



GRYFFE HIGH SCHOOL

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Head Teacher: Mr Colin H Johnson BSc



Dear Pupils and Parents/Carers

I hope both you and your loved ones are well. Schools are on the last day of the official Spring Break, however I know this break has been like no other.

We would normally be returning to school on Monday, after 2 weeks of relaxation, with a focus on our last big push towards the SQA examinations, and then our senior pupils would be heading off on exam leave.

I'm afraid this year we return to continued uncertainty, and in a little limbo as we wonder when we will get back to school life, and when our pupils will.

The one bit of certainty I have is that we will **not** be returning to Gryffe High School this coming Monday 20 April.

I will be attending a variety of meetings next week, some via conferencing and a few in person, and hope to gather detail in order to keep you as up to date as possible. In the meantime I would like to establish a 'norm' where I provide updates and direction, where we **focus on key priorities as detailed overleaf**.

In trying to keep to a 'norm', we would always welcome a new member of staff to our fold, so that it how we will start this term. I would like to welcome Mrs Robyn Sorley, who officially starts with us on Monday 20 April, working as Temporary Faculty Head Science (0.4 fte) and Biology teacher (0.6 fte). A strange start to life in Gryffe, but I am sure pupils will make Mrs Sorley welcome whenever they finally see her in school.

Updates over the Spring Break:

We have been working on the school timetable and hope to have the majority of it in place very soon.

We continued over the Spring Break to support children of front line service parents/carers at the West Johnstone Campus and have been in contact with some parents/carers of vulnerable pupils to check on their wellbeing and support needs.

Mr Taylor has been in liaison with the Local Authority in regard to refunding a considerable amount of Activities Week money to parents/carers. This is further complicated due to various insurance claims and procedures however we believe we are making progress.

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Our focus for the weeks/months ahead:

- Keep pupils and parents/carers up to date on all information coming from the local authority and from the SQA.
- Continue creating online resources, for each subject, for **S1, S2 and S3 pupils** in order for pupils to learn from home.

We are aware that some of our S2 and S3 pupils, having gone through their option choices, may not be continuing with some courses. We would ask that pupils keep up to date with the subjects they have chosen, and ensure that all work given is completed. I would wish to emphasise that pupils should work at their pace, if they miss what they see as a deadline then that is okay, just email and say that. The main thing is that pupils continue with routines as much as possible, work at their pace, make returns when they have managed the tasks, and keep positive in their learning.
- Ensure that pupils are able to be in contact with their teachers in order to have support..... via Glow Teams, SMHW, emails etc.
- Support vulnerable pupils and children of front line service parents/carers.
- Revisit estimates to ensure we have followed all local authority and SQA advice to date, and have evidence/reasoning for estimates. We still await the *'further details on the estimation of grades, and fuller details of our approach to certification'* from the SQA, however I want to reassure you that we are doing everything possible to support our young people in ensuring that they gain the grades in their exams that reflects their work and efforts across the year.
- Start to create online resources, for each subject for **new S5 and new S6 pupils**. We are aware that our new S5 and new S6 pupils, have gone through their option choices do not know actual estimates given, so some pupils will not know what level is best for them.

I would like to set an initial date of Monday 27 April for all subjects to have some online resources for National 5 courses, Higher courses and Advanced Higher courses.

That date gives staff the week beginning Monday 20 April to plan appropriate coursework tasks. Pupils will be advised to consider what their subject choices were and make a start on some coursework, which we hope will keep pupils engaged, reinforcing the skills they have learned over last session and to ensure smooth transition should they be progressing with the subject. **Following a meeting I have with the Local Authority, next Wednesday, I will provide further detail to you next Friday 24 April.**

- To consider appropriate recognition for **our leaving S6 pupils**. Our existing S6 pupils made a significant contribution to school life, something which was highlighted as outstanding in our recent HM Inspection. The Inspection seemed so long ago, end of February, and the report has still to be published, however it did identify outstanding practices within our school, and our S6 pupils made a particularly positive impression. We will consider, in discussions with the S6 pupils, a way of recognising their time in Gryffe, and consider possible rescheduling of their PROM and leavers day...etc.

I am sure that we all are looking forward to getting back to our 'norm', and when we do I hope we are looking back with all our families safe and sound, and looking forward to fully embracing and enjoying the joys and experiences, and normality, that school life can bring.

Please stay safe and keep healthy in both body and mind.

Mr Colin Johnson
Head Teacher



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