

## Weekly Update – 24 April 2020

### Welcome Back

It was an Easter holiday unlike any other for Team Porty this year! We hope that our families have stayed well and have perhaps been able to enjoy some of the good weather we have had recently. Distance Learning is continuing as it was before the holiday. Some families had asked for a reminder of how to access this and we have reproduced this information later in the update. Queries or problems can be emailed to [admin@portobello.edin.sch.uk](mailto:admin@portobello.edin.sch.uk) - please remember that we have no access to our school telephone line just now.



*S2 were asked to cook a rainbow for FTT!*

We are undertaking work to plan how to move learning forward while the school is closed. While our new timetable cannot yet begin in terms of assigning classes and teachers, we will be able to get started on some new coursework and staff are now undertaking preparation for this. For our senior students in particular, we know that the cancellation of their SQA exams has led to many of them feeling that there is little point in completing revision and past papers. While we understand why they may feel this way, we want to emphasise that the completion of courses is still important to ensure that there are no gaps in learning which might have an impact in future. In other words, the benefit of a revision at present is to do with consolidating learning and ensuring that knowledge and skills stay fresh and accessible so that next steps can be taken. That is important even in the absence of exams – it's about staying 'match fit' as learners. We will share information about moving forward as soon as we are able to do so.

### Pastoral Support

We want to reassure and remind learners that our Pupil Support Leaders are still working and providing pastoral support at this difficult time. If you would like to get in touch with your Pupil Support Leader, then please do so directly on one of the email addresses noted below. We want to keep in touch and will be very happy to give you a call back.

House Heads and Pupil Support Leaders can be contacted using the following email addresses:

#### *Abercorn House*

Nigel Cotter, House Head - [Nigel.Cotter@portobello.edin.sch.uk](mailto:Nigel.Cotter@portobello.edin.sch.uk)

Zelda Breingan, Pupil Support Leader - [Zelda.Breingan@portobello.edin.sch.uk](mailto:Zelda.Breingan@portobello.edin.sch.uk)

#### *Brunstane House*

Alison Fotheringham, House Head - [Alison.Fotheringham@portobello.edin.sch.uk](mailto:Alison.Fotheringham@portobello.edin.sch.uk)

Natasha Jacobs, Pupil Support Leader - [Natasha.Jacobs@portobello.edin.sch.uk](mailto:Natasha.Jacobs@portobello.edin.sch.uk)

### *Crichton House*

Margaret Williamson, House Head - [Margaret.Williamson@portobello.edin.sch.uk](mailto:Margaret.Williamson@portobello.edin.sch.uk)

Luke McAllister, House Head - [Luke.McAllister@portobello.edin.sch.uk](mailto:Luke.McAllister@portobello.edin.sch.uk)

Sandra Banks, Pupil Support Leader - [Sandra.Banks@portobello.edin.sch.uk](mailto:Sandra.Banks@portobello.edin.sch.uk)

### *Duddingston House*

John Ziltener, House Head - [John.Ziltener@portobello.edin.sch.uk](mailto:John.Ziltener@portobello.edin.sch.uk)

Chris Aitken, Pupil Support Leader - [Christopher.Aitken@portobello.edin.sch.uk](mailto:Christopher.Aitken@portobello.edin.sch.uk)

In addition, Angela McGhee is a Pupil Support Leader for young people in all four houses and can be contacted at [A.McGhee@portobello.edin.sch.uk](mailto:A.McGhee@portobello.edin.sch.uk)

### **Ramadan 2020**

For our Muslim families, this will be a very different Ramadan than usual - Mosques are closed and extended families unable to get together. Nonetheless, we wish them strength and peace as they go through this period of reflection and would like to wish them all Ramadan Mubarak!



### **SQA Update**

We understand that this is an uncertain time for young people and their parents/carers as we move forward with estimating grades for the SQA exams. The SQA have been working closely with the Scottish Government and key educational organisations to ensure that the alternative certification model is fair and transparent for all learners across Scotland.

At Portobello High School we have discussed the process in detail in our leadership team and will be doing so with the wider staff early next week ensuring that we are as fair as possible in calculating refined estimates. We will rigorously follow the guidelines produced by the SQA so that the qualifications received in August are as accurate a prediction as possible of what they would have achieved had they sat the exams in May.

To support the need to be transparent across all examining centres in Scotland, the SQA will further undertake a moderation process and have in place an appeals procedure. If you would like more information on the systems and process are of estimating grades, the SQA have put detailed information on their website at [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)

Please be assured of our desire to do the very best for our young people at this challenging time.

### **Twitter Theme**

Following the success of our pets and cooking themes, we are kicking off the new term with another sensory theme #TeamPortyListens and we invite our families to hop over to our Twitter account @PortobelloHigh and share the music, podcasts and radio listening which is helping to keep their spirits up while we #StayAtHome

For those who like their music classical, you might like to know that RSNO are doing a Friday night club where they bring never-before-seen concert footage straight to your living room. Though Mrs Docherty in Music is hoping for a

Rachmaninov symphony soon, tonight is Mahler and that is some powerful stuff! Follow the link and turn up the volume if you'd like to join in! <https://www.rsno.org.uk/friday/>

### **Distance Learning Access Reminder**

Click [HERE](#) to read the school's advice on Distance Learning during closure.

Learning activities can be accessed remotely as follows:

#### *For S1/2 pupils*

All learning content is being distributed via OneNote Notebooks. These can be accessed using a web browser on any internet-connected device using the following links:

S1: <https://tinyurl.com/S1PHS>

S2: <https://tinyurl.com/S2PHS>

Click [HERE](#) to watch a video with help on how to do this.

#### *For S3-6 pupils*

All activities are being communicated to pupils via their existing OneNote Class Notebooks. Pupils should also monitor their email for any additional instructions. S4-6 pupils have also been emailed information about using [Scholar](#). Scholar can be used to access online learning materials for many current and future courses.

Additional technical support for distance learning can also be found [HERE](#).

For reference, the whole Office 365 suite can be accessed using the link <http://office365.edin.org>.