

Parent Briefing

Thursday 04th February 2021



Introduction

I hope this finds you well. We have come to the mid-term point in what has been a difficult start to the year. The challenges we are facing and the resilience of our school community is commendable. I cannot thank everyone enough for the ongoing support to our pupils and staff right now.

Our online learning timetable looks set to continue for a bit longer and we are continuing to hear encouraging stories of how well our young people are adapting to another phase of online learning.

School recovery plan

On Tuesday 2nd February the First Minister gave a tentative timeline for some part-time return to school but on a very limited basis. This return would be for Senior Phase pupils to complete practical work for National Qualifications. The focus is still to reduce the footfall in school and adherence to social distancing will continue to be a key consideration to our planning to ensure a safe school environment.

The First Minister noted that a final decision on the part-time return will be made in two weeks, so our planning may change to reflect the context of the virus at that time. As soon as we have more information we will update you as quickly as possible.

Learning and teaching

It can be difficult for pupils to maintain their motivation and keep going and evidence has shown that the value of a teacher's input cannot be underestimated. We are aware that pupil motivation is starting to slip for some and this is inevitable the longer we continue with home learning. Pupil feedback has noted they enjoy the variety of learning activities they are undertaking. The live lesson option seems to be well received by Senior Phase pupils as does the recorded lesson where they can play back aspects of learning to help consolidate the content.

We would ask for your continued support in helping our pupils stay motivated at this time and engage in the learning opportunities offered.

Home learning consultation

Feedback from our pupils continues to shape our online delivery and we are responding to their suggestions. Communication is a key part of our continued connection with pupils and families. We are keen to hear the views of our parents also on how home learning is going at present. A series of surveys will be made available for parents of BGE and Senior Phase pupils (links below) and I would encourage you to complete these to help us further.

Parents of pupils in the Senior Phase (S4-S6)

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=oyzTzM4Wj0KVQTctawUZKQNAkG3qGH5LjmRRlc1RBjIUQTUzWU5EOU1UUUIHOJEMEpMRUo3N1hQVY4u>

Parents of pupils in the BGE (S1-S3)

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=oyzTzM4Wj0KVQTctawUZKQNAkG3qGH5LjmRRlc1RBjIUN1ZaTVE1QTZDSTdMWVg1VUk3TUVLOUJDUS4u>



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Parent feedback – you said, we did

Following your feedback we plan to limit the number of days we send e-mails and messages to you relating to whole school information. Where possible we will endeavour to issue information on a Monday and Wednesday so that you are not overwhelmed by documents and details. There will undoubtedly be exceptions to this as more guidance comes to us and we prepare for a return to school.

Celebrating success

It is easy to focus on the pressures of online learning during lockdown at present. We are keen to share as many positive stories as possible and one way is to celebrate the work of our pupils with parents and the wider community. We are extremely proud of our young people and want to build on our school ethos of aspiration and ambition by celebrating our young people's work. We are planning to produce a fortnightly 'mini' newsletter that will spotlight pupil success within departments across the school.

Online learning

We would like your support to remind our pupils about the expectations while online learning. The information issued to you previously gives clear guidelines as to what is and isn't appropriate. We have noticed some unacceptable comments being added to the chat function in some classes. In such instances we will need to consider alternatives to online learning activities in favour of paper packs where necessary. This would be a last resort however a necessary step to ensure all young people and staff are safe while learning continues.

Daily registration

We would welcome your support in reminding our pupils to register daily and on time. For the week beginning the 18th January the average percentage of pupils registering was 65%. The following week this rose to 69%. Please remind pupils to register daily on their specific Team before 10.30am, thank you.

February weekend

On Friday 5th and Monday 8th February we have our mid-term break and this is the perfect opportunity to switch off the digital devices and have a relaxing weekend. It is important for pupils and staff to take time away and focus on wellbeing activities instead. Please note no work will be posted on these days for subjects timetabled and pupils should not register either. Registration will continue as normal on Tuesday 9th February.

Contact with school

If you have any concerns regarding online learning, access to work or any ICT issues, please contact the school office in the first instance, either by telephone or e-mail. admin.keithgrammar@moray-edunet.gov.uk Please do not contact teachers directly via online platforms. This will allow us to ensure you are supported by the most appropriate person who will be able to provide the information you require.

Best wishes

Alan Bruce

Head Teacher

