



# Knox Academy

Head Teacher **Susan Cook BEd(Hons) MEd SQH**

Pencaitland Road  
Haddington  
East Lothian  
EH41 4DT

01620 823387  
knoxacademy@knox.elcschool.org.uk  
www.ka-net.org.uk

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Dear Parent/Carer

I hope you are all safe and well. It has been an extremely challenging and anxious time over the last year for parents/carers and pupils alike. The First Minister's announcement last week, of a phased return for all pupils from S1-S6, is to take place from 15 March – 1 April. The Scottish Government has asked that S4-S6 pupils' learning has to be prioritised during these three weeks to support the learning and teaching associated with their SQA qualifications. It is expected that all pupils, from S1-S6 will return to school full-time after the Easter holidays.

S4-S6 reports were due out last week and this week. However we have been working closely with our colleagues in the other five secondary schools, over the last month, whilst also awaiting guidance from SQA, to agree the best way forward to support our young people. We have jointly discussed the merits/demerits of sending reports out to pupils/parents following the period of remote learning over the last seven weeks. As we have been unable to carry out any assessments during this timeframe it was felt that we would not be able to report on current working grades at this stage as the focus of remote learning (based on SQA guidance) was to be on course content and not assessment and therefore we felt the accuracy of these grades may not predict current or final attainment. We also did not want to send out working grades that repeated those communicated in an earlier report and reflected only assessments carried out between August and December. The feedback at the Parents' Evenings in January will have provided both parents and pupils with feedback about progress and advised of next steps and for those pupils who have been able to engage in remote learning they will also have had feedback from their teachers throughout this time.

Once pupils return to school and have had a period of face to face teaching to consolidate their learning across all of their subjects, we will have a much more informed picture of their performance. At this point we will be able to communicate with them about their presentation levels, current working grade and provide detailed information about what they have to do to attain their target grade. This will be done through learner conversations and followed up by an email to the pupil detailing their next steps in learning. Pupils can also share this email with parents/carers too. These learner conversations will take place following their return to school on 15 March and may continue after the Easter break.

On returning from Easter holidays, we will have two weeks of focused learning and teaching prior to an assessment period, which will take place during the month of May (this will be the same across all East Lothian secondary schools). There will be no study leave during this time so we can continue to support learning and teaching between assessments.



We have been asked by SQA to gather between 2 and 4 pieces of evidence, for each subject area, we can use to come to our provisional grades. Pupils will be told what assessments will be used as evidence so they are clear about this. In the case of S5/S6, who sat prelims back in

November/December, we will also be able to use this as evidence too. In June we will be able to communicate with parents/carers and pupils their provisional grades we will be submitting to SQA. These are only 'provisional' grades as SQA will decide what grade is finally awarded.

We are busy devising an assessment calendar for the month of May and we aim to communicate this with you and S4/5/6 pupils as soon as possible. This will allow our young people to start preparing for these. The information they receive from their teachers from engaging in the learner conversations should also give them a clear steer of what to focus on to improve their performance in readiness for these assessments, which will be based on course work that has been taught. Feedback on marked work from August to December, and over the last seven weeks, will also provide information to help support focused study for pupils. The E-Sgoil also running an [Easter Study programme](#) if any young people wish to register for this.

Please can I ask you to discuss the contents of this letter with your young person and also encourage them to sign up for Easter Study programme?

I would like to thank you all for your support as we move forward in supporting our young people with a very busy schedule ahead. Please be assured we will do our best at our end to ensure the best outcomes for all as we want them to attain the grades that reflect their ability and potential.

Best wishes



Sue Cook