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To All Parents & Carers

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Contact: Mr J Lothian

Our ref :JL/COVID19

Your Ref :

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Dear Parents and carers

COVID-19 update – Wednesday 25th March 2020

I am writing to update you on the current situation in relation to COVID-19 and Perth Academy. Last week was the most challenging week we have faced as a school community in recent times and I have no doubt that similar challenges were experienced across every family and household.

I want to say how proud I am of the staff and young people in the manner that they have and continue to respond. I also want to thank our community for the support and understanding we have received.

School Closure

Perth Academy is currently closed and will remain closed until further notice. The school has now entered a “virtual” phase and steps are being taken to ensure that learning and support is provided for our young people and staff. I am overwhelmed at the approach taken by our staff in ensuring this provision is set up and ready to go for our young people. Please bear with us as we improve the offer and develop the mechanisms for learners to submit their learning and for feedback to be provided to young people on that learning. The IT and server capacity of Perth & Kinross Council has been tested this week and there are connection problems due to the high volume of traffic on the server. Our staff are doing their best to connect with young people and to respond to any queries raised.

If you have any queries in relation to the online offer, please contact us at perthacademy@pkc.gov.uk and we will respond as quickly as we can. Check our website (Resources/Online learning) for information and follow us on twitter @PerthOnline. You can expect a further communication and update from Mrs. Paul tomorrow on our online learning offer as well as further guidance for learners and parents on communication and interaction when online in the virtual learning space.

Executive Director (Education & Children's Services) Sheena Devlin

SQA Presentations and Estimates

Yesterday, the SQA issued a statement saying that this year, schools and colleges are not required to submit learner coursework for marking, in Higher and Advanced Higher courses. In addition, regarding any coursework already completed: This work can still be used as part of the suite of evidence for teachers to draw on as they consider estimated grades. Coursework for a range of National 5 subjects already received in earlier deadlines will be marked. All National 5 coursework, due to be uplifted in April and May, will not be submitted for marking. SQA will provide further details to schools on the estimation of grades, that they will need from teachers to inform certification, and fuller details of our approach to certification, as soon as possible.

In meeting with S4-S6 learners last week my message was “don’t worry” and “keep working”. Learners must keep going and finish the task. The message remains the same. **Any young person with outstanding assignment or project submission deadlines should continue to follow these deadlines and prepare to submit this work to us.** Principal teachers will be in touch with candidates to advise them. While this work will not be uplifted and marked by SQA the submissions will be used as part of a range of evidence for making robust estimates of pupil performance.

We will be working with the presentation lists agreed by staff and the Senior Leadership Team prior to the SQA announcement of removal of examinations. Presentation levels will not be changed from this point.

Mr. Ross will communicate with all parents this week with further detailed information relating to SQA and the estimate process.

Welfare of staff and young people

The welfare of those within our community is our priority. We are working hard to stay in contact with our learners online and through other channels and we aim to provide the support needed to those that need it. We have taken steps to do this already. We want to hear immediately from any young person who does not have access to online learning so we can make alternative arrangements. Please do not hesitate to contact us if there is something we can do to support you or your family. Mrs. Birrell will be in touch with all parents within the next few days to outline channels of communication and to signpost useful support provisions. In the meantime follow us on twitter @WellbeingPerth.

These are unprecedented times and things are evolving and changing literally minute by minute. We thank you for your patience and understanding at this very challenging time. We miss the contact with our young people, and we are sending our best wishes and prayers for your safety, health and wellbeing.

Please all, take care and keep safe and well.

Yours Sincerely

J Lothian
Rector