tuesday Wednesday	Afterschool drop in 3.50 – 5pm
Higher Maths	By arrangement with your teacher.	
Advanced Higher Maths		
Nat 5 Applications of Maths		
Higher Applications of Maths		

Science

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Lunch		Chemistry N5	Biology N5	Physics N5/H Biology HH
After school	Chemistry N5	Chemistry H	Biology HH Chemistry H/N5	Biology N5

Social Subjects

Geography

H - Monday lunchtime (or any other time by appointment)

N - Thursday lunchtime (or any other time by appointment)

History

N (Miss Shannon) - Tuesday lunchtime (or any other time by appointment)

N (Mr Kelly) - by appointment

H (Mr Kelly) - by appointment

Modern Studies

N - Tuesday lunchtime (or any other time by appointment)

H (Mr Dargie) Higher Modern Studies - Thursday lunchtime (or any other time by appointment)

H (Mr Mawhirt) - by appointment

Here is the link for our faculty revision portal - a one stop shop for key revision resources for Geography, History and Modern Studies along with some advice for parents about how to best support our pupils with revision.

<https://www.thinglink.com/card/1776665883108705124>

Technologies

- Admin & IT - Tuesday and Thursday lunchtime
- Business Management - Tuesday and Thursday lunchtime
- Computing - Times are available on request by asking Mr Tait
- Design & Manufacture - Wednesday lunchtime and Thursday after school
- Graphic Communication - Wednesday lunchtime and Thursday after school

Practical Woodwork / Practical Metalwork - Pupils needing to complete practical assignments are welcome to come to the department any period and the staff will try to accommodate them.

SQA news

This year, SQA has returned to the full course assessment standards post-covid. Assignments and folios have been reintroduced and that has been a challenge this year to many - pupils and teachers. SQA have shared the following information with us this week.

Exceptional Circumstances

We recognise that there are times when learners cannot sit an exam for reasons outwith their control. The Examination Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service (EECCS) will continue to be available this year, meaning **those learners with exceptional circumstances can have alternative assessment evidence reviewed to help determine their grades**. The EECCS is a pre-certification service and will be available to learners who are unable to attend an exam as well as those whose performance in the exam may have been affected by a personal circumstance, or an unplanned incident on the day, which is beyond their control. This includes, but is not limited to, a medical condition or bereavement, or disruption on the day of the exam reported by the Chief Invigilator.

To be eligible for the EECCS, learners must have completed all the compulsory non-question paper components of their course, such as performances and portfolios. They must also have an estimated grade submitted by their centre.

If a learner is eligible for the EECCS, an SQA-appointed subject specialist will review all the available assessment evidence, including the alternative assessment evidence submitted by their centre, to determine their grade. Heads of Centre will be responsible for ensuring SQA's criteria are applied when deciding whether the EECCS is the best option for individual learners. **The EECCS is not available to learners who have underperformed on the day of the timetabled exam unless they have suffered an exceptional circumstance.**

Grading

In 2022, following the return of exams, we adopted a generous approach to grading. This meant, where required, significant adjustments were made to grade boundaries compared to in a normal year. Our method to setting standards and grading in 2023 continued to be sensitive to the extent of the ongoing impact of the pandemic.

Last year we returned to full course assessment in the current session (with the exception of a handful of courses where the retention of the modifications was found to be beneficial to learners). This includes the return of coursework across a range of courses.

In 2024, we will therefore consider any impact on learners completing coursework for the first time, as part of their SQA assessments, in our grading decisions. These considerations will be incorporated into our well-established grading processes. This will provide fairness and safeguards for learners and help to provide assurances across the wider education community.

We will share more detailed information on our approach to grading when we issue the 2024 results in August.

Appeals

Learners will be able to appeal any of their final grades by requesting a review of their SQA-marked assessment components. In keeping with last year, the service will continue to be free and available for learners to access directly. Alternative assessment evidence will not be required and SQA appointees have told us that this will ensure fairness for all learners. The appeals service will include a priority service for learners with conditional offers for further education, training or employment. We continue to work closely with UCAS to ensure the outcome of priority appeals will be released ahead of their deadline.



CPR for all seniors has been hugely successful. Many thanks to Scottish fire and rescue for this