



Acting Head Teacher:
Douglas Morgan

Hermitage Academy
enquirieshermitageacademy@argyll-bute.gov.uk

19th February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer and Pupils (please share this information with your young people)

I hope this letter continues to find you and your loved ones safe and well.

As I mentioned in previous communications, I am writing to parents, carers and young people today to outline some of the changes that will be taking place next week with regards to how learning is supported for our young people both within school and online.

Hub provision

The hub provision that is currently in place to support the children of key workers and those young people who we have identified as being vulnerable will very much continue as it has done since the Christmas holidays. The only alteration that our young people will experience when they attend will be a change of location within the school.

Due to the phased return of some senior pupils for essential practical work there is the need to make the computers in the IT Suites available to them due to the specific software that they are attending school to utilise. Our hub pupils will therefore now be located in the English corridor with the use of laptops to engage with their online learning.

Young people in the hub should continue to enter and exit the building by the main door and maintain 2m social distancing at all times.

Online Learning Provision for S1-3

The provision for online learning for S1-3 pupils will continue as it has done over the past few weeks. However, from a recent school survey we have noted that some parents/carers mentioned that they would appreciate additional resources to enable their child to broaden their learning experiences whilst at home.

Mrs Harvey (Principal Teacher Attainment and Achievement) has been identifying opportunities for our young people should they wish to engage with generic extension activities and has highlighted the National e-Learning offer from E-sgoil as the perfect interactive provision. It is designed to engage the curiosity of our young people and allow them to explore a full range of topics for pupils in the Broad General Education.

What is e-sgoil? e-sgoil is an online educational resource focussed primarily on the delivery of live teaching to pupils across Scotland. As part of the National e-Learning Offer, the online educational provision is available during the current period of remote learning to support Scotland's schools in providing the best teaching/learning possible for their pupils.

Lockdown Live is a programme of live learning sessions, devised in response to the announcement by the Scottish Government on 4th January that school buildings would be closed to most pupils.

If parents/carers and young people feel that they have the time within their day and would like to engage with some additional extension activities we are recommending that they get involved with the 'Big Question'.

Learners are posed a big question about the world they live in every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. It goes out live at 11am but if this does not work with your current schedule then the core part of the lesson is recorded and uploaded to the website thereafter. You would then be able to use any of the big questions in your own time.

Mrs Harvey has created a 'Big Question' topic within the Youth Awards google classroom (code: xbmptjj) where young people can share any work that they have completed. The work that they share with us will not be marked or assessed by teaching staff but will be utilised to help our young people move towards gaining Dynamic Youth Awards.

Young people who are interested can access the 'Big Question' through the link below:

<http://e-sgoil.com/lockdown-live-s1-s3/>

If you have any queries regarding the 'Big Question' extension activities please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Harvey through the enquiries e-mail address.

Phased return of S4-6 for essential in-school practical work

Parents of young people who should attend school for essential practical work will have been contacted via Xpressions on Thursday 18th February with details of which full days pupils should attend for the foreseeable future.

Our young people have also been notified of this information by their class teachers through the appropriate google classrooms.

We have worked closely in partnership with the Local Authority to ensure that school transport is in place for those young people who usually receive it. Young people are reminded that the guidance remains that they should observe 2m social distancing on the school buses and that they should wear a face covering at all times, unless exempt from doing so.

When our young people arrive at school they should ensure that they are wearing a face covering (unless exempt) and enter the school building via the door to the Games Hall from the middle courtyard area where they will be welcomed by members of staff. They will then be asked to sanitise their hands and to ensure that they are 2m apart (as indicated by the markers) whilst they wait to have a quick temperature check using an infrared forehead thermometer.

This is the process that we have operated successfully in the school hub over the past five weeks.

Our young people will then proceed along the PE corridor and into the main hall where they will have the opportunity to pre-order and pay for lunch before going to the specific subject area in the school. There will be no charge for lunch if pupils are in receipt of free school meals.

The school day for our senior pupils will be structured so that lunch takes place from 12.00-12.45. This is to allow for us to keep to the national guidance that our S4-6 practical pupils should be separate from the young people in the hub who will have their lunch at the normal lunch time.

Our senior pupils can bring in a packed lunch or pre-order food in the school cafeteria. This is in a concerted effort to keep everyone as safe as possible and we would therefore ask that our young people remain in the school grounds at lunch time. The main hall has been set up so that our young people can have their lunch safely by being social distanced from their peers.

We will encourage our young people to take short breaks and to enjoy some fresh air where possible. We also ask that they bring a water bottle and a few snacks to keep them going throughout the day.

Our S4-6 pupils should wear full school uniform when attending for essential practical work along with face covering, unless exempt.

As our senior pupils will have full day contact with teaching staff for specific courses, this will replace the live sessions and other input that the young people currently have in that subject. When pupils are in school, staff will outline any work that they should carry out before seeing them again the following week.

This gives practical staff more time to work with young people in school and also ensures that pupils have the flexibility in their week to follow up on the subjects that they will have missed from being in school.

To support this our curricular leaders have worked with their staff to ensure that the core parts of live sessions are recorded and uploaded to their google classroom so that our young people can revisit them accordingly.

Lateral Flow Testing Programme

Earlier this week S4-6 parents and carers will have received details about the Asymptomatic Testing Programme. If your young person is attending for in-school practical provision from next week and you are content for them to be involved in the programme, please ensure that the consent form in the link below is completed in advance of them attending school:

<https://forms.gle/kLRJVaGfDVaSvNFG7>

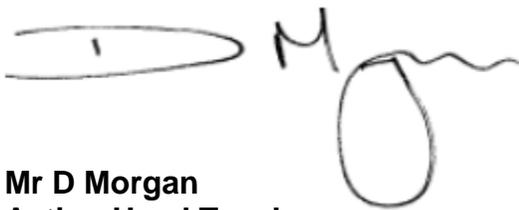
We will distribute test kits to those senior phase pupils who wish to participate on the first day they attend school during the w/b 22nd February for essential practical work.

Thank you

As a school we very much understand the pressures that families are under in juggling work, school and home life together. Can I therefore, once again thank you for your continued support of our young people in their learning and the changes they may be involved with next week.

If there is anything at all that we can do for you, please do not hesitate to ask by contacting us at the enquiries email address.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Morgan'. The 'D' is a simple oval shape with a vertical line through it. The 'M' is a simple block letter. The 'o' is a simple oval shape. There are some wavy lines to the right of the 'o'.

Mr D Morgan
Acting Head Teacher
Hermitage Academy