May 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers,

Firstly, I hope that you and your family are well. I think we all have times through lockdown where it is difficult to process what has happened, we don’t know when it is going to end and so have moments of panic when we wonder what will happen when life begins to get back to ‘normal or even if it ever will.

As a school community we feel the same.

This is a challenging time for everyone and we do not underestimate just how challenging it is when there are young people at home who should normally be in school. Having teenagers, or children moving towards teenage years, is demanding enough at the best of times! Add brothers and / or sisters to the mix and there is a new dynamic to family life that takes time to adjust to.

As we move towards our 10th week in lockdown, we have been reflecting on what has worked well and where we perhaps need to get some feedback and advice. From the beginning of this period, staff in school have provided opportunities for our learners to continue learning. I think perhaps we took a bit of time to get an appropriate mix – there is a balance to be had and we had to think about the notion of home learning as opposed to home schooling / education and how this fits in with family lockdown life. However, we tried to accommodate all needs - digital learning through Glow, through Show my Homework, through Twitter, through the school website and through paper copies available to be picked up from school. These efforts have been received with mixed success. This is not in any way a criticism, however it would be fair to say we are a bit concerned about those learners in senior phase who should be preparing for and planning to sit SQA examinations during session 2020 / 21. It is certainly the case that school will not be as we have known it for some time yet and so young people need to take responsibility to a certain extent for engaging in their own learning. Moving forward it looks like there will need to be some kind of ‘blended’ learning. What this means is that not all of our school community can be in the building together so we will probably require to stagger attendance and provide the resources for our senior phase learners to work independently when not in school.That approach needs to begin now whilst we remain in lockdown and learners cannot access the school building to learn.

I include a timetable in this letter. This is what learners receive at the beginning of June each year to signal the start of the new academic year ahead. The subjects listed are the subjects which have been chosen by your child based on tracking information and their aspiration for the future. Engagement in these areas of study needs to begin **as soon as possible** and we would hope that teachers will see an improvement in learners engaging in learning on line. Failing that we will contact you directly to find out what we can do to help. Success next year, without the normal school support in learning that you could usually expect, depends on **starting now**.

If there are any issues regarding the option choices on the timetable please email Dr Burns directly

‘gburns@glow.ea.glasgow.sch.uk’

Already at every level - Scottish Government , Local Authority and at school – plans forming with regards to what education in August might look like. However, we do know that it is unlikely that full classes of 30 learners in a room with the teacher will be feasible or even possible. You will have seen from the media the concerns that parents in England have faced with the announcement that schools will return soon. The Scottish Government have a more cautious approach and it is unlikely that learners will be back before August. That gives us time to hear your views and the views of young people.

What has worked so far?

What have been the problems / barriers to learning?

What are your concerns about school returning?

What do we need to do short term, medium term and long term moving forward to make you feel secure and confident?

How can we help?

Over the next few weeks we will be sending out short surveys and would be very grateful if you would respond. It’s important that we listen to your concerns as we plan the way ahead. Similarly, it would be great if you could encourage our young people to respond as well. The alternative would be for you to write to me directly

HT@st-mungosacademy.glasgow.sch.uk

There are no issues too small, no concerns that can’t be shared with regards your child’s education and I would welcome any feedback.

We have been working side by side with partners throughout this period to provide food parcels and other supports to those who need it. We are acutely aware that some of our families, as a result of Covid 19, find themselves without work or any source of income. We can help in small, but possibly critical ways:

1. If you are needs food parcel please contact this number and we can arrange a time for this to be picked up. Contact 07585992667. Someone from the FARE team, on our behalf, will respond.
2. If you find your circumstances have changed recently and you need advice, please contact our Financial Inclusion Officer Sharon on 07395832499 who can advise on benefits and potential income sources. Alternatively you can email her on ‘sharon@gemap.co.uk’

These supports are confidential and your details and the content of any discussion will not be shared unless you request otherwise.

Thank you for your support now and in going forward. I will endeavour to keep you as informed as possible over the coming weeks and months.

Yours Sincerely

Angela Milton

Head teacher