

23rd November 2020



Arran High School



NOTE FROM MRS FOSTER

Last week was certainly a calmer week in Arran High School! Understandably, absence rates were high and it was good to see pupils returning and getting back into the routine of teaching and learning. The situation with Covid 19 has put real pressure on pupils, teachers and parents; it is our aim to ensure that learning is continuous no matter what the circumstances.

A consequence of this has been a need for everyone to upskill in IT; for the first time teachers have been permitted to allow live access to classes for self- isolating pupils using a platform called VScene. It is early days for us, indeed we are pioneering this in North Ayrshire, and there are still things to learn. However, I did have the privilege of joining some lessons from my own desk and seeing pupils sharing the lesson from home. In the meantime, until we are fully up and running with this technology, lessons will be posted on Google Classrooms or Microsoft Teams and details will be provided for parents on 'Show My Homework'.

I am also aware of the pressure that has been put on our senior students by the uncertainty of arrangements for next year's exam diet. I can assure you that we will share any information as we get it. Faculties are teaching the courses very thoroughly and are in discussions about assessment procedures to ensure that we have very robust evidence for all National 5 candidates and a clear contingency in place for any change of plans for Higher and Advanced Higher.

I hope to let you know of our own school arrangements in the next newsletter.

NOTE FROM MRS DICK

I think it would be remiss of me not to talk about what took over my life last week. If you are thinking Covid, you wouldn't be wrong but I am talking here about Vscene.

Yes, thanks to Mr Dickie, Mr Reid and Mr Beith I am now fully Vscened enabled and just like that our whole school assembly became virtual, our Remembrance service was beamed live to all those at home, and with a few clicks, I accidentally found myself joining in Mrs Bunting's Advanced Higher Maths lesson.

However, it has also enabled a different way to connect for us, with Mrs Gaw and myself hosting a Meet the Teacher session via Vscene so that students at home could 'drop in' to meet our newest staff member at break time. Our school counsellor is also learning the ropes to host virtual group chats for different year groups so that they can get to know her better too, and be as accessible as possible in these times.

One of the biggest advantages for my role in the school of us all becoming more digitally enabled is that students who stay at home for education have far greater opportunity for joining in our classes than they had previously. They can now connect remotely with their peers, watch assemblies, access the classwork and join in classes from home, enabling education to be accessed on a more equitable basis, regardless of personal circumstances or health needs.

So though we all hope that coronavirus isn't here to stay, I do hope Vscene, Google Classrooms and Microsoft Teams does, so that the benefits to those who are often invisible to the majority of us are able to continue.

NOTE FROM MRS BUNTING

Transport update:

Please could I take this opportunity to remind you that the school buses are to be used for travel between home and school only, not personal travel? Those buses which are also service buses can be used for personal travel; pupils are expected to be paying the relevant fare and should sit at the front of the bus where socially distanced seating is in operation. The rear is allocated to the transportation of pupils.

At the start of term pupils were allocated to specific buses and asked to sit in the same seats every day. This was to reduce risk of wider Covid-19 transmission and to assist in any Track & Trace exercise. Whilst assisting in pulling information together for the Local Authority and Track & Trace recently, the number of pupils identified, and were then asked to self-isolate, was raised due to changing of transport arrangements.

Online Learning

Whilst pupils are self-isolating, there is the expectation that they will continue with their learning from home, following their timetable.

Staff and pupils having been coming to grips with new technology, VScene, which has been provided by North Ayrshire Council to support this. Pupils are sent links to the virtual class and are able to take part in the lesson in real time. One example of this in action was in French; two pupils who were self-isolating were practicing for their French speaking assessment and Mrs Fletcher was able to drop in and listen to them and work with the rest of the class.

As with many new technologies, there are teething issues, but we are striving to find solutions as quickly as possible. We thank you for your forbearance at this time.

Should you require support with digitally enabling, please contact the school Office.

Options 2021/22

A small number of Expressions of Interest Subject forms have yet to be returned by S3-S5 pupils.

Please could these be returned, either digitally or on paper, by Tuesday, 24th November to allow me to construct the final options columns.

If you need any assistance completing this form or would like further information, please contact the school office

Anti-Bullying Week

Anti-Bullying week is finally here! On the week, starting Monday the 30th of November and ending on Friday the 4th of December.

Arran High School will celebrate Anti-Bullying Week- an annual UK event dedicated to raising awareness of bullying, and highlighting ways of preventing and responding to it. In a show of support for all victims of bullying everywhere, and for LGBTQI+ people, we have chosen to participate this year, as we believe that mental health and wellbeing is especially important given our current circumstances.

Our team of Peer Mentors have worked really hard in preparing for this, and hope that all participating can both enjoy and learn from this week.

Beforehand, we are asking all students to complete a survey on Microsoft Teams picking their first and second choice of activity so we can be better organised.

On Tuesday 1st December during periods 1, 6 & 7, S1-S3 can choose to do one of three activities - a scavenger hunt, watching a film, or taking part in an escape room.

Depending on the amount of people wanting to do which activity (and the weather), options may be limited, or other activity option may be added. Either way, we will try our best to accommodate everyone, and make sure they have fun first and foremost.

On Wednesday 2nd December during periods 2, 6 & 7, S4-S6 students will have the same choice of activities.

Prizes will be available!

At the end of the week on Friday 4th December, we are asking all students to dress in brightly coloured clothing to honour difference and diversity. Anything brightly coloured is allowed, so long as it is appropriate dress!

We encourage everyone to come together to show that Arran High School is intolerant of any form of bullying.

John & Naomi

Heads of Peer Mentor Group



S2 Knitting

Our S2 pupils and some staff members of Arran High School are joining Dumfries House in knitting squares for a fantastic cause.

The squares are going to be 20 cm x 20 cm and will be sewn together to create blankets for various charities, including the homeless.

If you wish to join us, we will happily accept your squares at the High School drop off bin by the reception from this week.

We started with some expert advice with a live tutorial from Ashleigh at the Prince's Foundation at Dumfries House.

Thank you to everyone who donated us wool or needles and happy knitting !!



FREE Soup

For the month of December there will be free soup available at lunchtime for anyone who would like it.

This is being funded by our Wellbeing Centre, so that everyone has access to a free healthy meal regardless of need or cost.

No parent pay payment required!

Staff Stars

Has a member of staff gone out their way to support your family?

Have they done something in particular that has made a difference?

Sometimes it is nice to know when you are appreciated, so to support this we are launching Staff Stars.

If you would like one of our staff to be commended, then please use the link below and complete the nomination. You can send it anonymously too.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/DesignPage.aspx?fragment=FormId%3DoyzTzM4Wj0KVQTctawUZKRkaHYvxFO5EggAZuYgZ9fxURFQ1Qk5EQIIQVvk01R0hCV1ZQWFpaWlU3NS4u%26Token%3D60133510ab1248d684c9e1ea289f8578>



STRAVA CHALLENGE

Right folks...get ready for our next Strava Challenge – The Arran High School Christmas Challenge.

As a group we have to run, jog, walk, skip, cycle, skoot a distance of 3827km. (The distance between Arran and the North Pole)

Let's go team!!!!

University of the Highlands & Islands

The University of the Highlands and Islands online open week is running from Monday 23 until Thursday 26 November. This event is a great opportunity for pupils who are still considering their course options for September 2021.

<https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/studying-at-uhi/online-open-week/>

Explorathon in Glasgow

Welcome to Explorathon 2020!

They are back with another packed programme of free events to feed your curiosity. From festive-themed language tasters to live gaming demos, maths-inspired knitting and engaging research talks, there's plenty to see and do. Even better, it's free!

All events are online. <https://www.explorathon.co.uk/home/glasgow/>

Mrs Dick is particularly looking forward to this event :



The Cabaret of Dangerous Ideas @ The Stand – 29th Nov

Sunday 29 November 2020 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Take three top academics, three dangerous ideas, add one comedian and it's the force of nature that is the Cabaret of Dangerous Ideas (CODI).

CEOPS - Online safety resources for the home

Thinkuknow is an education programme from the National Crime Agency's CEOP Command.

Their online home activity packs contain simple 15 minute activities you can do with your family to support their online safety at home

https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Support-tools/home-activity-worksheets/?utm_source=Thinkuknow&utm_campaign=dd271ec52e-TUK_GLOBAL_12_11_20&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0b54505554-dd271ec52e-64795449

Christmas Lunch Menu 2020

Here is our Christmas Lunch Menu for the school canteen this year. The Christmas menu will be served on Wednesday 2nd December (NEXT WEEK !!!!)



Christmas Hamper

We are putting together a Christmas Hamper for a Christmas Raffle which will be drawn the week before Christmas. One Lucky Winner will receive a hamper full of Christmas goodies!!

We are still looking for donations, so if you wish to donate towards this prize, please drop your donation into the school office asap.

Raffle tickets will be sold via parentpay for £1 per ticket. This payment item will be added to all accounts by the end of today (Monday). If you would like to buy tickets for this raffle, please do so via parent pay.

Just for Fun!!!!

The ridiculously difficult rare words quiz.

Mrs Dick found this link this morning and thought some of you might like to have a shot. She says "I am definitely guilty of 'longiloquence' but hope I am not too much of a dunderwhelp.

How many will you get?"

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zmcfscw>

Jokes

"What do you call a fake noodle? An impasta."

What did one snowman say to the other snowman? "I can smell carrots"



Answers

In our last Newsletter we asked you to make as many words as possible from "Arran High School"

There is an amazing 959 words (3 letters or more) ... Who got the longest word? **ISOCHRONAL**

Defintion - having the same duration; equal in time, occurring at equal time intervals; having a uniform period of vibration or oscillation

All the words that can be made can be found at the following link:

<https://wordmaker.info/how-many/arranhighschool.html>