

3 November 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

I take this opportunity to thank your son/daughter for all of their efforts in keeping themselves, my colleagues, their families and the wider community safe over the past few months – and I thank you all for your ongoing efforts at this challenging time. School remains a safe place for the young people in our care and together we can ensure that your child continues to receive a high quality education. I thank you for ensuring that your son/daughter continues to follow all of the mitigation measures which continues to be a monumental effort and we must maintain our focus over the months ahead. I have taken the opportunity to attach again the DE information leaflet, please read in detail and note pupils MUST NOT attend school if they have any COVID-19 symptoms.

Together we can minimise the impact of this virus as we continue to support the education and wellbeing of our pupils.

I wish to highlight that after careful consideration, we have determined that the Winter Examinations will move for all year groups to the final two weeks of this term, w/b Monday 7 December and w/b Monday 14 December. Please note that these are important examinations for all pupils and will help inform future career choices. For pupils in Years 12, 13 and 14 they will provide robust evidence of your son/daughter's performance in their public examination subjects. The examinations for these year groups will be conducted under strict Examination Regulations, therefore if the school is required to provide evidence to Examinations Bodies this year then this data will provide key information. The detailed examination timetable will be forwarded next week. Please note that it is impossible to maintain social distancing for pupils and staff for all year groups if pupils sit examinations simultaneously. Therefore, in order to ensure that appropriate protocols are maintained, the examination timetable will be built around a rotational model i.e. in one day for examinations followed by a different year group the next day, whilst the other year group has a study day. The examination timetable will clearly outline the examination and study days. As normal, prior to half-term February, full written reports will be issued to Years 12, 13 & 14 and summary reports to Years 8 - 11.

For obvious reasons it is not possible to host our normal Parent Teacher Consultation this year. However, it is crucial that parents are informed of their child's progress. Therefore, it is the intention during the month of November, starting next week, that teachers will telephone the parent/guardians of pupils in Years 12, 13 and 14. Please note the call will be from a withheld telephone number and will be a brief (maximum 5 minutes) conversation outlining progress to date and any concerns in the particular subject. There will be a similar parent teacher consultation later in the Spring/Summer Term for the other year groups.

We continue to live in challenging times and my thoughts and prayers remain with you all. Please take care and we will continue to support your son/daughter as they strive to fulfil their potential and reach their goals.

Kind regards

R S McLoughlin
Principal
Banbridge Academy