



Executive Head Teacher:
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Dear Parent / Carer

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

Let me begin by thanking once again, all the staff who continue to volunteer for the Hubs; to deliver the free school means; to volunteer for the food distribution operation for those shielding; to keep the school open and running; and to those who have been doing extra jobs linked to making PPE, doing prep work for the upcoming P7 pupils and supporting online / digital strategies to help us cope with the changing landscape of what we do.

Of course, my thanks to all of our staff who are busy contacting our families to ensure their welfare and to all the staff busy preparing the new online courses that commence on Tuesday 5th May. Please note all year groups move forward from Tuesday: S1s become S2s etc.

Welcome

I would like to extend a warm welcome to the parents of our new S1 pupils who are due to join us formally after the Summer. We now have access to all your email details and will ensure you are copied into future relevant OHS correspondence to help both in the preparation for your child's transition to high school and to give you an understanding of how we are coping with these uncertain times.

The vast majority of pupils from our 19 Partner Primaries all use Glow and Google Classroom (GC) already. We are currently working with our Primary colleagues to ensure all pupils have their Glow Login and Password and that they are aware of how to use Google Classroom. We have created a Google Classroom for all P7s. The GC code is **uv24716**. Just log into Glow, then into Google Classroom, click the plus button and add this code. If you do not have a Glow Login or password, please contact your Primary school.

As we progress through this term, we will use this GC class to share online welcome videos, transition help, guidance and wee warm up tasks; similar to the transition projects we do every year across the Primary-Secondary classes. There is no insistence that the new S1 pupils do any work for the high school at this time. IT help guides are available on the OHS website and if you still have difficulty accessing our online provision, please send us an email via the contacts section of the website.

I would ask that parents consider downloading our “School App for Parents”, free from the App store. This will allow you to receive notifications when we issue letters, to see the calendar and follow school news. You can find all our policies, handbook and communications to parents on our website. More specific information for our new S1 will follow throughout the Summer Term.

Welfare check

As you know, this was the first week of our new Welfare Check system. It went very well indeed. Although we had more than a few uncompleted Welfare checks by the mid-week update on Wednesday, between the reminder email and the follow up calls to parents on the Friday, we have confirmed that every pupil is safe and well; and we have offered support to those in need. Thank you for your support in getting your children to engage with their My Time teachers.

School Leavers Welfare:

Current S6 pupils do not need to log onto the welfare checks via their My Time teacher. However, we wish to ensure that all our school leavers (S4, S5 and S6) receive continuing support and guidance during this difficult time. We have already been liaising with Skills Development Scotland and, together with our Guidance staff, we are helping pupils prepare for their positive destinations after school. We are also uploading lots of health and well-being advice onto a new separate Leavers Google Class, (Code: **ty6tp5y**).

Online learning

Following discussions with staff (many of whom are parents also experiencing online lessons) and from parents both across our own area and the country at large, we, teachers and parents alike, have learned a few things about remote learning recently.

Firstly, we need to remember we are not at school and we are not trying to deliver a full curriculum. We are trying to keep our youngsters mentally and physically active and academically engaged to help ensure they have some structure to their day. This will help support parents and allow pupils to step back into school more easily when the time comes.

Secondly, we need to remember that we are trying to perform this role at a time when both parents and teachers are faced with competing childcare / working from home demands. It is for this reason that I continue to reassert that the learning and teaching delivered, and how it is engaged with, has to be as flexible as possible.

Teachers should bear in mind:

They should not be setting huge levels of work for pupils to plough through at one time. The learning opportunities we provide should be provided in small, manageable chunks with reasonable timescales for it to be completed. Likewise, the work required back should also come in small manageable chunks for the teacher to comment on timeously.

Parents should bear in mind:

Each high school teacher may have around 200 pupils to provide brand new learning opportunities for each week. Therefore daily feedback to each pupil is simply not possible for every child, every day. Ideally pupils will receive feedback as often as needed throughout the week but weekly feedback is sufficient given current constraints.

I would also encourage parents (and staff), if they wish, to keep an eye on resources that can help with online delivery, for example SCHOLAR (for senior pupils) and BBC Bitesize. There are also new BBC educational programmes being aired each day at 10 a.m.

Monday Holiday

As Monday is a holiday, I do not expect anyone to be working unless they have very kindly volunteered for the Hub or free school meals delivery.

The Welfare Check forms will be uploaded onto the My Time classes on Tuesday morning instead.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire has been responded to by 96 parents/carers. The comments are very encouraging so far. Alongside the considerable praise for the efforts of our staff, there was a concern by a few parents that we are sharing too much information with parents. Trying to provide pastoral and academic support to a thousand pupils and their families, whilst neither staff nor pupils are in a single building each day, requires a fair amount of online communication. Please continue to read what we send you. The letters are sub-divided into sections to make it easier for you to scan through for what you feel is relevant for you.

If you have not responded already and are keen to do so, please log on and complete at the questionnaire before Friday 8th May. <https://forms.gle/Yz3fg3mTsDnCFH1P9>

As always, if anyone wishes to contact us about anything. Feel free to email your child's Guidance Teacher or contact us at:

<http://www.obanhigh.argyll-bute.sch.uk/contact>

Stay home, stay online, stay safe, stay learning.

Yours faithfully



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