



The Gordon Schools  
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Date: 23 November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

### **Update and plan for TGS week beginning 23 November**

Further to the notification I sent last night advising that our School would be closed to pupils today, I have been working closely alongside colleagues in public health and Aberdeenshire's Head of Education, Vincent Docherty, to decide on the next steps.

Due to the necessity for a number of our teaching staff to self-isolate, the School will remain closed to pupils for the rest of this week.

Online learning opportunities are already available to pupils and for the most part we are planning to provide access to live online classes for the rest of the week.

While we understand online learning is not best suited to every individual, I would like to reassure you of the benefits of this mode of delivery. Through our regional improvement collaborative we are developing ever closer links with e-Sgoil, an e-learning school based in the Western Isles. They are responsible for developing the national study support offer to pupils across Scotland and their expertise in delivering live online lessons is second-to-none. They count increased (not decreased) engagement and attainment among their many achievements and while we are all still learning at The Gordon Schools I have every faith in the team that they will be able to deliver an enjoyable and engaging experience for all pupils this week. We will be in touch with more information specifically about this.

Given that a number of pupils are self-isolating too, online learning will ensure everyone has access to their same specialist teachers and that the same high-quality learning and teaching is available to all. There are also obvious public health benefits from enabling all of our pupils to work from home this week.

We are still, however, planning on trying to get our NESCOL and Moray College pupils to travel to their campus classes this week. If you are intending to send your child, please contact us by phone or e-mail by 15:00 on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> this week. Please be aware that NESCOL pupils will have to make their own way to TGS as usual on Friday morning, but will also have to make their own way home from TGS for this week only.



I am aware that some questions have been raised with regards to cleaning at the School and I would like to reassure you that we have closely followed advice from our colleagues in public health at every turn. The Gordon Schools continues to be subject to enhanced cleaning measures, meaning that a full clean is undertaken at the beginning and end of each day, and common touch points are cleaned on a further two separate occasions during the day, in addition to the wiping down of tables by young people as well as staff as they move around the School. If at any point we were asked to put additional cleaning in place on top of all of this by health protection experts, we have done and will continue to do so.

As it stands, there is no evidence to suggest transmission of COVID-19 is taking place among pupils at School.

For those in receipt of free school meals, funds will be paid direct to families to make up for the absence of these. This will happen automatically during the next few days.

Our plan is to re-open as normal on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November and I will provide a further update before the end of this week. When the time comes to return, please rest assured that we have good control measures in place, an enhanced focus on hygiene as well as cleaning, an enhanced one-way system will be in operation and we are making every possible effort to ensure health, safety and wellbeing continues to be a priority for us.

Until we can welcome everyone back to School, I wish all of our young people every success in their online learning and please do encourage pupils to get in touch if they are facing any difficulty with this.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Gaiter', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Phil Gaiter  
Rector