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Date: 28th January 2021



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Dear Parent,

I hope that this letter finds you and your family safe and well and that by now, your child has settled into a good remote learning routine. Following the First Minister's announcement last week, we now know that remote learning will continue into, at least the middle of February. Since writing to you on 8th January, we have now completed three weeks of online learning which have been overwhelmingly positive. We have taken time to review our procedures and to seek feedback from pupils, parents and teachers. We have used this feedback to inform our remote learning procedures moving forward, and thought that the following information might be helpful to you when supporting your son/ daughter's online learning.

Routine of Remote Learning

Pupils may wish to follow their normal school timetable period by period, to support them in the management of their work and time. This is a useful strategy for many pupils, and certainly practice that we would encourage. However, we do recognise that this is not always practical for pupils and therefore a more flexible approach may be adopted to accommodate different home learning environments.

Subject Departments will endeavour, where possible, to post all of the lessons for each week, at the beginning of the week. Based on feedback, this allows pupils to plan and manage their time around the challenges of multiple family members working at home. Teachers will clearly differentiate work that is expected to be completed as 'class work' from work that is expected to be completed as homework. It is important that pupils work through 'class work' e.g. recorded lessons/ printed notes, before attempting to answer any consolidation exercises. Only once all of the 'class work' is complete, should homework questions be attempted. There is an expectation that pupils in the senior phase will follow a thorough revision plan, in order to prepare for their exam schedule, which will take place on their return to the school building. Depute Head Teachers for S4, S5 and S6 will provide a separate update on the exam schedule. The routine of remote learning should ideally mimic, that which takes place in school

Deadlines for Assignments and work to be submitted will be posted clearly for pupils to work towards. It may be beneficial for pupils to record their work in their school homework diary, to help self-regulate their studies and to help share progress with parents. When submitting work, your son/ daughter should be encouraged to check that they click on the 'Mark as Done' within Google Classrooms or 'Hand in/ Turn in' within Teams to confirm that their work has been uploaded correctly for the teacher to access.

Content of Remote Learning

As always, our aim is to provide rich, engaging and high quality learning experiences for all pupils. Lessons will move the curriculum forward at the normal pace, covering new material, but also providing ongoing opportunities for

revision and consolidation, especially in the senior phase. Research has found that the effectiveness of remote learning is determined, not by the method of delivery, but by the quality of the lesson content. In most cases, lessons will closely resemble the normal format and will include exposition, explanation, exemplification and opportunities for pupils to apply the learning through appropriate exercises, teacher-led solutions to exercises and relevant homework tasks. Teachers are acutely aware of the challenges faced by some pupils, to gain access to ICT devices. Therefore, some lessons will involve work that can be completed away from the screen e.g. extended reading material, directed questions from textbooks, hand-written tasks and refining of practical skills, where possible.

Methods for delivering Remote Learning

Teachers, as subject specialists, consider very carefully, the best way in which to convey the application of new knowledge and skills whilst ensuring the pupils receive clear explanations. Lessons are provided via online learning platforms; Google Classrooms and Microsoft Teams. Pupils should already be active on each of their Classrooms and Teams. If your child is still having difficulty accessing any of the necessary online platforms, please simply telephone or email the school office and someone will be able to help you.

As we progress through this second period of lockdown, teachers continue to review and refine their approaches to help ensure the very best for all of our learners. Feedback has informed us, that our pupils engage very well with recorded lessons e.g. voice-over PowerPoints/ video lessons. Pupils enjoy the level of depth and rigour that recorded lessons allow, where they can exercise a level of control over their learning by having the ability to revisit the lesson as often as they wish. Therefore, in the majority of cases, core lessons will be recorded lessons. These will be accompanied by exercises and homework tasks that pupils will be asked to submit in the usual way. This ensures an equitable approach, where no pupil misses out on direct teaching as a result of connectivity issues, shared devices or any other reason. In addition to recorded lessons, pupils will also benefit from a combination of printed study notes, PowerPoint slides, textbook work, revision quizzes and links to relevant websites.

In addition to the core recorded lessons, departments, where possible, offer live tutorials or Q&A sessions for pupils during one (or more) of the normal timetabled teaching slots for each subject. Teachers will continue to highlight these opportunities for live learning via their online learning platforms. These live sessions will be hosted using the video conferencing tools either on Classroom or Teams. The success of these live sessions will be monitored. Where teachers consider the live sessions to be of benefit to pupils and to be an effective use of time, departments will utilise this facility as and when they deem it to be suitable within the curriculum. (Please note that pupils who wish to join a Q&A session, but prefer not to appear on camera, can switch off the camera function if they wish).

For you information, ERC guidance is provided [here](#) for parents and pupils relating to live engagement online and would ask you to ensure that your child reads the guidance carefully. Please note that pupils, parents and staff are expressly forbidden from recording any aspects of online learning.

Feedback to pupils

Ongoing 'live' dialogue, reflection and feedback with pupils in relation to their own learning is valuable in ensuring progress and motivation. Teachers are available 'in real time' during each of the normal timetabled teaching slots to answer any questions that pupils wish to ask about the content from recorded video lessons or to go over any concepts that pupils need reinforced. Pupils can post a question or a comment on the stream or can email the teacher directly through GLOW. Pupils can of course send questions to teachers outwith these times, but should be aware that they may not receive an immediate reply. I would ask pupils to be mindful of the fact that a large proportion of our teachers have young children at home, or other caring responsibilities, so pupils may find that their questions are sometimes answered outwith normal hours.

Pupil will receive feedback on work that has been submitted so that they know how to progress and what the next steps in their learning are. Feedback can be given in many forms e.g. written, worked examples, voice notes, video

answers and teachers are applying the best approach for the pupils in their subject. Just as they would in class, it is very important that pupils engage with the feedback process and ask any supplementary questions if they require clarification.

Engagement

Teachers will be responsible for monitoring pupils' engagement and progress through the work that they are asked to submit each week. We will track the engagement of pupils in every subject each week and will collate any concerns about lack of engagement. We will contact parents if a child appears to be off track through lack of engagement.

Faith, Community and Health and Wellbeing

Depute Head Teachers host live meetings with their year groups on a weekly basis to help maintain a sense of community that might otherwise be lost during remote learning. Moreover, the year group meetings provide an opportunity to come together and celebrate our faith and to pray for those who are experiencing challenges at this moment in time. Information regarding these live check-ins are posted on your child's year group Team and we would encourage your son/ daughter to attend whenever possible. Now more than ever, it is crucial to look after our health and wellbeing. Please be assured that ensuring your son/ daughter's health and wellbeing is our priority. Pupil Support staff are hosting live Wellbeing Meetings for pupils in their Pastoral classes, and pupils are encouraged to attend these sessions if they possibly can. St Ninian's High now has a website dedicated to promoting positive mental health and we would encourage parents to look at this with their children. It can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

Parental involvement

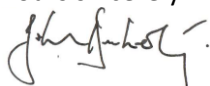
Finally, may I ask you to be vigilant to the amount of time your child spends on school work. We are providing the full curriculum for pupils and I would anticipate that most pupils should be able to keep up to date with the majority of their learning. For some pupils, this will be easily achievable within the normal 27.5 hour school week, but others may need help in managing their time. Pupils should not be on screen all day, and should not focus on schoolwork to the detriment of their wellbeing.

I would urge you to discuss with your child how best to organise the day's work. As a parent, you are best placed to know whether or not your child is coping with the provided. If you have any concerns that your child is becoming overwhelmed by the amount of work required to be completed, please contact your child's Pupil Support Teacher (through schoolmail@st-ninians.e-renfrew.sch.uk) who will be able to offer advice on prioritising schoolwork tasks.

I would encourage parents, as much as possible, to read the information posted on their child's year group Team, as it is the main channel of communication between Depute Head Teachers and their year group. If possible, it would also be beneficial to ask your son/ daughter to show you their subject Teams and Classrooms.

I hope that this summary is helpful in giving you a better idea of how your child's learning is being supported during the current period of school closures. We look forward to the return of all pupils to in school learning. In the meantime, please accept my sincere thanks for your forbearance and for your exceptional support and encouragement, which has meant a lot to my colleagues and I.

Yours sincerely



J. Docherty
Head Teacher