

Harris Academy

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Respect Equality Enjoyment Achievement

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Parent / Carer Newsletter Session 2021 – 2022 Issue 12

Dear Parent / Carer,

As always, I hope the following updates are of use to you in keeping you informed as to developments in our school community:

Feedback from our Parent Council Chairperson

At the recent parent council meeting, it was agreed that as well as the normal minutes, feedback from the Chair of the Parent Council will be added to the Parent / Carer newsletter.

Staffing

The ongoing effect of the pandemic is having a major effect on staffing with the school having to deal with short-, medium- and long-term absence as well as dealing with vacancies brought about due to members of staff moving on or retiring. Recently two members of staff have moved on for promoted positions which is excellent for them.

The school are deploying the use of every available supply teacher to assist with these vacancies as well as having to deploy maximum cover arrangements, by other teachers within the school. On top of this they are ensuring in specific subject areas subject specialists are being deployed to ensure each class has some subject specialist teacher within each week. To achieve this, members of the senior leadership team and support for learning are being deployed in their subject area as well as undertaking their own duties.

It is hoped that this demonstrates to parents the lengths the staff are going to to maintain quality educational provision.

Litter

There continues to be daily complaints from members of the local community of pupils littering in the streets. Parent Council and school are asking pupils to be considerate to the community and environment by either taking litter home or ensuring it is disposed of in the correct bins. The Head Teacher of the school will be reassuring the West End Community council that the school are doing everything possible to reduce this issue and parental support is appreciated.

Social Media

Recently there have been some postings on the Parent Council Facebook page removed by the administrators. This page should not be used for airing concerns about members of staff and we ask that if you have a concern this is directed via the school office. We'd also like to remind you that staff will not engage in dialogue through this medium

Murray McLeod,

Parent Council Chair

Senior Phase – Our Approaches to Formal Assessments

Your young person is likely to begin to increasingly encounter a variety of assessments both as part of their day-to-day learning and teaching and as they prepare for their future SQA Exam Diet that commences in April 2022. Assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching and plays a crucial role in allowing your young person's teacher measure and monitor progress and, most importantly, provide targeted feedback and strategies for improvement.

Our return to a full SQA Exam Diet in May will also signal the first time that any of our young people in the Senior Phase will have the opportunity to sit examinations in a large-scale format, supported by SQA Invigilators and the associated rigours and regulations. To support our young people prepare for this experience we have taken the decision to plan three formal assessment opportunities that will take place between December 2021 and February 2022. Departments will have the opportunity to offer young people both an extended assessment that reflects the demands of the SQA examination and an opportunity to undertake an assessment in an examination hall.

In addition to this, you may notice that your young person may begin to undertake learning that contributes towards any externally assessed coursework that contributes to their National Qualification, commonly referred to as Assignments. Due to SQA course modifications, the Assignment has been removed from some, but not all National Qualifications.

Below, you will find a Quick-View Calendar that provides you with a summary of our planned assessments at present. Further detail about our Formal Assessment Diet, including Mathematics and English Formal Assessments, will be shared at the start of next month.

November	December	January	February	March	April	May
No further extended assessments	Maths Formal Assessment: W/B 13 th December N5/Higher/A. Higher	English Formal Assessment: W/B 17 th January N5/Higher	Main Formal Assessment Diet: 27 th January – 2 nd February (Inc. Study Leave)	Geography Assessment: Higher	SQA Main Diet	SQA Main Diet
	Art Practical Formal Assessment: N5/ Higher/A. Higher	Main Formal Assessment Diet: 27 th January – 2 nd February (Inc. Study Leave)	Tuesday 1 st Column D	Biology Assessment: N5/Higher		
	Business Assignment: N5	Thursday 27 th Column C	Wednesday 2 nd Column A			
		Friday 28 th Column B	Business Assignment: Higher			
		Monday 31 st Column E				
		Drama Practical Formal Assessment: N5/Higher				
		Music Practical Formal Assessment: N5/Higher/AH				
		Computing Assignment: N5/Higher				

P7 / S1 Transition update

Over the past two weeks we have welcomed the primary seven pupils from Ancrum Road, Blackness, Camperdown, Tayview and Victoria Park primary schools to Harris Academy where they have participated in a numeracy challenge event. This is the second transition event we have delivered this session following Mr Stewart, and Senior Prefects, visiting all six-cluster schools at the beginning of November. The event, whilst having a numeracy theme, is primarily designed to allow young people from across cluster schools to work with pupils from other schools to begin to form new relationships with a view to starting at Harris Academy in August 2022.

The three mornings were extremely successful with positive feedback from primary school staff and pupils alike. The young people were a huge credit to their individual schools and worked extremely well together.

We look forward to welcoming our primary seven pupils back into Harris Academy again in December to view a performance of our S3 Pantomime.

COVID Close Contact Tracing

As a reminder to all families, any contact tracing will now be actioned by NHS Test and Protect directly rather than via the school.

I would again encourage all young people to participate in bi-weekly Lateral Flow Testing to ensure we minimise infection spread within the school community.

Staff Absences

Last week, I communicated to the Parent Council that we are currently experiencing a high level of teaching staff absence. I assure you this situation is being managed in the best possible way to ensure that classes are taught by a subject teacher as often as possible.

Misuse of Social Networking Application – TIK TOK A letter from Audrey May, Chief Education Officer

The use of digital technology has changed the way we live our lives, particularly throughout the pandemic. Dundee City Council has received Scottish Government funding to ensure that young people have access to their own digital device, and we recognise the importance of responsible digital learning.

You may have heard reports in the media about young people mis-using TikTok, a video-focused social networking service which allows users to post short videos, in the hope of gaining significant numbers of likes and followers.

There have been a few reported instances of this in our schools, with videos which include images of school staff taken from online sources or even recorded in school, alongside statements which could cause reputational damage.

I would ask for your support in discussing this issue with your young person, so that they understand fully that posting unfounded anonymous claims about any adult in school does not only cause anxiety and harm but may also involve police action and even the pursuit of civil action by the individuals targeted.

Our school staff work hard to instil responsible digital citizenship and safe use of internet resources in young people, so that they are fully aware of the potential consequences of mis-using social media. Many employers, universities and colleges look at potential applicants' online activity as part of their selection process and I seek your support in working in partnership with your child's school, to ensure that they conduct themselves responsibly online.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Audrey May', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

AUDREY MAY
Head of Service (Chief Education Officer)

West End Christmas Market and Lights Switch On

We have agreed to share the following information related to one of the events related to the West End Christmas fortnight.



WEST END CHRISTMAS MARKET

Hot food and drink, sustainable gifts
and festive fun!

Dec. 2nd • 4 - 8 pm
Community fridge/ Millers Wynd car par, Perth Road

More info at www.thelittlegreenlarder.com



Kind regards,



Barry Millar
Head Teacher