

1st April 2020

Dear Parent, Guardians and pupils,

I hope you are all keeping well and are safe. As we draw towards the Easter Holidays, I want to provide you with an update and guidance on several issues as we move forward.

CLUSTER SCHOOL

Sperrin Integrated College has entered into a cluster school arrangement to support children of Key Workers. The location of the cluster school is Magherafelt Primary School. Sperrin College staff will be working there on a rota basis. Therefore, our school building is now closed until further notice. The Cluster school facility should only be used as a last resort, and if all other options for childcare have been exhausted. If you have any queries, please contact the school on: info@sperrin.magherafelt.ni.sch.uk

KEY STAGE 3

Teachers will continue to post new work on google classroom on a regular basis. Pupils in KS3 will not be required to work during the Easter Holidays. (6th-19th April 2020) New work will be posted again by Heads of Department on Monday 20th April 2020 for the new term when pupils should recommence their studies. Unfortunately, learning packs are no longer available for collection.

We are understanding of the varying circumstances you find yourselves in. Our expectations are realistic and we don't want any household to feel under undue pressure - just do what you can.

YEAR 11 AND 13

All Year 11 and 13 pupils **must keep** up with their studies. Given that modular GCSE examinations and AS examinations will not take place in May and June 2020, this will place enormous pressure on pupils in the examination series 2021. Therefore, it is vital that all pupils keep working to the best of their ability, submit work to teachers and act on the feedback given.

YEAR 12

GCSE Courses and Programmes of Study

Unfortunately, there is currently no new information regarding how GCSE grades will be awarded. Year 12 courses need to be finished, in line with teacher guidance. This is in readiness for the next stage in the learning process. In this next phase, and over Easter, pupils are advised to:

- Finish all note taking and learning to complete the course (if it was not completed in school)
- 'Learn' all notes in preparation to attempt past papers
- When the course is complete, begin to work on practice papers and self-mark or submit for teacher marking (Follow your teacher's online instructions as every subject area is different)

GCSE Coursework-CEA Courses ONLY

CEA have communicated to all schools that pupils **MUST NOW STOP WORKING ON COURSEWORK**. This means that pupils are asked to tidy up and ensure the coursework they have already fully completed is of the highest standard possible. No additional coursework should be completed. Pupils are advised to **RETAIN ANY INCOMPLETE PIECES OF COURSEWORK** rather than discard it.

GCSE/Level 2 Coursework-OCN/BTEC and Prince's Trust ONLY

Pupils completing GCSE/Level 2 Coursework for OCN, Prince's Trust and BTEC examination boards are advised to continue with this coursework, as no directive or guidance has been issued from these exams boards on how grades will be awarded. Please continue to follow your teacher guidance and submit work as requested.

A LEVEL

Again, we have no new information regarding how A Level grades will be given, therefore, until such times as we are clear on how grades will be awarded, I urge all pupils to **keep working**. The only exception to this is **COURSEWORK COMPLETION for CEA examination boards-this SHOULD BE STOPPED** (this includes years 13 & 14). The work you currently have should be tidied up and of the highest standard possible. (Should it be required) BTEC and OCR coursework should be continued to be worked on. This is particularly important for those progressing to a university degree course, many of which will require pupils to have the foundational knowledge and course content that the A level programmes contain. It is also very important that all Year 14 pupils continue with the coursework components for BTEC and OCR in accordance with the teacher instructions.

YEAR 14: UCAS

Mrs Martin has created a google classroom forum for UCAS updates and career advice. All Year 14 pupils should log in and check their emails on a regular basis.

CELEBRATING YOUR SPERRIN JOURNEY

At this time of year, we are normally planning our end of Year services. We look back at all the photographs we have in the archives and see how much our pupils have grown, matured and flourished. We celebrate the wonderful journey we have been on at Sperrin. Whilst it is clear, we won't be able to hold our services in June this year, it is my hope, that when we return to normality at some stage in the future, we plan to hold these celebration events for both Year 14 and Year 12. This means we can celebrate and mark the end of these important school years as you all progress onto the next phase of your educational journey, whether here at Sperrin, university, the world of work or NRC.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Now that the building is closed, all enquiries (including technical support) should be done via email to: info@sperrin.magherafelt.ni.sch.uk Please be advised that we endeavour to reply within 24 hours, however, this may take longer.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

During the period of the COVID-19 crisis, the Autism Advisory and Intervention Service (AAIS) has suspended its normal service. However, should you wish to contact the service details are as follows: barbara.teague@eani.org.uk, or telephone: **028 25661480**

There is also a booklet for Post Primary pupils containing advice and information about Covid-19 as well as hints and tips on studying at home and coping with anxiety and sleep difficulties. It also contains many links to very useful websites.

Parents can access the “*Staying Safe*” pdf document via the following link:

<https://www.eani.org.uk/services/pupil-support-services/autism-advisory-intervention-service-aais>

COVID-19 FREE SCHOOL MEALS UPDATE

As a result of the school closures, the Minister for Education and Minister for Communities have agreed to make payment to families who have been assessed as eligible for free school meals. In order for those payments to be made effectively it is essential that the Education Authority (EA) has your most up to date bank details. Parents need to follow this link:

<https://www.eani.org.uk/getfsm>, and complete the form. Payments will commence week beginning 30th March 2020. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please send an email to: MealsandUniforms-Omagh@eani.org.uk.

Once again, I hope you are all safe and well. Remember to adhere to all the Public Health Safety advice, be helpful and supportive of one another and I hope to see you all again when this is over. Stay safe.

B A Heron

Principal