



# Brechin High School

#ProudtobeBrechin

## Weekly Update 26.04.24

### Message from the Head Teacher

The first week of SQA exams has run smoothly, with our pupils being considerate of those doing exams and being mindful of keeping things calm and quiet around the building.

I was joined last week by Rebecca Robertson, DHT at Montrose Academy and Scott Brown, who works in the Angus central education team, to spend all day Thursday interviewing candidates for the Faculty Head of Science post. I was delighted to appoint Mrs Alison Niblock, who joined us as a Chemistry teacher in September last year, bringing with her a wealth of expertise, in addition to calmness, good humour and a determination to improve outcomes for pupils.

### Pupil Attendance

Our school appeared in the paper last week in an article expressing concern about secondary school attendance, with Brechin being highlighted as having a particularly poor attendance rate last year.

This year we have put in place a number of things which are already leading to better pupil attendance, though we recognise we still have work to do together to improve things further. These include:

- Emily Smith, our Engagement Officer works to support young people and families with attendance, with many of those who do work with her describing her help as transformational.
- We have brought in our attainment hubs for S1-3 and S4-5, with this proving to be the support that has encouraged several of our young people back into school in a way that feels manageable for them.
- The introduction of registration at the beginning of each day provides a daily check-in for all young people, with feedback showing that these are seen as a positive and supportive addition to the timetable.
- We are improving the accuracy of our attendance recording and contacting home when a pupil is not where we expect them to be.
- Adapting the curriculum offer to improve engagement of young people.

### **Impact of Attendance: Support your child to be successful.**

School attendance supports success, with pupils who miss lessons or days regularly finding it hard to maintain progress. Pupils are reminded regularly that attendance in all their classes is important with many skills being developed across subjects.

We recognise that there are some families and young people in exceptional circumstances for whom this will not be possible, and we hope to continue to work in a supportive way as possible to flexibly accommodate the needs of individual pupils. Nevertheless, the vast majority of young people around Scotland attend school and attend school every day and for every lesson - average attendance in secondary schools across Scotland is around 90%, with the majority of pupils having a higher attendance rate than this. Our tracking reports come out three times a year and show you attendance figures for your young person. If you are concerned, please contact your child's PCS teacher to discuss how we can support you.

Percentage Attendance	Days missed	Impact on learning
100%	0	Gives your child the best chance of success
95%	9 days	Attendance is beginning to have an impact on learning and progress.
90% or lower	19 days	Less chance of success due to poor attendance, may drop a whole grade.
85% or lower	27 days	Serious impact on learning and progress, may drop two or more grades as a result.

### **Maximise your child's potential**

- Communicate with school about any concerns or worries you or your child have related to attendance.
- Establish routines at home, such as regular bedtimes, having their uniform and homework ready for school in the morning to support punctuality.
- Discuss school with your child and take a positive interest in their learning
- Contact school to inform them of any absences
- Plan holidays within school holiday periods
- Limit 'screen' time before bed
- Try to plan medical/dental appointments after school
- If medical/dental appointments are during the school day ensure your child is returned to school as soon as possible.

## Is it ever okay for my child to be off school?

It is okay for your child to; be off school if any of the following apply:

- They are ill.
- They are attending a medical or dental appointment.
- They are going to a meeting about a Children's Hearing or court, or if they are going to a Children's Hearing, care review or court.
- They are involved in an activity and the school agrees in advance.
- Someone close to your child has died.
- There is a crisis or serious difficulty at home or in your family.
- They are going to a religious ceremony or a wedding of someone very close to them.
- You are a Gypsy/Traveller family and while you go travelling you keep in touch with your child's school, informing them of when you will leave and return.
- Your family is returning to a country of origin for cultural or familiar reasons.

## Update on the new Junior Hub in ASN

Mrs Duncan and Mrs Christie enjoyed meeting parents of our S2's who access the Junior Hub at Parent's Night this week. They gave lovely feedback about the positive impact the hub is

having for their young people. They spoke about how the hub is supporting their attendance, and improving their wellbeing. It was great to hear that they are finding it easier to come to school, they are more positive about school, and happier and more relaxed at home.



The Hub teachers Mrs Duncan, Mr Kingsmill and Mrs Barnes all work hard to support these young people, so it was great to hear how that work is paying off. The Hub has a real focus on health and wellbeing, and this week they looked at the impact of vaping on young people's health. We're also really proud of our mural project, run by Mr Farquhar, which is almost

finished, and has been designed and painted by young people attending the Hub. You might see some Brechin landmarks in there that you recognise!



# Social Subjects Paris Trip

- June 2025
- Open to **all current S1 and S2 pupils**
- Expression of interest letter will be out by the end of the week via email to parents - complete the Google form.



Activities include...

- Eiffel Tower
- River Seine boat trip
- Battlefields tour
- Theme Park

## Hurricane news!



S1 Boys with 3 wins and a draw out of 5 games in the 3rd Angus football festival this week.

S3 Netball beat Montrose Academy.



S3 sports Leaders delivered their 2nd Transition event for the P7s and did a brilliant job last week!



Senior Girls had an unbeaten season and became Angus Champions at Netball for our first time ever!

# CHAMPIONS

