



September 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

Raising Attainment in the Senior Phase

Your son/daughter is now at a key stage in their school career as they study towards Scottish Qualifications Authority Awards at the various National, Higher and Advanced Higher levels. Our aim is to help them get the very best grades and skills so that they have the best chances beyond school whether in work or further study. I am sure you have the same goal and appreciate that the key to their success comes from young people, parents and teachers all working together. In Portlethen Academy key strands where we can work together are Pupil Revision Approaches, Milestone Documents and Homework.

Pupil Revision Approaches

Attached to this letter is a leaflet of revision tips from former pupils and from teaching staff. We encourage you to discuss these with your child and help them put these tips into action. If I were to pick one central piece of advice it is to start studying and revising now if they have not already begun. This can mean that other things have to go by the wayside but the long term benefits of better grades outweigh any these. In addition to the leaflet, this week we have provided an extended Study Skills Booklet to all S4 pupils. This provides more detailed revision approaches and strategies. S5 and S6 pupils received this booklet last year. An electronic copy is available on the school website.

<http://portlethenacademy.aberdeenshire.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Study-Skills-Booklet.pdf>

Milestone Documents

These documents can be accessed on the school website and broadly highlight the key milestones in terms of subject content and assessment that pupils will encounter in their courses. Actual timings may vary as teachers adapt materials however the extent of work required is apparent. These can be used to plan revision and as reference to ensure course work is being covered.

<http://portlethenacademy.aberdeenshire.sch.uk/parent-area/milestone-documents/>

Homework

We are frequently asked about formal homework and this is set at differing points in time by teaching staff. Our view is that there is no time when a young person will not have homework in the broadest of senses. All pupils should read over the work they have done in class, revise around it and, where possible, do further research. When a pupil does not understand a point or concept they should attempt to resolve this themselves through reading and research and, failing that, they should ask their teacher for support when next in class. There are wealth of resources available whether provided by school, on the web, apps or purchased texts. At a basic minimum we would advise all pupils should revise for the equivalent of 1 hour per night if studying for 5 or 6 National 4 and 5 subjects and 1.5 Hours for 4 or 5 Highers and Advanced Highers. This is not per subject but a broad figure which they can allocate to their subjects. Specific "set" homework would be on top of this and ideally pupils would do more than this minimum suggestion.

I hope the above is helpful and will support your child to attain the very best results they can.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Neil Morrison', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Neil Morrison
Head Teacher

Portlethen Academy
Learn and Improve. Get Involved. Think of the Consequences. Respect All.