



NBHS WEEKLY UPDATE

Friday 8 January 2021

Message from Mrs Rodger, the Head Teacher

I hope that everyone in the NBHS community has enjoyed a peaceful and happy festive break - despite the restrictions we are currently living under - and I wish you all a very happy new year. Whilst 2021 has started with the challenge of a national lockdown, I sincerely hope that it eventually proves to be a brighter and better year for us all. One of the hardest things about lockdown is not being able to be with those we love who live some distance away. Christmas Day gave only a very brief – but hugely welcome - opportunity to meet up. Particularly difficult for our young people, I'm sure, is the rule on meeting only one other person at a time, and only outdoors. But with the vaccine comes hope, and we are beginning to see the possibility of a time when our school will be fully open again, with relationships, lessons, extra-curricular activities, and simply moving around the building all back to the way they were before the pandemic. Until then, though, let's continue to do all that we can to ensure we keep ourselves and others safe.

One thing is certain – high quality teaching will continue throughout lockdown, enabling all our pupils to make progress in their learning. Remote learning begins in earnest this coming Monday morning, and there is detailed information on that accompanying this Update; please do take the time to read it thoroughly. At present, the plan is for remote learning to continue until Friday 29 January, though this is subject to review by the Scottish Government on 18 January. You will see from the remote learning paper that all work for the week will be placed on Google Classrooms by 8.30 am each Monday morning. That way, pupils know what is coming up throughout the week ahead in each subject and they can spend time on the Monday morning planning their timetable for the five days. The remote learning paper gives some suggested timings and plans for each year group, which I hope pupils will find helpful. We are aware that some pupils may find receiving all their work at the one time on a Monday overwhelming. I would urge them not to panic, but to take plenty of time on Monday mornings to get an overview of the work for each of their subjects, breaking it down into small, manageable chunks of activity which can then be spread throughout the week. Until they get used to doing it for themselves, pupils may appreciate receiving support from a parent with this planning for the week.

Education Scotland has today produced a helpful resource on supporting remote learning for practitioners, pupils, parents and carers. You can find it via this link: [Supporting remote learning | Supporting remote learning | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

We may not know what is in store over the coming weeks, particularly for our Senior Phase pupils, but you can be reassured that all NBHS staff are here to support our young people as best they can, often going above and beyond in doing so.

Higher and Advanced Higher Prelims

Due to the national closure of school buildings and the move to remote learning, the Higher and Advanced Higher prelims which we had scheduled for January will once again have to be postponed. We may have to review our approach to Senior Phase assessment and evidence gathering in the

light of future developments: we are awaiting further guidance at national and local authority levels and, in particular, directly from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. There is some information on Senior Phase assessment in the attached guide to remote learning and we will keep pupils, parents and carers fully updated with information as we get it.

It is very important that senior pupils engage fully with all remote learning during lockdown: teachers will be introducing new content and setting tasks which will ensure that pupils can continue to make good progress in their courses. We realise that this will be an unsettling time for many senior pupils and I would like to reassure you that staff will continue to care for and support all our young people. Teachers will be available via Google Classrooms or edubuzz email to address any subject queries or concerns, and our guidance and pupil support team will be happy to liaise with any of our pupils who feel in need of extra support.

Parents' Evenings

We have two parents' evenings planned during the period of the school building closure, for S2 and S3.

S2 parents' evening is all set to go ahead as planned on Wednesday 13 January, with pupils having made their appointments with teachers before the Christmas holiday. There are some teachers who will have difficulty accessing virtual appointments from home and we are liaising with the local authority education recovery team on how this issue can be overcome. We will keep you posted should there be a problem.

We are hoping the S3 parents' evening will be able to proceed, virtually, as planned on Thursday 21 January. Mr Jones is currently working on a solution to allow pupils to make appointments electronically, which he describes as "not pretty, but it might just work". We will share further details next week.

COVID-19 Positive Cases

Although the majority of our young people are not in the school building and, hence, the school would not be involved in contact tracing in the event of a positive case, we would appreciate it if you would inform the authority if your child tests positive for COVID-19. Please email the details to covidinschools@eastlothian.gov.uk. If you have no access to email then please call East Lothian Council on 01875 613 921. If your child is attending the school hub during lockdown, please do not send them if they have any COVID-19 symptoms; instead, please ensure that they self-isolate and book a test.

NBHS Communications

Just a reminder that if you wish to contact school you can email us at the address below, or contact your child's guidance teacher directly. This email inbox will be monitored every day during the closure of the school building. There are no staff in the building to take phone calls. Please note that, should a member of school staff phone you, it will likely to be from a withheld number.

communications@northberwickhigh.elcschool.org.uk

Dates for your Diary

Wednesday 13 January	S2 virtual parents' evening
Thursday 21 January	S3 virtual parents' evening
Tuesday 26 January	Parent Council meeting
Monday 1 February	School building to reopen (subject to review)
Friday 5 February	School closes for February break at 12.15 pm