



Dear Parents/Caregivers

We hope you are all well and adjusting to a new way of life inside our 'bubbles' and wanted to touch base with you all before school begins again on Wednesday 15th April. Term 2, 2020 is going to be vastly different from what we imagined at the beginning of the year. We are moving into a new way of doing things in education unlike anything we have ever done before as a school.

Our teachers have been very busy setting up their remote learning programmes to begin with our Aberdeen students next Wednesday. I have asked teachers to use the communication platforms that they are most confident with and that are already set up with students and their families. Some staff will use class Dojo, some will use class Facebook pages, some will use Google classroom while others may use Zoom to connect with students and families. Mrs Mac has been using Instagram as many of you will have seen due to her appearance on Newshub last night at 6pm to share how she connects with students.

While we are looking forward to strengthening our connections with our students, as the term begins, there are some considerations that we want you to be aware of:

- Some staff have their own children at home with them or they have elderly parents who form part of their 'bubbles'. As a consequence of this, staff will not be available for contact all day as they are unable to replicate what happens in the classroom when online. Staff will be available at varying times throughout the day and I have asked staff to let you know when they are likely to be available to connect with you or to answer any questions/queries you might have.
- We know that not all staff and students have access to good internet connections or individual digital devices at home. This may impact on the way in which the teacher and students can connect with each other. The Ministry of Education is hoping to provide support in this area although we know that Secondary students who are studying for exams will be the first priority for this support. It may be a while before the Ministry is able to support younger learners with internet connectivity and devices. Hard copy (paper) packs will be delivered by the Ministry of Education to those Aberdeen students who do not have the internet or digital devices. We are unable to provide paper packs as the school site is closed during lockdown and we are unable to enter the school.
- Staff have planned and prepared work for students to do throughout the day. We know that many of you have other children at home as well, so your time is shared across all of your children along with other commitments you may have. We ask that you do the best you can do but please don't feel bad if all of the school work does not get done. We understand the complexities for families and students at this time.
- It is important to adapt your child's learning routine to fit in with your family and how this works for you. Some of our parents are essential workers so time for school work has to fit in around their commitments outside of home. Please make learning enjoyable and fun and allow it to fit in with your own family routines.
- Our personal well-being and the well-being of our children is paramount at this time. If your child is needing a break from an activity, have a game, go for a walk or give them a snack or a drink. The Ministry of Education is providing educational programmes on television that will begin next week to support learning at home. You might like to use this time to allow your child a break from the work the teacher has provided.

We do not want parents or teachers to feel stressed or under pressure while supporting children with their learning at home. This is a challenging and difficult time for all of us and we want to be supportive of each other and our children.

Kind regards on behalf of the Aberdeen School Staff

Lesley Lomas
Principal