

Spring Newsletter

The Spring Newsletter will be available on the school website and Twitter Feed in the near future and highlights, yet again, many of the great achievements by our young folk and staff here at Mackie Academy over the past three months. Not only are these achievements a great reflection of the time and effort put in by many pupils both in and outside of school it is also a reflection of the time and efforts of many staff to make the learning experience for our young people as positive as possible. We hope you enjoy reading it over the holiday period.

If you don't yet follow the school on Twitter you can do so at @mackieacademy and @mackieht. Many other teams at Mackie Academy have their own accounts to celebrate our learning and successes so please have a look and join us on our journey to excellence.

Change of Timetable 2019

Advance warning that timetables will change for current S1-S3 pupils on Monday, 27th May 2019. For current S4 and S5 pupils the new timetable will begin on Monday, 4th June 2019. The school has made the decision to move our Careers Pathways event to September 2019 for two days to reflect the fact that by that time pupils have got their exam results and will have a clearer picture about their next steps.

Further information about these changes will come out in the early part of next term.

Behaviours in school and local community

Following on from last month's email the school would like to outline what it is doing to support young people with their behaviours and choices:

Last week, the Head Teacher spoke with all S1 and S2 pupils around three key areas associated with particular concerns that have been raised recently by staff members, members of the local community and Police Scotland:

1. Be Kind – this is with particular reference to the use of social media and what individuals are prepared to say behind the safety of an electronic advice.
2. Be Respectful – we spoke with pupils about the importance of their behaviours at all times whether that be in or out of school. There have been some very disturbing reports recently from Police Scotland about behaviours towards individuals in the local community, people's houses and people's cars which is just not acceptable and, as a school, we will challenge pupils about this if brought to our attention. We will not just stand back and accept it.
3. Be Responsible – here, we spoke about this within the context of how pupils treat the environment that we live in and the importance of ensuring that each and every person takes on their responsibility. The big area that we focused on here was rubbish and hopefully the message has been taken on board.

After the holidays Senior Leadership Team members will be visiting each of the S3 tutor groups on an individual basis to discuss the above points within the context of what is appropriate for them.

As a school we rely on the support of you, as parents, in these issues and will continue to work with you on these to provide a safe, working environment for our young folk.

School Meal Prices and use of the canteen

Aberdeenshire Council would like parents to note that as of 15th April 2019 the following price increases will apply to all academies:

Main course: £2.00

Soup and Pudding: 85p

The full, new tariff will be available online and in Academies from Friday, 13th April 2019.

At Mackie Academy our canteen is one of the most heavily used across the local authority. Most recently an addition to the provision of “healthy eating” in the canteen has been the “breakfast bar” where pupils can access cereals, fruit, yoghurt as an alternative to cereals and other snacks. This has been very popular, especially amongst senior pupils and we hope to continue with this.

We continue our work to increase sustainability and recycling associated with the canteen and we now have a group of S1 and S2 pupils who are keen to carry on the work that our outgoing S6 pupils have started. Removing the use of plastic cutlery has been a challenging one but the school will persevere with re-educating our young folk around this as we believe the rational for this – a sustainable, responsible future for our young people – is the way forwards for the school. The long term aim, and it is long term, is for Mackie Academy to become a plastic free school. We look forward to updating you on the work around this in the monthly email.

Aberdeenshire Council: Consultation on School Term Dates

Aberdeenshire Council would like to invite you to take part in a consultation on the pattern of school holidays, term dates and in-service closure dates. The consultation will run from Monday 25th March 2019 until Monday 6th May 2019 and is available online at: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/TN2JMV9> .

The current pattern of school holidays and term dates was approved by the Education, Learning and Leisure Committee on 29 May 2014. This covered the sessions from 2014/15 to 2019/20.

The pattern of school holiday and term dates currently takes into account the following factors:

- The national requirement that the school year for teaching staff consists of 195 days, which includes 5 In-Service closures and results in a school year of 190 for pupils
- There are four sets of school holiday periods: a summer break of 6 weeks, three further breaks of two weeks during October, at Christmas and at Easter.

- The aim to avoid part weeks as far as possible where the week begins on a day other than Monday; ends on a day other than Friday, or where there is a closure on a day mid-week.
- Alignment where possible of holiday and term dates with neighbouring local authorities. It should be noted that Aberdeen City are currently consulting on their school holiday pattern which includes options referring to changes to the mid-term break and October holiday.

Final dates will be issued in June 2019.

School and Transport Changes

Find out first about school closures and transport changes. Sign up through “my Aberdeenshire” www.Aberdeenshire.gov.uk/my, and download the free App now for iOS or Android.

Thank you for taking the time to read this,

Louise Moir

Head Teacher