



Milne's High School

Education, Communities & Organisational Development

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9 October 2020

Dear Parent

I write to you at the end of a busy and ever-changing term with a few updates.

Term 2 preparation

We have worked hard as a staff to ensure that we continue to strive to our vision of providing a creative and ambitious learning environment while complying with the measures in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Although we will not be able to offer our usual events in school for occasions such as parents' evenings, Halloween or Christmas, we are investigating alternatives as follows:

- Instead of parents' evenings, we will be issuing a written report for pupils in S1-3. We still hope to hold a parents' evening for pupils in S4-6 in February, unless restrictions remain
- For Halloween, the Parent Council are sponsoring a pumpkin challenge with details to be publicised. Photographs of your child with their pumpkin can be sent to the school admin email account. Additionally, pumpkin pictures drawn by students will be displayed in the windows of the canteen as part of a locally organised event for younger children
- Remembrance Day will still be marked in school. Arrangements will be relayed to pupils during their Wellbeing and Attainment lessons
- Anti-bullying week occurs toward the end of November with materials being prepared by our Guidance team to be shown to pupils in class and links sent out to parents
- For St Andrew's Day, pupils can wear tartan alongside full school uniform. The acceptable exemptions are that a kilt or a tartan tie may replace the usual uniform items
- Christmas dances will not go ahead but we intend to hold virtual alternatives to our concert. We hope to hear soon about arrangements for Christmas lunch
- Fundraising such as our Christmas drive for the Foodbank and the Milnescroft hampers will still go ahead with enhanced planning
- Our last day whole school Christmas challenge will go ahead in an alternative manner

In terms of learning and teaching, we are still unable to deliver the usual varied activities and resources in class and therefore, the current way of working will continue. Teaching staff are working continuously to adapt courses and methodologies to comply with the restrictions in place.

Senior Phase (S4-6) Exams

Mrs Valentine, Depute Head Teacher, sent an update yesterday in response to the announcement by the Deputy First Minister that National 5 exams will be replaced with teacher's judgement based on robust evidence. It is therefore crucial that pupils continue to work as hard as they can and ensure that all deadlines are met. We also wish to reiterate that pupils will be given opportunities to learn and develop as well as gathering evidence which should be ongoing. As the situation remains uncertain, all pupils in the senior phase must ensure that all work reflects their best efforts.

Staffing

We wish Mrs Sparkes, Principal Teacher of Guidance of Spey house, our very best as she begins her maternity leave after the holidays and hope the next chapter is full of excitement and joy. Mrs Grant will be taking up this role for the rest of the academic session and we wish her the very best. Mrs Grant was previously Acting Principal Teacher of the Additional Support Needs department and we thank her for her hard work and leadership of this area of the school. As Mrs Burchell continues to undertake the Depute Head Teacher's role while the permanent vacancy is being advertised, we are advertising for an Acting Principal Teacher of Additional Support Needs. In the meantime, any queries can be relayed to Mr Adam MacLeod, Depute Head Teacher, with overall responsibility for Pastoral Care and Additional Support Needs. Yesterday we appointed Katie Doyle as Teacher of Additional Support Needs as Mrs Haufe is due to retire before the end of next term. We will be wishing her all the best when the time comes. Finally, we say thank you, farewell and best wishes to Miss Caroline Mair who leaves us today to begin her teacher training and we hope she enjoys this next step in her career and look forward to seeing her as a teacher in future.

Information system for parents

Moray Council have introduced *Parents Portal* as part of the Improvement and Modernisation Programme. This is to give parents online access to a range of school related services. You will be able to access the following using *Parents Portal*:

- Report your child's absence
- View the school calendar
- View your child's timetable
- View your child's attendance
- Update your own and your child's details
- Access Parent Zone, an information area
- Access online school payments system – iPay

To register for this service please click www.moray.gov.uk/parentsportal and follow the onscreen instructions.

Celebrating our success

There is great cause to continue to celebrate the achievements of our pupils and staff. Even although we are amid a global crisis, we see staff and pupils achieving great things daily and demonstrating creativity, innovation and ambition to achieve success. These achievements will be celebrated at assemblies planned for next term.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank parents for their ongoing support and encouragement this term. We are proud of how our young people have responded to this situation with a resilient, common sense approach. I hope your families stay safe and well and that you have an enjoyable break.

Best regards



Mrs T Cameron
Head Teacher