



Dear Parent or Guardian

Plan for Ballycastle High School in relation to school closure due to Covid-19- update 20th March 2020

As you are aware, all schools have been directed to close from Friday 20th March 2020. I would like to share with you the plans which have been set in place in Ballycastle High School in relation to our school closure as a result of the protective measures against the spread of Covid-19.

All students and teachers have access to email and school folders through My School accessed through their normal C2k login.

Please ask your son/daughter about this and they will show you how they can access their account using the school login details. From here pupils can access email and Google Classroom.

During the period of closure teachers are planning to be in contact with students working remotely. Pupils should check their Google Classroom for subjects daily. We ask that school hours are respected in online communications. Understanding must be given to the fact that Broadband access may be limited in some areas.

Students have also been advised to bring home necessary books and notes thus enabling study and school work to be completed from home. **From Monday 23rd March 2020 school will still be open for pupils to collect any additional books etc.**

The following actions below outline how we will move forward, together during this period of closure:

- All pupils have been informed how to access their C2k email account remotely.
- From Monday 23rd March all pupils will commence a virtual timetable which will involve work being sent to your child via Google Classroom and C2k email.
- Information relating to accessing Google Classroom will be available in student email folders from Monday.

We will keep you advised and up to date on any further developments.

Supporting Children of Key Workers in Primary School

The Minister for Education in Northern Ireland, Peter Weir MLA has stated that schools will remain open from Monday 23rd March 2020 to provide care/supervision for the children of identified Key Workers. This relates to pupils who are in **Years 8, 9 and 10 only**. Due to skeleton staff, this will not be formalised teaching.

Key workers are those who are maintaining essential public services during the Covid-19 response. The Department of Education has given some guidance which outlines the broad categories of what would be defined as a key worker;

- Health and Social Care. This includes doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, home carers and staff required to maintain our health and social care sector.
- Education and childcare. This includes nursery and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who will remain active during the Covid-19 response
- Public safety and national security. This includes civilians and officers in the police (including key contractors), Fire and Rescue Service, prison service and other national security roles
- Transport. This will include those keeping air, water, road and rail transport modes operating during the Covid-19 response
- Utilities and Communication. This includes staff needed for oil, gas, electricity and water (including sewage) and primary industry supplies, to continue during the Covid-19 response, as well as key staff in telecommunications, post and delivery, services and waste disposal
- Food and other necessary goods. This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution and sale, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (e.g hygiene, medical etc)
- Other workers essential to delivering key public services
- Key national and local government including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response.

If possible, alternative childcare arrangements should be sought before deciding to send your child to school. For example, with other family members, friends etc. This is to try and limit the number of children and adults together in one place in line with recent social distancing guidance.

Children attending will be required to wear their school uniform.

Examinations:

The Minister of Education has also announced that GCSEs, AS, A Levels and other public examinations will not proceed this summer. Relevant authorities are working to develop a 'robust process for awarding grades'. In his letter the Minister stated that, 'the plan is to use a combination of prior achievements, internal teacher-assessed tracking information, predicted grades and analysis and modelling of existing data trends to provide the necessary assurance about the robustness, accuracy and fairness of the grades being awarded.'

We await further clarification in relation to this and until we receive this clarification I believe it is still sensible for students in relevant year groups to continue work on assignments, assessments, tasks etc which they have be instructed to complete by their teachers.

As the days, weeks and months ahead unfold, additional actions within school may be necessary and I will endeavour to keep you informed of these when they arise. I am grateful and appreciative of your support at this difficult and uncertain time for everyone.

Yours sincerely

I Williamson