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4 November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this update finds you and your family well and that you had a restful half term break. As you are now aware, there has been an update in guidelines from the Scottish Government and Stirling Council. The whole of Stirling Local Authority is in Tier 3 and as such, we are implementing the required changes to keep everyone safe.

#### **Update – Tier 3 implications**

From today, Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November, all S4-6 pupils and staff should wear a face covering in senior phase classrooms as well as communal areas, corridors and toilets. We have shared a presentation with our young people that looks at the science behind the decision so that they understand the importance of playing their part. The presentation is also available on their year group google classroom. We very much appreciate your support in ensuring that everyone complies with the guidelines.

#### **Keeping safe**

Our protocols for keeping safe include regular and rigorous hand washing/hand sanitising, sanitising of equipment before use, physical distancing in queues, accurate record keeping relating to seating and of course, wearing of face coverings. I appreciate that this can be uncomfortable and frustrating but it is essential that we all take responsibility for others and ourselves in the community. Bellrock continue to provide a rigorous enhanced cleaning service throughout each day. We are ventilating classrooms by keeping windows and doors open. So far, our young people have done a fantastic job in taking responsibility seriously.

#### **School Recovery Plan 20-21**

The school recovery plan for this session is available on the school website. We are aware that as things change, the plan will be amended to reflect developing guidance. However, I thought it useful to share the over view with you.

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/st/public/balfornhighschool/uploads/sites/3190/2020/09/28175400/BHS-SIP-Recovery-Plan-2020-21.pdf>

Our Health and Safety group, led by Mr Slavin, meets weekly to review and update practice based on guidelines and teacher/ pupil feedback.

## Outstanding Achievement Ceremony

While it was not a typical year, we felt it as important as ever to recognise the outstanding achievements of our young people in SQA courses from August 2020. I am delighted to share a link to our virtual prize giving. It is rather shorter than usual (approx. 20 minutes) and very accessible. We recognise subject prize winners, junior and senior Dux and Proxime Accessit as well as special awards. We also have some fabulous music included. Please access the event through this link:

<https://youtu.be/2NkK6D--Fw4>. Massive congratulations to all our 2020 prize winners.

### Junior Dux 2020



Charlotte Schmautz

### Junior Proxime Accessit 2020 (Joint)



Sanshika Bhardwaj



Heather Campbell

### Senior Dux 2020



Sian Williams

### Senior Proxime Accessit 2020



Finn Thompson

## SQA 20-21

National qualification courses have been amended in recognition of the exceptional circumstances that we find ourselves in. Details for each subject can be found at <https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/95157.html>. Please be assured that your child's teachers will be making changes and expectations clear to the classes. We continue to use Google Classroom as our main digital learning platform. We would encourage pupils to make use of Scholar resources available at National 5 and Higher Levels. As per Mr Slavin's email, pupils can log-in directly to access on-line tutorial sessions and resources at <https://scholar.hw.ac.uk/index.html>. We would recommend these to all pupils. These are the available courses:

Available Courses			
Science and Mathematics			
	N5	H	AH
Biology	✓	✓	✓
Chemistry	✓	✓	✓
Computing Science	✓	✓	✓
Human Biology	**	✓	**
Mathematics	✓	✓	✓
Physics	✓	✓	✓
Languages			
	N5	H	AH
English	✓	✓	✓
ESOL	✓	✓	**
French	*	✓	✓
Gaelic	*	✓	
German	*	✓	✓
Mandarin	✓		
Spanish	*	✓	✓
Business			
	N5	H	AH
Accounting		✓	✓
Art and Design		✓	
Business Management		✓	✓
Economics		✓	✓
Psychology		✓	**

\* Please note: these National 5 courses are support materials only.

\*\* Please note: SQA do not provide a qualification for this subject at this level.

## Prelims

We are planning a Higher and Advanced Higher prelim diet in January as usual and working towards a prelim diet for National 5 courses sometime after that. These dates will be confirmed shortly. For National 5, we expect a further update from the SQA with assessment guidance by subject. We will use this as our guide, subject by subject, when planning prelims.

Current advice from Education Scotland received states:

### National Qualifications

- There will be **no external assessment of National 5 courses** this year and an alternative certification approach is being put in place based on teacher judgement, supported by assessment resources and quality assurance.
- The SQA published broad guidance on evidence gathering and estimation with a clear focus on the quality, not quantity, of evidence. This is accompanied by an SQA Academy Course on quality assuring estimates.
- Subject specific guidance on the work that learners need to complete will be published by the SQA.
- Higher and Advanced Higher exams are planned to start on Thursday 13 May 2021 and finish on Friday 4 June 2021, with Results Day on Tuesday 10 August 2021.
- A clear contingency plan will continue to be developed, including key checkpoints up to the February break to assess public health advice and its impact on the plans for exams.



## Celebrating Success S1-3

Dr Appelquist reviewed and identified all behaviour data of our young people in S1-3. She identified all of the young people who have not had any de-merits so far this session. In recognition of this, a total of 261 Celebrating Success certificates were issued to pupils in S1-3 this week. 95 were for S1, 76 for S2 and 90 for S3 pupils.



In addition, those pupils with the most merits in every class were nominated for our wellbeing initiative, 'Hot Chocolate from the Heads'. The Head Prefect Team safely delivered a celebratory hot chocolate, or

flavoured tea to nominees during form time.

Special congratulations to Katie Saunders, 1E2, pictured above who, with 40 merits, had collected the largest number of merits in First Year.

## S1 Team Building Days



Last term we were able to run S1 teambuilding days at Auchengillan. Each House spent one day at the outdoor centre getting to know each other and their form class leader better. The activities were designed so that they would work together and develop key skills. Overall, the weather was really kind, making water sports and climbing, archery and many other activities a fantastic experience.



## Advanced Higher Geography

Taking advantage of the safety that learning outside affords, our Advanced Higher Geography students got out into the National Park to conduct their fieldwork. Working with the Education Team at Loch Lomond and Trossachs, our pupils had a fantastic experience gathering data for their investigations.



## Donald Dewar Debate 2020

Just before the October holiday, we were delighted to invite Curtis McLeerie back to school for a photo call with Finn Thompson. The pair were runners-up to The Royal High School team in the prestigious Donald Dewar national debating competition run by the Law Society of Scotland. The motion for debate was, 'this house would introduce a universal basic income'. Finn and Curtis did a great job in arguing for the motion in the four school on-line final. Congratulations to both.



## Duke of Edinburgh Award

While expeditions are not going ahead for now, we are working with the Balfour Award Group to support and encourage our pupils to complete their e-DofE in order to secure the final award. A Google Classroom has been set up to help with this. If young people need support, they should see Mrs Shaw in Drama/Pupil Support.



### **ICT & Staff training (blended learning)**

We have been given some extra staffing time (0.5) from Stirling Council to allow us to develop staff ICT skills. By the end of this week, all pupils S1-6, will have been issued with a personal Chromebook and all staff a laptop. Mr Scott in Technologies is leading this and has been delivering some helpful sessions to staff. This month sessions have been provided on using Screencastify, digital feedback and Google Classroom Rubrics.

### **Parents Meetings**

We had hoped to be able to run parents' meetings on-line this session. However, following a diagnostic review, we have found that our system simply cannot handle the volume of data required for multiple video links running at the same time. We will share regular tracking reports with updates on progress. We are aware how important this is, particularly in the senior phase and we are committed to keeping you well informed. These will be emailed home this session so that we can be sure that they get to you. Please let us know if your email contact changes or requires updating on our system. Do contact your child's Form Class Leader or PT Pupil Support if you have any issues or questions regarding progress.

### **AH Mentors**

The Head Prefect Team have launched a peer-mentoring scheme. Having secured the support of the Advanced Higher Classes, Google Classrooms have been set up where pupils in younger years can ask for subject advice and support from senior pupils. If your child would find this helpful, they should complete the link on their year group Google Classroom.

### **Wellbeing Wednesday**

We recognise that mental health and wellbeing is so important particularly for our young people dealing with the restrictions and challenges that COVID-19 has brought. As a school, we try to ensure we are inclusive, fair and respectful while being solution focused and optimistic.

To promote wellbeing at this time, we are marking Wellbeing Wednesday weekly with upbeat music at the beginning and end of the day, motivational quotes on the atrium screen and nominations for hot chocolate with the heads. This week Miss Maxwell created a chair yoga session which was used in some form classes. The picture shows Ms Vickers' class taking part.



Mrs Boyle has put together an on-line link for our pupils to access the books bought for the mental health hub. As the library is not operating as normal right now, pupils can see the books on offer through the link below and book them out. We have a great stock of books that promote positive mental health. Pupils can access this link: [https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1PWdR26NAt0zmVTP7OfxiP3btwtVeE1NrQYzXgNIXNZ0/edit#slide=id.gc6f75fceb\\_0\\_55](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1PWdR26NAt0zmVTP7OfxiP3btwtVeE1NrQYzXgNIXNZ0/edit#slide=id.gc6f75fceb_0_55)

Our school counsellor, Karin Figliolini, is running a focus group along with Morven Ferguson and Julia Anderson of S6. The group plans to raise awareness and will discuss a range of issues and strategies for helping selves and others.

### PE Activities & School Uniform

We are delighted that we are able to deliver some activities indoors. In Tiers 0-3, pupils can now participate in contact and non-contact activities both indoor and out. The team are planning the safest activities and the protocol for running them.

Unfortunately, changing rooms are an area of increased risk and will continue to be avoided for changing. This means that pupils should continue to wear PE kit to school on PE days. **This has had a negative impact on school uniform and I would ask for your support in ensuring that your child wears school uniform when it is not a PE day.** School PE kit is preferred and can be purchased at <https://www.border-embroideries.co.uk/schools/balfron-high-school-pe.html>

Bare midriffs are not appropriate for school. This has been of particular concern in science labs. For safety reasons pupils should be covered. They may not take part in experiments should their clothing pose a risk.

### Assessment Overview

We are aware that young people and parents need a clear steer on when assessments will take place so that they can prepare appropriately. On the following pages, there is an overview of the assessments planned for each year group this term. Pupils will be advised of exact dates by their teachers as these may be either side of the planned week depending on class progress and readiness.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have a query or an issue that we can help with. Many thanks for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely,



Elaine Bannatyne





## In class assessments October-December

S1 Assessments								
	Oct	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Dec	Dec
week beginning	26	2	9	16	23	30	7	14
<b>English</b>	continuous coursework assessment							
<b>French/Spanish/German</b>	Weekly vocabulary and grammar							
<b>Science</b>						x		
<b>Social Subjects</b>	x			x				
<b>RME</b>				x				
<b>Maths</b>			X					
<b>Music</b>								
<b>Art</b>							X	
<b>Business</b>							x	
<b>Graphic Communication</b>							x	
<b>Design &amp; Man</b>							x	
<b>PE</b>							x	
<b>ICT</b>							x	





S2 Assessments								
	Oct	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Dec	Dec
week beginning	26	2	9	16	23	30	7	14
<b>English</b>	continuous coursework assessment							
<b>French</b>								
<b>Biology</b>		x					x	
<b>Chemistry</b>		x					x	
<b>Physics</b>		x					x	
<b>Geography</b>		x			x			
<b>History</b>		x			x			
<b>Modern Studies</b>		x			x			
<b>RME</b>		X						
<b>Maths</b>							X	
<b>Music</b>								
<b>Music Technology</b>								
<b>Digital Art</b>				X				
<b>Art</b>								
<b>Business</b>								
<b>Graphic Com</b>	x					x		
<b>Design &amp; Man</b>	x					x		
<b>Practical Craft</b>	x					x		
<b>Engineering Science</b>								
<b>PE</b>							x	



S3 Assessments								
	Oct	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Dec	Dec
week beginning	26	2	9	16	23	30	7	14
<b>English</b>	continuous coursework assessment							
<b>French/German/Spanish</b>								
<b>Biology</b>				x				
<b>Chemistry</b>				x				
<b>Physics</b>				x				
<b>Geography</b>								
<b>History</b>							x	
<b>Modern studies</b>			x					
<b>RME</b>								
<b>Applications of Maths</b>							X	
<b>Maths</b>					X			
<b>Music</b>	x							
<b>Music Technology</b>						X		
<b>Art</b>				X				
<b>Drama</b>							x	
<b>Business</b>				x				
<b>Graphics</b>	x							
<b>Engineering Science</b>	x							
<b>Design &amp; Mamufacture</b>	x							
<b>Practical Craft Skills</b>	x							
<b>PE</b>							x	



National 5								
	Oct	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Dec	Dec
week beginning	26	2	9	16	23	30	7	14
English			x				x	
French								
German								
Spanish								
Biology								x
Chemistry								x
Physics								x
Energy								x
Geography								
History							x	
Modern studies				x			x	
Maths								
Music						x		
Music Tech					xp		x	
Art & Des								
Drama	x				x			x
Business			x				x	
Design & Manufacture	x	xp	xp	xp	xp	xp	xp	
Engineering Science	x	x			x			x
Graphic Communication						x	xp	xp
Practical Wood	x		x					x
PE	x						x	

S4 National 4								
	Oct	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Dec	Dec
	26	2	9	16	23	30	7	14
Geography	x				x			x
History				x			x	
PE	x						x	



S5/6 Higher								
	Oct	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Dec	Dec
week beginning	26	2	9	16	23	30	7	14
English			x				x	
French							x	
German							x	
Spanish							x	
Human Biology								x
Chemistry								x
Physics								x
Geography	x		x					x
History		x		x		x		x
Modern studies	x		x		x		x	
RMPS				x				
Sociology					x			
Maths								x
Music			x					
Music Tech					x		xp	
Art & Des	x							
Business		x					x	
Engineering Sci			x			x		x
Graphic Com								
Design & Man							x	x
Photography	Online folio							
PE	x						x	





S6 Advanced Higher								
	Oct	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Dec	Dec
week beginning	26	2	9	16	23	30	7	14
<b>English</b>				X				
<b>French</b>							X	
<b>German</b>							X	
<b>Spanish</b>							X	
<b>Biology</b>								X
<b>Chemistry</b>								X
<b>Physics</b>								X
<b>Geography</b>	Geographical study and issues							
<b>History</b>	X		X		X		X	
<b>Modern Studies</b>					X			
<b>Maths</b>					X			
<b>Music</b>								
<b>Art &amp; Des</b>	folio							
<b>Business</b>	X							
<b>Engineering Science</b>	X					X		