



## Balfiron High School

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**15 January 2021**

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that the first week of home learning has gone well for our young people and that you are all safe and well.

I would like to extend a massive well done to the vast majority of our pupils who have engaged positively this week. It would be really helpful if you could reinforce to your child that they should follow their **timetable** for the day. We hope that this approach will support learners to be organised and ready for when we return to learning on campus. Having had feedback from pupils from the previous lockdown, we are keen not to overwhelm learners at the start of each week. Some staff are reporting mixed levels of engagement on the Google Classroom so your help to reinforce that your child should follow their timetable would be appreciated.

Learners should complete all assigned tasks as directed by their teacher. While we recognise that there is a greater degree of flexibility and autonomy in remote learning, young people should not pick and choose which tasks they complete. Teachers and promoted staff will be monitoring and measuring participation and repeated failures to engage with/complete work may lead to interventions to support learners back to full engagement.

We are required to provide information on pupil **attendance** on-line. To minimise time taken away from learning activities and to avoid complication, we are doing this on a daily basis through a pupil sign-in form during form time. I understand that the 20-minute window may be tricky due to family circumstances and would ask that all young people complete this every day and by the end of the day. We will input the data to our school system retrospectively. I have explained this to pupils via an assembly that was posted to S1-4 pupils this morning.

We are sharing information with pupils through the year Group Google Classroom. Please could you ensure that your child has accepted the invite and is able to access the daily information that we are keen to share.

## Approaches to learning

Although remote learning has its limitations, recent research by the *Education Endowment Foundation* (April 2020) has suggested that remote learning can be successful.

*“Pupils can learn through remote teaching.*

*Ensuring the elements of effective teaching are present – for example clear explanations, scaffolding and feedback – is more important than how or when they are provided. There was no clear difference between teaching in real time (“synchronous teaching”) and alternatives (“asynchronous teaching”). For example, teachers might explain a new idea live or in a pre-recorded video. But what matters most is whether the explanation builds clearly on pupils’ prior learning or how pupils’ understanding is subsequently assessed.”*

We are in a good place to deliver remote learning because:

- Our teachers have been busy developing their skills in using Google G-Suite and have made great use of Google Classroom and other apps.
- Our teachers have shared innovative practice and we have been proactive in sharing examples of good practice within team meetings.
- We have established an excellent set of digital support resources for teaching staff and learners alike.
- All of our teachers have been issued with laptops, with cameras built in.
- All of our learners have been issued with Chromebooks. Learners have become used to and have developed skills in learning using G-Suite, especially Google Classroom, Docs, Slides and Google Forms, and being issued work and getting feedback in Google Classroom using posts and assignments.
- We have developed streamlined systems of communication for learners to have contact with class teachers, form class leaders and to flag technical issues with our ICT team.

Learners must maintain their usual high standards of behaviour when engaging with teaching staff and their peers whilst using our virtual learning platforms. As is normal in school, any failure to meet with our school standards, expectations and values will initiate an intervention to support the learner to better positive engagement.

Some teachers may engage learners in “live” meetings using Google Meets, where this is appropriate for the learning and some may prefer recorded videos that they post up using this function. **Please note that there is absolutely no obligation for our teachers to use this method of delivery**, some teachers may prefer and be more confident with other platforms to engage learners. What matters most is that learners are being engaged, stretched and challenged to a point that will allow them to progress and develop their capacity with us over this period.

Google Meet does require consent. Teachers will manage this for the classes engaging in Meets. Pupils who are 12 years old and over can sign consent for themselves.

**Parents/carers should not attend any live Google Meet that has been created for the teacher to engage their students.** If a parent /carer wishes to contact the school then they should use the normal established process of contacting the Principal Teacher of Pupil Support for their son/daughter. If they are curious about lesson content then they should discuss this as a useful consolidation exercise with their child. Other supports will be highlighted within this document to support with parental engagement in the learning.

### Issues with ICT

If pupils are having specific problems with internet access, Google Drive, Classroom or their Chromebook, please use this link to report it: <https://forms.gle/qi1ReEB64WXkAxdd9>

**Personal and Social Education(PSE)** will be delivered through your child's Year Group Google classroom.

Wellbeing activities and information will be available for your child to access. Resources will be posted on the day your child has PSE. During your child's PSE lesson Form Class Leaders (FCL) and or the Principal Teachers' Pupil Support (PT PS) will be available to answer any concerns your child may have. Your child can message their FCL or PT PS using the teachers email address or message in the respective Google classroom.

Year Group	PSE Support
S1	Form Class Leader
S2	Form Class Leader
S3	Mr McFarlane (Campsie) Mrs Shaw (Endrick) Mrs Mackay and Mrs Johnstone (Lomond)
S4	Mr McFarlane (Campsie) Mrs Shaw (Endrick) Mrs Mackay and Mrs Johnstone (Lomond)
S5/6	Mr Lauder/Mrs Fernie

### Pupil Council

To help get a range of feedback, the Head Prefects are joining me on live pupil council sessions next week through Google Meet. If your child is the pupil council rep for their class, they will be invited to the meet and should complete the consent form.

Please do get in touch if we can provide any additional information or support.

Best wishes,



Elaine Bannatyne