



Hillhead High School
Oakfield Avenue
Glasgow G12 8LJ
Phone 0141 582 0100

Head Teacher
K McAlaney

18.12.20

Parental Newsletter

Dear Parent/Carer,

If you follow our school on Twitter (@HillheadHS) you will have seen lots of examples of all of the work going on in classrooms and across the school this week. I would also like to thank all who attended this week's Online Information Evenings for S3 and S4 pupils and parents and Mr Brown, Miss Black, Mr Richardson and Ms Higgins for all the work they put into preparing for these sessions. All materials can also be found on our website. Miss Rothery has created a booklet for pupils and parents explaining the accessibility features available on school iPads to support with reading, writing and learning. It can be found here:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/gc/hillheadsupportforlearning/>

Pupils wishing a paper copy of the booklet can pick one up from the Support for Learning Base.

School closes at **2.30pm on Tuesday 22nd December and re-opens at 8.49am on Wed 6th January**. As you will be aware, due to current restrictions we will not be able to have our usual end of term assembly on the last day of term and pupils will be following usual timetabled lessons next Monday and Tuesday. We were also unable to have our Christmas concert earlier this month but below are links to two online concerts featuring pupils from across Glasgow schools - you will see a number of familiar faces from our school in the first video as well as be treated to some fabulous festive music. The second video has performances from primary schools across the city.

[CREATE Christmas Concert Part 1 - Monday 14th December 2020 - YouTube](#)

[CREATE Christmas Concert Part 2 - Tuesday 15th December 2020 - YouTube](#)

I know that this has been a most unusual and challenging year for all of us and it is really important that pupils, staff and families all get time to rest and switch off over the holidays. I will be asking all staff to turn off their email notifications when school closes on Tuesday at 2.30pm so as to take a real break after a very busy term. Emails sent over the holiday period will be answered once we return on Wed 6th January - our school office will also be closed during the break.

I would like to thank all staff for the huge amount of work they have done over the past year in extraordinary circumstances to keep things as normal as possible for pupils. Many thanks also our Parent Council who have been superb partners and given up so much time to help us all navigate these uncharted waters, and to all parents and families for your support, kindness and understanding and for the generous donations to our S6 charity appeals. It has meant a





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great deal to all of us to be part of such a caring community. Finally, I want to thank each and every one of our wonderful pupils. Their resilience in the face of so many changes and restrictions and their kindness to others has been both uplifting and humbling to witness. As a school we could not be prouder of them! I know our S5&S6 pupils may have some anxieties about the recent decision not to go ahead with exams which is understandable, but they will be fully supported to achieve their very best and we will share more information and support once we return to school. It is important though that they all also take a much-needed break too during the holidays.

Covid-19 Update – Who to contact during the break

It remains essential that if anyone in your household develops symptoms of COVID -19 the symptomatic person should self-isolate and be tested as soon as possible. Pupils should not come to school if they have symptoms or if anyone else in the household has symptoms. The symptoms include:

- a high temperature or fever
- a new continuous cough
- a loss of, or change in sense of smell or taste

If your child is self-isolating or has tested positive please do let us know, however, if your child tests positive from the afternoon of Tuesday 22nd December onwards, you will not be able to contact the school as we will be closed. Instead, you will be contacted by the Test & Protect team who will discuss the details with you and ask for the information they need. Test and Protect will then liaise with the Executive Director of Education, Maureen McKenna, if required –e.g. if your child was in school 48 hours prior to becoming symptomatic or the taking of the test.

It is important if your child tests positive during the holidays and has to self-isolate beyond the school return date of 6th January **that you contact the school directly on the 6th January** just as you would for any other absence.

Spotlight on...Mathematics



As you will know we have asked different departments/faculties in our school to share some information on what has been going on in their subject since we returned in August. Thanks to Mr Carson, Principal Teacher of Mathematics for the information below:

Nurturing Mathematicians





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Mathematics is a practical subject. To develop as a mathematician, it is imperative to work on problems and past papers as well as exercises. Having observed every teacher in the department during the first term, I was delighted to see the opportunities given by teachers for deep thought and discussion. Although the classic worksheet has its place, the range of activities on offer was vast. I witnessed everything from students using their bodies to model graph transformations to a chorus of conjectures about how a function might look on Desmos. Learning is facilitated in a supportive atmosphere and it is amazing to see the young people of Hillhead making the most of this. Perhaps the most pleasing thing was how willing our pupils are to help each other out while working on mathematics. A natural community spirit amongst classes which is inspiring to see. It was also a treat to see pupils and teachers smiling when working on mathematics together.

A range of Problem Books have been created to provide young people with the opportunity to get stuck into mathematical problems. These are occasionally used in class but their main use is for additional work at home. Some of these are available on Teams but please contact me at gw11carsonthomas3@glow.sch.uk if you would like more of these. These tend not to be dependent on content knowledge so provide an ideal opportunity to work on problems with your child.

A number of focus groups were carried out towards the end of the first term of the year. The aim of these sessions was to gain an insight into the student experience of maths at Hillhead, particularly in the Broad General Education (S1 to S3). As a result of this, some additional opportunities for students are being planned. Keep an eye on our Twitter ([@HHS_Mathematics](https://twitter.com/HHS_Mathematics)) for more information on how this develops.

Formal Assessments

Teachers were delighted with the amount of effort and thought that was put into preparation for the first round of Formal Assessments in the Senior Phase. In uncertain times, the resilience and perseverance shown by our young people has been a pleasure to see and this was reflected in their results. However, it is the reaction to these assessments has been arguably more pleasing and important. Pupils have been considering actions that were not available in these assessments and have been working to rectify this for future assessments.

In light of these assessments, Mrs McCarthy has run a series of focus groups with Senior Phase pupils. As well as gaining an insight into students' perspective on the purpose of assessments, this has given us ideas to better support young people in assessment preparation. This has given us thoughts for the short-term (for upcoming assessments in 2020/21) and the long-term (for our current S1 to S4).

Digital Learning





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The potential of our Digital Learning platforms is huge and while teachers across the department use different apps in their classrooms, the common platform used by all classes is Microsoft Teams. Where possible, teachers will post class resources onto Teams so that these can be accessed at home. Pupils who miss lessons are encouraged to ask questions on Teams to obtain support from their peers as well as their teacher. So far, this is going well. Most of the time, tasks are able to be posted on Teams and teachers are also posting their notes and examples. Pupils are encouraged to use Teams to ask for help. As well as gaining help from their teacher, classmates are often able to help out to the benefit of everyone.

Nightly homework is posted on Teams pages and is typically due on a Friday. The main purpose of nightly homework exercises is to prepare for fortnightly quizzes. Some Senior Phase classes will have extended exercises to complete which are also available on their Teams page. The purpose of these homework exercises is to prepare for examinations. At the moment, some teachers are using OneNote for homework submission. This is something that will hopefully become more common across the department towards the end of the year.

Supporting your child with Mathematics

Ask about homework. All classes should have homework every week. If your child does not have homework, please contact me by email at gw11carsonthomas3@glow.sch.uk

Please encourage attendance at supported study. Supported study offers a quiet environment to work on problems as well as getting support from a teacher. Attendance can be for the full hour or just for enough time to get help with a specific problem or past paper question. Supported study is not just for Senior pupils and morning sessions with Mr Carson are available for all learners. Ask your child what they've been learning about in maths. Even if you are not confident in it yourself, it is a good opportunity to gain a sense of how your child feels about the subject, if they need support or additional challenge. However, the main place to keep up-to-date with what's going on in the classroom is Microsoft Teams.

Mrs K. McAlaney

Head Teacher