

Hello everyone!

I hope you are well and coping under these most unusual circumstances. This is just a quick note to keep in touch with you and also to offer a level of reassurance and support during these challenging times.

There is no doubt that we are living in the strangest of times. School life has been turned upside down and I know working from home has created a very different way of learning. Many of you have managed this and have kept up to date with what is required and I would like to thank you for all of the effort you have put in. I am also aware that home learning has been very challenging. You may have found the experience to be stressful and you might feel that you are not working as well as you normally do. Please don't worry about this. We can support you through this. If you have been struggling with this, I would suggest you let myself or your guidance teacher know and we will do what we can to support you from August.

The good news is that we are currently planning for you to be back to school in August. I really do believe it will be one step closer to some form of normality and it should be a nicer and more reassuring way to learn when compared to the home learning you have done in the last few months. The one thing I am looking forward to is meeting you all again face to face.

I am really keen to make sure everybody is ready for learning in August. Things will be strange for pupils and also for the teachers. We will have to manage things that are different, particularly the rules to minimise the risk of catching COVID that you must stick to. All of these changes may make you feel a little worried, but I would like to reassure you that we will be there to support you and make sure you are able to manage this.

Most importantly, my advice for you would be to relax, take your mind away from the stresses of learning in 2020 and have a fantastic summer holiday. Again, it might not be like a usual summer holiday and you may not even get away, but you can still relax and have fun!

If you remain concerned with coming back to school in August, just let our guidance department know and we can deal with it from there.

If you are thinking about the next steps after school and would like to talk to somebody about this, our wonderful careers advisor Caroline Steele from SDS can still help you. She, or one of her colleagues are available throughout the holidays. Her contact details are at the very end of this post.

So, please enjoy the last days of term, mark school year 2019/20 as one of the strangest ever, enjoy the holidays as much as you can, take care of yourselves and each other and be kind. We will look forward to seeing everyone in August!

Take care and stay safe

Mrs Burgess, the Guidance Department and the Support for Learning Department

Useful contacts:

penicuik_hs@midlothian.gov.uk

- Social Care Direct (to contact Social Work for any new or ongoing issues) – 0131 271 3900
- Emergency Social Work Service – (out of hours) – 0800 731 6969
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services – 01968 671 330
- MYPAS (Midlothian Young People's Advice Service) 0131 457 0757
- St Mungo's Food Bank foodfactfriends@gmail.com
- Police Scotland Edinburgh – 01786 289070
- Police Scotland – 101 (non urgent), 999 (urgent)
- Childline – 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
- Parentline Scotland – 08000 28 22 33
- Breathing Space www.breathingspace.scot 0800 83 85 87
- Hope Line UK 0800 068 4141
- Anxiety UK 0844 477 5774
- Living Life to the Full www.lttf.com
- www.seemescotland.org
- Domestic Abuse Helpline – 0808 802 3333
- Children 1st – 0131 446 2300
- NSPCC – 0808 800 5000
- Samaritans – 116123 or jo@samaritans.org
- Young Minds Parents Helpline 0808 802 5544
- Skills Development Scotland – Caroline Steele – caroline.steele@sds.co.uk or phone 0131 665 3120