

General School information during school closure

The front page of our school website has a link to information relating to COVID-19 or via the link <https://boroughmuirhighschool.org>

Wednesday 24th June - Update

Last week of School closure/ Last week of term / Holidays 12.00 Friday 26th June

As you will be aware, we have been developing multiple models for school opening in August. However further to yesterday's announcement by the Education Secretary that he now envisages a **100% return model for all schools on 12th August**, we are now re-looking at our contingency planning for pupil return, which of course hopefully we'll never have to use. Our attention will now need to turn to the H&S of staff and pupils, and we will await further instruction on that. Our aim is to ensure that by w/b 10th Aug we have clear advice and protocols to follow that we can then share with staff and pupils.

In terms of pupil return contingency, we have now designed a contingency model for 50% pupil return with social distancing of 1m. That model, if required, would allow subject teaching to take place. If social distancing were to revert to 2m then the 50% return model could not deliver universal subject teaching, but we would adopt this if we had to. The 33% return model is now deemed politically unacceptable and we will set that model aside entirely. Hopefully any contingency model will remain just that - a contingency that we will never have to use.

Given the shift in position of the government I am not minded at this stage in the term to start sharing these contingency plans in more detail than I have given above. I have spoken with the Chair of the Parent Council and we are in agreement that this approach is now appropriate.

It now looks like our preparation is going to be for an almost normal pupil return to school and all the planning that goes around that. As said, our H&S committee we will be focusing on everyone's H&S for returning to school and we will keep you posted with progress nearer the time of school re-opening

Have a great holiday and I look forward to seeing your children on August 12th!!

Mr Dempster

Monday 22nd June

Week 12 of School closure/ Last week of term / Holidays 12.00 Friday 26th June

This is indeed week 12 of school closure. I want to thank everyone for working so hard and coping so admirably over these last 12 weeks. Friday 12.00 does signify the start of the summer break and it is vital that we all try and take a break from school and recharge our batteries. Have a relaxing and refreshing holiday when it comes!

Mr Cifelli's Retires!

This is Mr Cifelli's last week at Boroughmuir as he retires on the last day of term. I want to make a personal thank you to him for all the incredible support he has given to the school and to me personally during his 14years at the school. I wish him a well deserved, long and happy retirement.

Mr Cifelli's Final S3/4 Assembly

Mr Cifelli has recorded a special assembly message which will be uploaded to the S3 and S4 Year Group Teams pages on Monday.

There are assemblies for all year groups this week with a cameo appearance from me!!

Congratulations to Ms Emma Thomson who has appointed as full-time permanent Curriculum Leader of Computing in Liberton High School.

Activity Week

Our traditional Activity week is being replaced this year with 2 Health and Wellbeing days. They will take place on 25th and 26th June. As per Activity week these days are for the junior pupils in years S2- S4 and as such no "work" will set for any S2-S4 pupils on these days. We anticipate that pupils in S5 and 6 will continue with home study in lieu of the work experience they would have been doing.

We hope that for S2-4 this will be a healthy break from home learning and a good way to finish the term.

We do hope you can join in as a family in some of the activities.

The booklet describing all the activities will be group called out to pupils in S2- 4 later this week, but here is a summary

Activity and HWB Days 2020 – Summary of Activities

1. Boroughmuir 5000	11. Scrapheap Challenge
2. Walk in the Woods	12. Camping and Outdoor Cooking
3. Create and Craft	13. Photography
4. Minecraft	14. Race across the City
5. Boroughmuir Bake Off	15. Random Acts of Kindness
6. South Edinburgh Adventure Race	16. Mindfulness
7. Edinburgh by Bike	17. Gardening
8. Music, Drama & Dance	18. Microadventures – Into the Wild
9. Cheer Experience	19. Royal Observatory
10. Young Activists	20. Creative Writing: Gallery Tour

Return to School

Since writing about this last week (see below) the government have stated that 1/3rd return model as proposed by Edinburgh City is not 'strong' enough and that the City needs to move towards ½ return.

This is something that all Head Teachers would like but while social distancing remains at 2m it nigh on impossible for large secondary schools like us to accommodate 700 pupils (half the school) in groups of no more than 10. (the max number of pupils that can be in our classrooms with 2m social distancing)

The 50% model favoured by the government does not easily allow pupils to receive subject specialist input.

Here is a simple illustration of the issues we face.

Model 1 – Supervision Basis

Bringing 50% of pupils back can be done on a 'supervision basis' but even for us that would involve

70 sets of 10 pupils = 700 pupils (50% school population)

70 teaching spaces (we have 74)

70 teachers (we have 90 classroom teachers - but how many are available?)

This would not allow a match between pupils and subject teachers.

Simply creating groups of 10 pupils would then require access to technology and wi-fi for all pupils if they were to self-study. That we do not have.

Model 2 - Subject Teaching basis

As soon as we try to provide subject teacher input, because of the way subjects in the senior phase are chosen and also because the pupils in these classes are not in multiples of 10 we find that providing this would involve an additional 39 periods of teaching every period, therefore
109 groups of pupils (of varying sizes of 10 and below)
109 teaching spaces
109 teachers

Even if we got additional teaching spaces in churches and leisure centres, we don't know how we could timetable staff or what resources we would have to deliver lessons!

The Edinburgh 1/3 model was in fact an honest model in that it does deliver subject teaching within the resources of the school rather than have pupils sit in supervision groups perhaps feeling they were better off working at home.

If the 2m social distance rule reduces then things will be quite different.

The Council are working on a model that is deemed appropriate and that is workable. We will keep you posted and give you an update as soon as a suitable model is agreed on.

We really are hopeful that social distancing for pupils in schools can be reduced and allow a better model of return to school.

We are planning to issue final details to all staff and parents w/b 3rd August as we do anticipate changes will happen over the summer period.

Virtual 3 Day Visit

Our 3 Day Virtual Transition was a huge success. Feedback from parents and pupils told us that pupils were “Blown away” by the “interactive, fun and engaging” learning which was posted on our new S1 Team by our Boroughmuir teachers. A huge thank you also to our Cluster Primaries for their help in the planning and logistics! We were overwhelmed by the enthusiasm and positivity of more than 250 of our new S1s and we just about managed to keep their energy under control. We were exhausted but delighted and very proud of them. It was a great start to their Boroughmuir experience.

Enhanced Transition

This week we are welcoming some of our soon to be S1s in small “enhanced transition” group visits. Our Support for learning and Pupils Support Team along with Ms Presly are leading these visits on Tuesday and Wednesday this week. PC Fowler will also join us! We will be able to take them on a tour of the school and get to know them a little better before the end of term.

Staff leaving at end of session 2019/20

Mrs G Currie	-	Clerical Assistant
Mr A Laing	-	Probationary Teacher of Biology & Physics
Mrs A Qaisar-Javed	-	Probationary Teacher of Social Subjects
Miss M Church	-	Probationary Teacher of PE
Dr C MacMillan	-	Probationary Teacher of Chemistry
Mr A Dunn	-	Temporary Teacher of Chemistry
Mrs E Thomson	-	Teacher of Computing
Mrs M Cemborian	-	School Support Assistant
Ms Kelly Lockhart	-	Pupil Support asst
Ms Holly Burns	-	Temporary Teacher of PE
Ms Yvonne Cameron	-	Temporary Teacher of Art.

Retirements – June 2020

Mr P Cifelli	-	Depute Head Teacher S3/4
Mr I T Barbour	-	Teacher of Media
Mr S Donegan	-	Teacher of Business Education
Mr Graeme Williamson	-	Instrumental Instructor

Staff who left in 2019/20

Mrs H Marshall - Pupil Support Leader – Leamington
Mrs A Clegg - Curriculum Leader of Expressive Arts

Can I thank all our staff leavers for their incredible contribution to the school.

Career Support from Skills Development Scotland.

Message for parents of new S4-6

Hello, my name is Lou Murphy and I provide career support from Skills Development Scotland to pupils from Boroughmuir High School along with my colleagues Helen Irons and Fiona Grubb. I hope you and your families are keeping safe and well during this pandemic.

During this time, like pupils, Career Advisers are unable to attend school, but we continue working from home, for us this is likely to be until at least October.

With this in mind Skills Development Scotland still want to support pupils to develop their Career Management Skills to help them make career decisions that are right for them, as they move through school and eventually leave.

I may be contacting your young person in the senior part of the school between now and October (including the summer holiday) to discuss their plans for the year ahead although you or your young person can also contact us at a time that suits you by calling our local Edinburgh office on 0131 718 2040.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to working with your young person in the year ahead,

Have a great Holiday and we'll be back in touch w/b 3rd August with further updates about our return to school.

Mr Dempster

Monday 15th June

Congratulations to Ms Caroline Nisbet who has appointed as full-time permanent Pupil Support Leader in Boroughmuir High School.

Return to School

This is week 11 of school closures.

The City of Edinburgh have confirmed that all school will adopt a 1/3rd model for pupils returning to school in August. The first day that any pupils will be in school will be Wednesday August 12th.

This was communicated in the letter below which was emailed to all parents on Friday 12th June.

<http://boroughmuirhighschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Letter-to-Mainstream-Parents-and-Carers.pdf>

Each 1/3rd of pupils will be in school for a 'whole' day although this may a slightly shortened day.

With only 1/3rd of pupils being in school there are obviously 2/3rds of pupils at home engaging in home study.

It is essential that we try to provide staff with some additional time to manage the home study provision. No pupils will be in school on a Friday. This is time for staff to develop and create online study materials.

We have been looking at models that would allow the delivery of full day teaching for a 1/3rd of our pupils and are continuing to speak to Heads of Department about the viability of certain models.

We will communicate our preferred model with you by 24th June.

Further and final details will be shared the week before term starts in August in case there are changes in social distancing measures over the summer or if schools are instructed to adopt an alternative model.

We are also working with Senior Offices in the City and our own Health and Safety committee to ensure that proper and robust systems are in place to ensure infection control through social distancing, hand washing and sanitising as well as the control of pupil movement around the building. Facilities management will put in place appropriate cleaning regimes for all areas of the school through an increased day cleaner provision as well as increased out of hours cleaning.

Again, we will be able to provide more details on this prior to pupils returning to school.

Resources

Here is a link to *Family Magazine* – a local publication containing useful information on home schooling and entertaining children, as well as all important information about health and wellbeing.

https://issuu.com/familiesonline/docs/edinburgh_3_fr=sOTJiMzE1MTMyMDM

This week

w/b 15th June - Awards Ceremony Video uploaded to web site.

Wed 17th June - P7 Transitions Power point and video uploaded to our web site

Have a good week.

Mr Dempster

Monday 8th June

Staffing

Congratulations to Mr Clive Hembury who on Monday 1st June was appointed as full time permanent Deputy Head Teacher in Boroughmuir, replacing Mr Cifelli who retires at the end of term.

We are also delighted to announce the following appointments: -

Devon MacDougall - full time permanent teacher of Mathematics (currently probationer teacher at Boroughmuir)

Ms Katrina McLeod – full time permanent teacher of Physics (currently at Harlaw Academy, Aberdeen)

Ms Katie Dunlop - full time permanent teacher of Media Studies (currently at Kelso High School)

Return to School/ Blended Learning

We are currently designing our “Blended Learning” in line with national guidance and support which is now emerging.

It is however apparent to all high schools, that with current social distancing measures, there will have to be a significant increase in the number of classes i.e most classes will have to be sub-divided into 3 smaller classes.

Classroom space is a factor, but even with sourcing more space elsewhere the limiting factor is the number of teachers we have.

This will mean that in the course of a week each class will be in school for significantly less time than normal.

We are continuing to work with emerging guidance and will share with you as soon as we can what a pupil timetable might look like as well as our understanding and expectations of the blend of learning at home and in school from August onwards.

Resources

As of this week some departments will be making arrangements with pupils for the collection of essential teaching resources.

This will be arranged directly with pupil groups via Teams or other on-line platforms.

Departments will publish times for collection.

Materials will be able to be collected at these times from the foyer of the school.

Staff will be on hand to ensure the process takes place in an organised fashion with social distancing being observed.

Learning@Boroughmuir@Home – 8th June Update.

Incredibly we now only have 13 teaching days left of this term for S2-S4 and 15 days for S5/6. We are aiming to end the term with a strong focus on Health and Wellbeing.

As such, we are designing two Health and Wellbeing Days in lieu of Activity Week to finish the term. This will be for the pupils involved in Activity week - our new S2 -4.

Therefore, learning at home for “New S2-4” should finish on Wednesday 24th June. We will send out soon details of suggested planned activities and how to get involved. We hope you can all get involved!

New S2

S2 have told us that they have been finding the last couple of weeks a challenge and we have taken this on board. They have not had much of a change in their learning in contrast to other years. Teachers are adjusting learning to reflect this and to ease the pressure that is being felt by some pupils. Please continue to do what you can. Ms Presly’s assembly reinforces this message for them. We still recommend that 3-4 hours a day of learning is sufficient and we know the structure of this will of course vary for families.

If there are any concerns at all please get in touch with your Guidance Teacher, Class Teachers, Year Heads or use the Admin address if you are in any doubt. We are here to help.

Assemblies this week!

Please try to share in the year group assemblies this week which will be posted on year group Teams. There is also an item in the assemblies for all year groups from Ms Aleksandowicz to mark “World Empathy Day” on 9th June.

P7 Three Day Visit & P7 Virtual Information Evening Video 17th June

We are really pleased to be hosting a “Virtual P7 3 Day Visit” in our new S1 Team which is being created in collaboration with our primaries. All the information for P7 parents is being added to our website. We will

post a P7 Information Evening video on our website on the 17th June. Our cluster Parent Councils are gathering questions.

If you are a parent from out with a cluster school please email us any questions directly to Admin@boroughmuir.edin.sch.uk

Apologies for any confusion regarding uniform information on the letter for P7 parents. We are currently updating this and will include it on the website and in the video for parents.

Awards Ceremony

Every year we hold our annual awards ceremony in June. Given the current circumstances we are unable to hold this in the traditional format. Therefore, we have decided to try and celebrate this differently for 2020.

We are creating a video which will include a roll of pupil names with the award they are receiving. This award may be for academic success in a subject (S4,5,6) or for an area of service to the school.

Award winners will be contacted in advance.

The video should be ready for distribution week beginning 15 June. This video will be distributed through groupcall and on our twitter feed.

Well done to all award winners and watch out for our virtual awards!

Keep well and have a good week.

Mr Dempster

Monday 1st June

Parent Council meeting - Webinar

Last Wednesday night we had 109 parents take part in a parent council webinar where SLT were able to answer pre-submitted questions and answer others submitted on the night. Feedback from the parents has been excellent with great compliments being paid to our staff for providing the level and quality of support that they are during this time.

I'd like to thank all our parents and pupils for their support of our staff during this period of school closure.

Pupils' Return to School

As we enter week 9 of school closure, we are awaiting further guidance on how we will bring pupils back to school and what exactly blended learning will look like.

We are pretty sure however that we will be starting on August 11th with 1/3rd of the school in at any time. There are obviously different ways we can do that but ensuring subject areas can be staffed and roomed for the increased number of smaller socially distanced classes will be a challenge.

We will obviously keep you updated as details emerge around this.

Have a good week and keep well

Mr Dempster

Monday 25th May

I hope you were all able to enjoy last week's Monday holiday – the last holiday before the summer break on 26th June.

Congratulations to Mrs Marshall who on Friday 15th May was appointed as full time permanent Depute Head Teacher at Liberton High School.

Mrs Marshall had been acting in that post for the last year and we wish her well in her new post.

She is also due a massive thanks for all she has given to Boroughmuir in her time as a Pupil Support Leader for Leamington House and in her role as a music teacher before that.

Congratulations to Klara Hinze in S2 (new S3) who has won a national competition to 'design a bear' for John Lewis which will be sold to raise funds for the NHS. Her Caped Crusader design won through the final voting rounds. You can see the full story on page 3 of Friday's Scotsman Newspaper or just google Klara's name and you will find the story! Well done Klara.

SQA

Staff have now completed the task of assigning estimate grades in each subject for pupils doing National Qualifications in S4,5, 6.

These estimates have been produced using the guidance set out by the SQA. The estimates have been cross checked and quality assured by departments and the Senior management Team.

Please be assured the highest level of professionalism has been applied to this process to ensure these estimates reflect the true potential of all our pupils.

In line with advice from the government schools cannot share these estimates with parents or pupils until after the SQA issue the 'results' to pupils on 4th August.

Home Study

Teachers and pupils have generally settled into good routines around home study – but there are always improvements to be made and I know that our teachers are constantly sharing good practice and developing their own skills in delivering on-line learning. Similarly, I know our pupils are finding what works for them and the best way to organise their days and weeks.

If pupils do need additional support, they must email their subject teacher or their guidance teacher for help.

Learning@Boroughmuir@Home:- Update from Ms Presley

When we started teaching in lockdown our initial aim was “surviving” and getting materials online quickly. After Easter we moved into a “striving” phase and were aiming to improve the quality of learning. We gathered feedback from pupils, parents and teachers. Building on that more recently we feel we are now “thriving” and have moved forward with the quality of learning we can now provide for you all at home. Our ultimate aim is “arriving” at point in the very near future when we are providing really high quality learning at home for all our young people and parents.

This week we are sharing “Virtual Assemblies” with all year groups to support you all at home. This was a suggestion from one of our pupils. Great idea! Here is the link for S1 and S2 (new S2/3) from me with some Health and Wellbeing advice from Mr Collard and an introduction to Ms McLeod who replaced Mrs Clegg as Curriculum Leader for Expressive Arts.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g5ZSFtrdE5o&feature=youtu.be>

The same message and advice is being recorded by Mrs Paterson for S5/6 and Mr Cifelli for S3/4. We have used the same points about learning at home in them all. These will be shared on year group teams this week too. We are continuing to look out for our pupils and keep an eye on them. If they have not been engaging with learning we are getting in touch to check in with them.

Here is another useful link to the National Parent Forum who have produced new “Nutshell” advice around learning in lockdown. It's worth pupils looking at it also.

<https://www.npfs.org.uk/>

Our teachers are also designing and producing more materials that do not require to be online or use devices. I have included some from Health and Food technology and RMPS for pupils in S1 – 3.

<http://boroughmuirhighschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/HFT-Home-Learning-Web.pdf>

<http://boroughmuirhighschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/RMPS-Home-Learning-Web.pdf>

We have also been adding more videos, voice overs and adding that human connection our pupils told us they were missing the most. We are continuing to develop and teach each other the digital skills to keep improving this too. We are also discussing and planning how we can support “Activity Week at Home” happening for S1-S3 pupils. We will keep you posted.

Over the last two months we have all developed new skills and have adapted to our “new normal” of learning at home.

We hope you and your children continue to feel supported by us. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with your child’s guidance teacher if you require any further support or help.

Message from Chair of Parent Council – Kate Morris

Parent Council Meeting 27 May 2020, 6.30 to 8.00pm (previously Groupcalled out Thursday 21st May)

I hope that you and your loved ones are well.

We have now all had time to settle into our new routines after the Covid-19 shutdown of the physical school, and the lockdown measures in general. I know that times are still challenging, and that families are having very diverse experiences of the current situation, but I believe that we are fortunate in the strengths of our school and its community, and that these strengths will stand us in good stead in an uncertain future.

To reflect the fact that many of you have questions you would like to ask, we are holding the next PC meeting on Zoom, and setting aside the bulk of the time for answering parent queries. A Zoom link will follow shortly.

If you have a question you would like to ask, please send this to me by the end of Sunday, 24 May, at chair@boroughmuir-pc.co.uk

I cannot guarantee that all questions will be answered, but we will get through as many as possible.

Pupils' Return to School

You may have seen Scottish Government information on the re-opening of schools, proposing that the re-opening of all schools across Scotland is aligned and will happen on Tuesday 11th August. This is a week earlier than Edinburgh schools were due to return. I append the extract below.

The start date of the new term will be standardised to 11 August 2020 only for the purposes of managing Covid-19, which will mean an earlier than planned start for some schools. The Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers will give advice to Local Negotiating Committees for Teachers on how to manage this locally and how to reach agreement on when lost holiday time should be taken back. A universal approach will bring benefits for children, including an earlier return to school for many, and the ability for all learners to engage with weekly in-home learning tasks.

We know that pupils will attend school on a part time basis and will have a blend of school learning and home learning. Again, I have no further detail on any aspect of this, but will keep you posted as details emerge.

Have a good week and keep well.

Mr Dempster

Friday 15th May

This is to remind you that Monday 18th May is a school holiday and as such there will be no teacher input for home study.

Home study materials will of course still be available on TEAMS and other platforms.

HUB schools for the children of key workers are still operating during the holiday.

Key workers who need to use this facility can do so by booking via this link.

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/schools/emergency-school-closures>

Monday 11th May

This is week 6 of school closures

I hope you enjoyed the Friday holiday and it being the month of May there is another holiday to come- next Monday 18th.

Many subjects are moving to the next level of study today and the information in my 2 previous posts should assist in this.

Unfortunately, it looks as though we will not be returning to school for some time.

We will continue to develop our on-line resources and methods of remote teaching.

We are also continuing to work in a wide range of other areas to ensure the school is 'good to go' when we do eventually return.

This includes completing the course choice process, developing the school timetable for next session, creating estimate grades for all our SQA candidates, enrolling the new S1 and providing a virtual transition process for them, recruiting new teaching and non-teaching staff, writing the school's Standards and Quality Report and Improvement Plan, inputting to the school extension works which should resume soon as well as dealing with the many day to day issues that arise in schools – even when closed.

We are also continuing to support the work of HUB schools for the Children of key workers with 39 Boroughmuir teaching staff and 5 Senior Leaders involved in our HUB at JGHS on a rota basis.

SQA

Teachers and departments are now starting to create SQA estimate grades as asked for by the SQA.

There has been a lot of information provided to schools by the SQA and staff teams are now working together to create these grades as per the protocols. Of course, exercising teacher professional judgment in their creation is also an important factor and this is clearly highlighted by the SQA.

All our teachers want our pupils to attain at the highest level possible, but these estimates have to be produced within the guidelines given and in an ethical, robust and fair way.

Teachers have until the 29th May to produce, Quality Assure and submit these estimates.

Please do not try and contact teachers about this process.

Please do trust that they will represent all our pupils with the highest level of professionalism.

Support

We are aware that families circumstances are changing throughout this period.

If we as a school can assist you in any way, please make contact with your child's guidance teacher or Depute Head and hopefully we can assist you

I hope you are all well.

Have a good week.

Mr Dempster

Thursday 7th May

To support moving to the next level of study as indicated in the table posted below on 4th May, the following message has been posted in each Year Group Teams page.

Have a great holiday weekend.

Mr Dempster

Course Choice/New Timetable (S2 to S3, S4-5 and S5-6) – Update 5.5.20

Dear all S2, S4 and S5 pupils,

We are working remotely to complete the course choice process and new timetable for 2020-21. We have tried very hard to ensure as many of you as possible are allocated to your first choices. However, as is usual, we unfortunately cannot run all courses at all levels due to the numbers choosing each subject. We have been in contact with many of you (and your parents and carers) when we have had to use reserve choices. This has proved a little more challenging with the school closure. **Subject teachers are now setting up new online Office 365 Teams for the new S3-6 courses and this will indicate that a place has been allocated for you in that subject.** It is very important that all of you fully engage with this change over the coming weeks.

We will not be making course changes for pupils at present as we are now in the process of creating the timetable. There will be an opportunity to change courses in August.

S2 to S3 pupils – you should be allocated to 8 subject Teams

S4 to S5 pupils – you should be allocated to 5 subject Teams

S5 to S6 pupils – you should be allocated to at least 3 subject Teams

You will not receive a new timetable showing the actual days, periods and class teachers for all subjects until later this term.

It is therefore important that you create your own individual **study plan** to allow you to spend approximately:

1½ hours in each of your 8 subjects in S3

3 hours to each of your subjects in S5/6

Monday 4th May

In-Service Day & May Holidays.

Remember that as per my post of Friday 1st May, today (Monday 4th May) is an in-service day for staff and Friday 8th May is a school holiday for all. Monday 18th May is a holiday also. There will be no teacher engagement with home study on any of these days although home study work is available online.

Moving to next Level of Study

The table below lists all subjects in each year and indicates when they will move to the next level of study.

Transition	Date of Starting Next Level			
	Monday 11 th May (or before)	Monday 1 st June	Monday 8 th June (original start date of new timetable)	Between 8 th June and end of term
S1 → S2	Music, Drama, French, German, Mandarin, RMPS, HFT, Art & Design, Design and Engineering, PE, Maths	History, Geography, Modern Studies, Science	Computing Science, Business, English	
S2 → S3	Computing Science, Business Management, Economics, Music, Drama, Media, Spanish, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, RMPS, HFT, Practical Cookery, Art & Design, Practical Woodwork, Graphic Communication, Engineering Science, Design and Manufacture, PE	History, Geography, Modern Studies,	French, German, Mandarin. English	Maths
S3 → S4	Computing Science, Business Management, Economics, Music, Drama, Media, French, German, Mandarin, Spanish, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, RMPS, HFT, Practical Cookery, Art & Design, Practical Woodwork, Graphic Communication, Engineering Science, Design and Manufacture, PE, Maths	History, Geography, Modern Studies,		English
S4 → S5	Computing Science, Business Management, Economics, Digital Media, Music, Drama, Media, French, German, Mandarin, Spanish, History, Geography, Modern Studies, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Philosophy, HFT, Practical Cookery, Art & Design, Practical Woodwork, Engineering Science, Design and Manufacture, Photography, English, PE, Sports Leadership, Maths			
S5 → S6	Computing Science, Business Management, Economics, Digital Media,		Data Science	

	Music, Drama, Media, Spanish, Modern Studies Biology, Maths, Chemistry, Physics, Philosophy, HFT, Art & Design, Practical Woodwork, Engineering Science, Design and Manufacture, Photography, English, PE, Sports Leadership, Maths (inc Statistics & Mechanics),			
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I hope you and your family are well

Mr Dempster

Friday 1st May

In-service Day - Monday 4th May.

Monday 4th May is an in-service day.

Teachers will not be engaging with pupils in home learning on that day although there is obviously home study work available on line.

As with other in-service days this time is for preparation of work, development of work, staff meetings and professional learning.

I am convening an on-line meeting with all my Heads of Department and the Senior Leadership Team on that morning and I'm asking that all our school teams make an effort to connect and share learning and ideas.

May Holidays.

There are school holidays on Friday 8th May and Monday 18th May. There will be no teacher engagement with home study on these days.

HUB Schools

The HUB schools for the children of key workers will still operate on the in-service day and on these May holidays. Our HUB school is James Gillespie's High School.

Monday 27th April

I hope everyone has settled back into a routine after the holidays. It's not easy!

Survey

We would appreciate if you would complete this survey about home study so we can get the views of parents and hopefully find out what is working best.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/QD7KQC9>

TEAMS

We have updated our website with a new link to make it clearer where subjects are hosting their material on Teams. <http://boroughmuirhighschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Home-Learning-in-Teams.pdf>

This will be a dynamic web page and will be updated regularly.

Next Level of Study

It is planned that all schools in Edinburgh will advance their 'school timetable' on **Monday 11th May** i.e pupils will move to the next level of study so if they had been studying National 5 they will now start to study at Higher level if they are continuing in that subject.

This will happen for all subjects at National Qualification level. (Nat 5, H, AH)

For some subjects in S1, 2 & 3 courses require a bit more time for completion so some subjects in the junior phase may not advance at that time.

We will provide more detail around this as the information becomes available.

Reporting /Tracking

Unfortunately, like all other schools we are unable to properly track or report on pupils' progress in the current climate.

Teachers simply don't have the information they need or the on-line reporting programme to write the reports. We also have no way of printing reports or distributing them

1st year were due to have a full progress report on 15th May and 3rd Year on 19th June.

These will not now be produced.

Schools across the City are looking to see how we can provide meaningful progress reports in the context of school closure.

Awards 'Ceremony'

Every year we have our annual awards ceremony in early June.

There are academic awards for the senior school and awards for service to the school. Academic awards are based on prelim grades and given that all our senior pupils sat prelims this year before the school closure we feel that it's the right thing to recognise our pupils' academic excellence this year as in all other years. There are also many shields that go along with the awards and we feel that these should also be awarded as in previous years.

So, we are currently collating award winners with Heads of Department and will in the next few weeks be in touch with award winners. We will then publish the full list on our web site.

We're not quite sure when we'll be able to get certificates, medals and shields to the winners, but we will in due course.

Supporting Children and Young People at Home During School Closures (Learning)

Introduction

These are very unusual and uncertain times for everyone. Comprehensive guidance on [Supporting Children and Young People at Home During School Closures](#) provides an overview of key messages and recommended resources which you may find useful. This document links those key messages to learning at home.

Talk About Coronavirus



- Discuss what is happening with your child and keep them up to date about school closures.
- You might want to help them understand this situation through stories e.g. [Coronavirus – a book for children \(for primary age children\)](#), or websites e.g. [The Young Scot Website](#) (for older children).

Create Routines



- Routine is important. This will help make the days more predictable for your child.
- Set times for getting up and going to bed, particularly during the week.
- Try to limit their time on technology.

Keep Learning



- Aim for a maximum of three to four hours of learning per day.
- Help your child to make a plan so they know what they are doing each day (you might want to do this the night before).
- Help your child identify a space where they can work, and what they will need.
- Praise your child for their effort.
- You are not your child's teacher. You can help your child reflect on their learning by asking questions like "what did you learn today?", "what was challenging today?", "what would you like to learn next?".

Keeping Active



- Encourage your child to be active. Make time for outdoors and exercise every day if possible.

Staying Connected and Emotionally Healthy



- Encourage your child to keep in touch with their friends and help them with how to do that.
- Maintain your own friendship and family connections to share practical and emotional support with learning at home.

Looking After Yourself



- Is there anything your child would like to learn while they are at home? Having a say in what they want to learn might make them feel more in control.

Additional Sources of Information



- [The National Parent Forum of Scotland: Learning at Home in Term 4 – Guidance for Parents and Carers](#)
- [NHS Lothian – COVID-19 Resources](#)

Tuesday 21st April – Summer Term begins

Welcome back to 'school'.

I hope you and your family are well and that you were all able to enjoy an Easter holiday of sorts! At least the weather has been pretty good.

Today is the start of the summer terms and it's important that our pupils get back into some sort of routine with home study.

Teachers will be posting work in Teams and in the next week or two many will be posting work at the next level of study in preparation for the new courses pupils will be studying next session.

Some departments are using class Teams and others are using Year Group Teams. We are going to try and collate this information and post the location of department work on our website.

In the circumstances we find ourselves teachers cannot insist that pupils do this work.

The priority is of course the health and wellbeing of our pupils, their families and ourselves.

However, our hope is that those who are well and whose family is well, and who can access the work, will access the work and do it to the best of their ability.

Please be assured that once some normality returns and we get back into school, teachers will ensure that appropriate remediation work will be covered to ensure all pupils have covered the required coursework.

SQA Update

Yesterday (Monday 20th April) the SQA published more detail on the process of how pupils will be awarded grades this year.

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/93920.html>

Although this link gives the broad outline there is more detailed information about the process in a further link at the bottom of this SQA page.

Staff will need access to materials and information held in school and will need to be able to meet to work collaboratively in this process.

Please be patient as we await further details of how and when we can do this.

School estimate grades do not have to be submitted until May 29th.

HUB School for children of Key workers

Key workers who are in need of this provision should have been contacted already by the Council directly about the process of enrolling their children.

There have been some changes to the system. All the information can be accessed via this link.

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/schoolclosures>

Course Choice

Pupils in certain year groups have already made an on-line course choice.

We are continuing to work through this process.

If pupils have made choices that cannot be met we will be in touch directly. Otherwise please assume that all is okay.

New Staff

Ashleigh McLeod joins the school today as Curriculum Leader of Expressive Arts, replacing Alice Clegg.

We welcome Ashleigh and hope to see her soon.

I wish you all well in the coming weeks and look forward to getting back to some degree of normality soon!

D Dempster
Head Teacher

Friday 3rd April – Holidays 12.50pm!

SQA Update

Last night the SQA put out an interim update on how estimate grades will be produced.

I include below the link which takes you into the appropriate page of the SQA website for pupils, parents and carers.

https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/020420-SQA-NQ2020-Parent-Carer-covid-19-FAQ.pdf

We still await further details on the exact process of creating and compiling the estimate grades.

Until we have this detail, we cannot start the process so please do not contact teachers or the school at this time.

All pupils in Scotland are in the same position with this so do not worry.

The City of Edinburgh have produced a letter to complement the SQA update.

It is on our website in the City of Edinburgh – Edinburgh Learns page of the Coronavirus page.

Holidays!!!

School breaks for Easter Holidays today - at 12.50pm!!

Although we are not having a traditional end of term, it is the end of term and we are on holiday until Tuesday 21st April.

I think we are all desperately in need of a break and that all schoolwork, communications and home study should cease to allow us all to get that break.

So, by 12.50pm today at the very latest, pupils should switch off computers and start their holiday.

I will 'speak' to you all on the morning of Tuesday 21st April - first day of the summer term!

Take care and have as great a holiday as you can!

Mr Dempster
Head Teacher

Monday 30th March

Once again thank you all for all your incredible work in week 1 of the school closure.

This week will hopefully be a bit less frantic and will see us get into more of a routine.

It is important that we settle into some sort of routine and that pupils and teachers get on with the business of *some* Home Study. I say *some* because as important home study is, I do not want it getting out of hand. Home study will never be a substitute for proper school but as said we will all find our way with it as time progresses. I want to reassure you and our pupils that they are as well catered for in Boroughmuir as any school I am aware of.

It is vital that we do not overly stress our pupils by giving them the impression that their lives will somehow be disadvantaged by this event. They will not, and that message has to come consistently from us. Our pupils are in the same boat as all other pupils across the UK and indeed the world and young people need to know that. We do have to trust that the SQA and examination boards across the country will react accordingly to this event and put in place robust and fair processes to recognise pupil achievement as well as adapt courses as necessary so that pupils are not disadvantaged.

As I said before, we do not have details on any of this so please do not ask us to try and speculate, but the message I want all our pupils to hear is that 'everything is going to be alright'.

Do what you can with Home Study, but don't let it take your life over. We still need a healthy home life/school life balance!

When we are all back at school proper again teachers will ensure that everyone has covered the essential work that needs to have been covered.

I hope you and your family are keeping well and coping with this incredible new world we find ourselves in. Friday is of course the start of the Easter holidays and we all need a well-deserved break when it comes. I will be in touch before then.

All the best to you all.

D. Dempster
Head Teacher

Friday 27th March

Week 1 Finished!

Thank you to everyone for helping make the first school closure week go so smoothly.

It really is testament to how well our whole school community works together.

Have a great weekend!

Wednesday 25th March

SQA Update

I append a link which will take you to the latest update from the SQA which we received yesterday.

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/93658.html>

Having sought clarification we are told that the SQA will not be collecting any further assessment materials from schools.

Where appropriate however schools may use this material as part of evidence used to produce estimate grades.

The process for creating estimate grades has not been finalised and further advice on this process will have to come from the SQA as it applies to all schools across Scotland

Please do not contact the school or teachers about the issue of estimate grades at this time as we cannot provide any definite answers.

Home study - Expectations

I hope all is going well with home study.

As said before, home study on this scale is new territory for us all! We are confident that pupils engaging with their subjects even on a reduced basis will continue to build mastery and improve their preparedness for the next year of study.

It is impossible to provide bespoke materials for pupils and therefore it is inevitable that some pupils will feel there is too little work and others will feel there is too much. Some will feel it is too easy and others will feel it is too hard.

Please try and communicate on-line with your teacher if necessary but be assured that whatever you do will be helpful to you. Making decision as to what to prioritise and what to do if you feel there is too much is something you should do.

Teachers will try to provide work at the next level after Easter, probably towards the end of April if school closures are still in place.

Hub Schools – Accommodating children of Key Workers

The programme of support for the children of key workers is posted on our website in the Coronavirus section at <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/schoolclosures>

Monday 23rd March

This morning is the first day of school closures.

I have written this morning to all teachers by school email, all parents by the Groupcall messaging service and all pupils by the Office 365 TEAMS platform.

I am wishing them all well going forward with home study and hoping that they all stay safe and well.

Home study on this scale is not something that we or any school has been previously involved with.

As time progresses, we will I'm sure all become more confident with it and develop and source new resources to assist us.

Thank you for your support at this extraordinary time.

I append below my message to our pupils.

Dear Pupils

Good morning on what is the beginning of the next extraordinary phase in dealing with the Coronavirus outbreak.

This is just a reminder of the on-line home study materials that you can access during this period of school closure.

The front page of our website has a link to Coronavirus information and home study information.

<http://boroughmuirhighschool.org/coronavirus-updates/>

You will be aware now that the government has said senior pupils are not allowed to attend school to finish any outstanding SQA course assessments. You are also aware that there is no diet of SQA exams this year.

However I do think it important that pupils in S4,5,6 complete as much course work as possible in SQA courses and that you try to develop mastery in each subject – especially those you plan to continue with into H or AH.

I know that some subjects will in due course try to provide introductory materials for the next level of study. I think for many of you this will provide further motivation and preparation for future study.

In the S1/2 phase most subjects have less teaching time. We do say that work will be provided on a basis that is proportionate to the time the subject has on the regular timetable. That said it is important that pupils in S1/2 engage with the home study materials and work through them in all subjects that there are materials for. I append below an extract about expectations around home study.

I would encourage you all to create a reduced timetable to assist you in your progress with your home study.

Providing home study on this scale in new territory for all schools but I'm sure as time progresses, we as a school will adapt and build on what we currently have available.

I do hope you are all well.

As with our staff, I cannot thank you, our pupils, enough for the way in which you conducted yourselves and supported each other in what was extremely difficult circumstances over the last couple of weeks. You are a credit to yourselves and the school.

As we enter the next stage of this incredible event, I know that we as a school will continue to do all we can to get through it together while providing the best possible support for all of our pupils and for each other.

Mr Dempster

Head Teacher 23/3/2020

Supporting Home Study – Expectations

- The school has provided on our website information on where to find a range of support materials to support pupils' home study
- Office 365 is the main platform that teachers are using to distribute and share learning activities. In particular the 'Teams' app is used extensively.
- This covers all stages of the school (S1-6) and most subject areas
- The work will be proportionate to time the subject has on the regular timetable and will also reflect the nature of the subject i.e it will be more difficult to provide meaningful work remotely for practical subjects
- The learning will not be interactive but will take the format of guidance and support around the work provided. It is unrealistic that Teachers would be able to feedback to pupils on every piece of work provided or submitted.
- Individual departments will endeavour to provide as much quality educational activity as possible via office 365.
- We strongly recommend that parents/carers regularly discuss with their children the progress they are making in using these home study materials.

Teachers who are working from home may be themselves be unwell, be caring for others who are unwell or simply be fulfilling the role of family care. Therefore, the support offered may not follow a regular pattern. We appreciate your understanding with this.

Pupils who lose their password or get locked out of OFFICE 365 should email Admin@boroughmuir.edin.sch.uk to request assistance.

Friday 20th March

Complete School Closure

We have been advised by the City that the school will close completely as of today for all pupils and staff.

There had been some belief that pupils with outstanding course assessment would come into school on a planned basis to complete these assessments. This will not happen.

We are told that **Hub Schools** will open on 30th March to accommodate the children of key workers.

Families in receipt of **free school meals** are having money credited to their bank accounts by the City during the period of closure.

SQA Exams and Outstanding Course Assignments

There is to be no diet of SQA exams this year.

SQA awards will be based on estimates provided by schools.

As said above schools will not now be able to complete outstanding course assessments.

Staff are being asked to provide robust estimate grades that the SQA can use to award National Qualifications. This is something staff are working hard on to provide the very best estimates for all our pupils.

In most subjects it is not just the prelim grade but an amalgamation of other evidence also.

Teachers and the school are unable to enter in to dialogue about this at this time.

The priority is to produce these estimates in a reliable and robust way which best reflects pupils' true ability.

Course Choice Process

Please be assured that the course choice process will not be compromised by the removal of the SQA exam diet.

If you do have any vital queries about the process please email them to.

coursechoice@boroughmuir.edin.sch.uk

S6 Last Day

Today was of course the last day of school for our S6. Although not ideal we managed to mark the occasion appropriately and the S6 have left in good grace.

We look forward to seeing them at our prom either in June or at another time in the future.

There are some photos on the @boroughmuirHS twitter page.

Thursday 19th March

SQA Update

National Qualifications:-

SQA have announced that this year's National exams diet will not take place.

It is being proposed that prelim grades, prior attainment and other evidence is used by schools to provide an estimate of a national qualification award.

This will take schools some time to do properly and robustly.

The Local authority will also provide advice on how this is best done and done consistently within and across schools.

We are unable to answer enquiries about this process at the moment so please do not contact the school.

Course assessments and Assignments:-

SQA are asking that pupils complete outstanding course assessments and assignments.

It will mean that some pupils in S4/5/6 will have to come in to school to complete these.

We are looking at how best to organise this and we will provide more information in due course.

Accommodating vulnerable children and children of key workers:-

The local authority will provide advice on whether this is to be done locally or schools or in hubs across the City. WE will make this known as soon as we have the information.

Providing Free School Meals:-

The local authority will provide advice on whether this is to be done locally or schools or in hubs across the City. WE will make this known as soon as we have the information.

Skills Development Scotland

Due to COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and the closure of the school, Skills Development Scotland cannot deliver career services face to face, but they are still there to help. Your child can contact their school Careers Adviser, **Lou Murphy** for career information, advice and guidance at lou.murphy@sds.co.uk or visit myworldofwork.co.uk.

You can also still access their career services. Call your local centre to speak to one of our qualified advisers. Find your nearest centre at myworldofwork.co.uk/centres.

You can also find their services for parents/carers online at myworldofwork.co.uk and www.mykidscareer.com.

Wednesday 18th March

School Closures

The Scottish Govt announced today that all schools in Scotland will close this Friday.

For us that means we **will close at 12.50pm on Friday 20th March.**

No date has been set for reopening.

SQA – statement

Below is the announcement from the SQA today about National Qualifications

“In the event of school closures, the Qualifications Contingency Group agreed that every effort should be made to ensure schools remain partially open to allow Senior Phase pupils to complete learning and be able to submit coursework, in addition to being able to open as examination centres during the diet, should medical and scientific advice allow. “

This does not provide full clarity, but it does suggest that there will be a diet of exams in April / May if at all possible.

This is what the vast majority of pupils appear to want – albeit in a safe environment.

Pupils therefore should continue to prepare for their SQA exams as best they can via **Home Study**

Hopefully more information will be forthcoming about how the diet will take place.

Supporting Home Study – Expectations

- The school has provided on our website information on where to find a range of support materials to support pupils' home study
- Office 365 is the main platform that teachers are using to distribute and share learning activities. In particular the 'Teams' app is used extensively.
- This covers all stages of the school (S1-6) and most subject areas
- The work will be proportionate to time the subject has on the regular timetable and will also reflect the nature of the subject i.e it will be more difficult to provide meaningful work remotely for practical subjects
- The learning will not be interactive but will take the format of guidance and support around the work provided. It is unrealistic that Teachers would be able to feedback to pupils on every piece of work provided or submitted.
- Individual departments will endeavour to provide as much quality educational activity as possible via office 365.
- We strongly recommend that parents/carers regularly discuss with their children the progress they are making in using these home study materials.

Teachers who are working from home may be themselves be unwell, be caring for others who are unwell or simply be fulfilling the role of family care. Therefore, the support offered may not follow a regular pattern. We appreciate your understanding with this.

Pupils who lose their password or get locked out of OFFICE 365 should email Admin@boroughmuir.edin.sch.uk to request assistance.

Access to Technology

We today have emailed all families to offer assistance to households where there is little or no technology which would allow access to Home Study materials.

Please email Clare.Braisby@boroughmuir.edin.sch.uk if this applies to your household and you would like help.

June Work Experience – Cancelled

All work experience placements for our work experience week in June have been cancelled.

Tuesday 17th March

Pupil Absence

Due to the high volume of correspondence around COVID-19 we are unable to provide a personal reply.

The decision to keep pupils off school lies entirely with parents/carers and be assured the school will support you with your decision.

Supporting Home Study

Please see our website (in Coronavirus section) for advice and links to assist pupils in working from home.

All School Trips - Cancelled

All school trips up until the end of June are to be cancelled.

This includes UK based trips and activities as well as international trips.

As such our Activity Week will be cancelled in entirety.

Full refunds will be processed in the weeks to come but this is substantial work that will take some time.

All College Courses - Cancelled

The college courses that some S5/6 pupils attend on a Tuesday and Thursday afternoon are now cancelled until further notice.

S6 pupils should work from home. S5 pupils should report to school library at these times

Child Planning Meetings/ Young Person Planning Meetings

Where absolutely necessary we will try to hold any planned meetings however often external partners are required at these meetings and this may be a limiting factor in whether these meetings can take place or not.

As such each essential meeting will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

Drama Showcases for N5,H,AH Drama pupils - Cancelled

The drama showcase events planned for the evenings of Tuesday 17th & Wednesday 18th March are cancelled.

Mon 16th March

Pupil Absence

Due to the high volume of correspondence around COVID-19 we are unable to provide a personal reply.

The decision to keep pupils off school lies entirely with parents/carers and be assured the school will support you with your decision.

Finger Prints

The Finger Print System for pupils paying for lunches has been suspended.

Pupils will now give their name to the catering staff member who can debit their account.

International Trips

The City of Edinburgh has indicated that all international school trips up to 30th June have to be cancelled.

This means that all our activity week foreign trips will be cancelled.

It is expected that full refunds will be provided in due course.

School Events

Schools have been instructed to postpone major school events.

Events so far postponed are

Our Sports Personality of the Year - Wednesday 18th

Resonate Concerts at Queens Hall – Friday 20th and Summerhall on sat 21st

Art Showcase – Thursday 26th March