

# CARRICKFERGUS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

**Principal:**

**J.A. Maxwell**

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**Education Authority - North-Eastern Region**

24 April 2020

**Dear Parent / Guardian**

I trust this letter finds you well.

Further to my letter of Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2020, I write to update you on a number of matters.

## **Online Learning**

We are now a week into the summer term, and we remain impressed with how the majority of students are embracing the online learning platform. It is a pleasure to see merits being awarded for diligent work and for great efforts made. It is also good to read reports from teachers regarding the quality of work in relation to content and presentation. I congratulate students who are working so diligently on the system, and thank you as parents for your tremendous work in supporting your child with their education at home. It is making a difference.

We encourage all students to embed strong and robust routines which include when they get up and go to bed, eating healthily, accessing their lessons as far as possible according to their timetable and taking 'screen-free' breaks away from computers, tablets and mobile phones, particularly in the evenings, as well as first thing in the morning, at break and at lunch times.

Now that the online learning platform is established and students and staff have got used to it, there should be less and less excuse for students submitting work beyond deadlines. Teachers will make it clear to students regarding when work is due, and consideration when setting deadlines will always take into account the fact that we are aware and understanding of families where technology has to be shared. However, all students should be aiming to meet deadlines and submit work unless there are very extenuating circumstances. This will avoid text messages having to be sent out from school or phone calls having to be made to you.

**FURTHER EXCELLENCE from PRESENT STRENGTHS**

**[www.carrickfergusgrammar.com](http://www.carrickfergusgrammar.com)**

**[info@carrickfergusgrammar.carrickfergus.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@carrickfergusgrammar.carrickfergus.ni.sch.uk)**

An overview of the summer term for Years 8-14 is below:

**Years 8-11** will continue their lessons on Google Classroom throughout the summer term.

**Year 12** will soon complete their specifications and therefore their learning on Google Classroom. Students should then take the opportunity to research future career options, read around their chosen A Level subjects and complete past GCSE papers in those subjects in order to ensure the best possible preparation for future study. School will communicate further about this in the next few weeks with links, advice and guidance on these matters. In the interim, students must continue to engage with their learning on Google Classroom until further notice, and they are expected to continue to submit work as indicated by their teachers. We remain convinced that this ongoing structure remains beneficial for all our students in this time of lockdown.

**Year 13** will continue their study on Google Classroom until further notice. In some subjects, students might be starting some preparation for their A2 courses and in others they may be consolidating their AS learning to ensure the best possible preparation for A2 study.

**Year 14**, like Year 12, will soon complete their specifications and therefore their learning on Google Classroom. Students should then utilise their time to research future career options and to prepare for the next stage in their educational journey. Again, school will communicate further about this in the next few weeks. Students must continue to engage with their learning on Google Classroom until further notice, and they are expected to continue to submit work as indicated by their teachers.

I would remind all students that they should be logging in with their @c2ken.net school Google account, and that they need to read instructions carefully and follow through on all work in its entirety. This includes watching all videos to their conclusion and reading all worksheets to the end.

### **Internal Examinations**

Internal examinations for Years 8-10 were due to take place in the week beginning 18th May 2020. Year 11 mock examinations have already been missed as these were due to take place in late March.

It is unlikely that students may be back in school by Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May, and therefore I am advising that internal examinations are now deferred until a time to be arranged in June. This remains subject to advice, guidance and regulation in upcoming weeks from government and other agencies regarding school closures and social distancing measures. If students have not returned physically to school by June, it is very possible that we will run some type of assessment online. This will include all students in Years 8-11.

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It is therefore important for Years 8-11 to engage effectively with the online work and submit it to their teachers when required.

### Wellbeing

As highlighted in previous communications from school, we wish to ensure that as a school we are supporting your son/daughter throughout this time. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you require support or advice. A reminder of communication channels can be found at the end of this letter.

I would also refer you to the e-mail sent out on Monday of this week from Mrs Kane, Head of Pastoral Care, and the attachments and links contained therein. These include information on online safety and emotional support.

### External Examinations

Last week I wrote four separate letters to parents and students in Years 11, 12, 13, and 14 with information on the future pathways for grading, as indicated by the local examination board CCEA and other examination boards in England and Wales.

Over the past week senior staff have been consulting in school regarding our processes for determining Centre Assessment Grades, in particular. I know that this is an extremely challenging time for you and your family, but please be assured that school will work tirelessly to try to ensure that students achieve appropriate outcomes.

The consultation will continue over the next week with Governors, Heads of Department and all staff, and we are awaiting further detailed guidance from CCEA which is due to be published on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020. In the interim, I am attaching a summary document to give you as much information as we can at this stage regarding the process.

CCEA are clear that the grades submitted by schools could be changed by CCEA after computer modelling and standardisation. Indeed, it is certain that some such changes will take place within this process overall. **Students' final grades will be the grades awarded by CCEA.**

If you feel that your child has experienced very extenuating circumstances that may have impacted upon their performance / progress in school at any point over the past two years, it is incumbent that you make school aware of this by e-mailing details to the info account at [info@carrickfergusgrammar.carrickfergus.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@carrickfergusgrammar.carrickfergus.ni.sch.uk). School reserves the right to request further documentary evidence if necessary. It is also anticipated that you may have alerted school to these circumstances at the time. Whilst we may wish to bear such extenuating circumstances in mind when determining Centre Assessment Grades, they are not a guarantee that grades will be modified, and school will not be in a position to share information on Centre Assessment Grades with parents or students.

## **Communication**

May I remind you of various communication channels the school has in place to support and assist you and your child as far as possible. Information and updates regarding individual subjects will be posted in the respective Google Classrooms.

Parents can contact the school as usual via the school phone line on 028 93 363615 during the day or the additional number of 07395930976. The general school e-mail account is [info@carrickfergusgrammar.carrickfergus.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@carrickfergusgrammar.carrickfergus.ni.sch.uk) . Any general Google Classroom issues can be addressed by forwarding the query to [kcrooks461@c2kni.net](mailto:kcrooks461@c2kni.net) . Safeguarding issues will be dealt with as a matter of urgency. These, and any other pastoral issues, may be addressed by contacting [lkane502@c2kni.net](mailto:lkane502@c2kni.net) .

The school community is also asked to check the school website on a regular basis for further updates.

### **In Summary:**

**Tel:** 028 93 363615 // 07395930976

### **Email:**

General: [info@carrickfergusgrammar.carrickfergus.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@carrickfergusgrammar.carrickfergus.ni.sch.uk)

Google Classroom / IT: [kcrooks461@c2kni.net](mailto:kcrooks461@c2kni.net)

Pastoral / Safeguarding: [lkane502@c2kni.net](mailto:lkane502@c2kni.net)

Website: [www.carrickfergusgrammar.com](http://www.carrickfergusgrammar.com)

Finally, I thank you as parents for your tremendous support. My thoughts and prayers are with our pupils, parents, governors, colleagues and everyone in our community.

Please take care and stay safe.

**Yours faithfully**

**J. A. Maxwell**  
**Principal**

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