4th September 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

The term has started very well with our children showing great enthusiasm for learning. Their behaviour at Mass was so impressive, especially given that it was the only the third day in school for our Primary Ones!

This newsletter is aimed at giving you an insight into the teaching and learning going on in the school this term. You will see that we are developing our delivery of important subjects such as Reading and Spelling in order to ensure the best possible outcomes for our children. We hope to share these developments with you at Sharing our Learning and Literacy Workshops. Please read below for details.

Thank you for your continued support,

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Nuala McElroy

**School Improvement Priority One: Numeracy**

This year, we will be working with Leigh Graham, the authority’s PT of Numeracy on developing our teaching and learning in Numeracy. Mr Traquair is the school lead on Numeracy and is very excited to be attending a full-day conference with Jo Boaler, Professor of Mathematics Education at Stanford University. We are eager to hear what this international expert has to say on the subject of teaching Maths and Numeracy.

**School Improvement Priority Two: Literacy**

**Reading**

We are also excited about our collaboration with Sue Ellis, Professor at Strathclyde University. We will be working with Professor Ellis over the next two years and will be sharing the changes in our practice with you as we learn more through the training programme.

**Spelling**

Primary One and Primary Two children will continue to use Read Write Inc to develop their knowledge of phonics. This knowledge, in turn, will help the children to develop their confidence in spelling.

Once children have learned their Read Write Inc Set Three sounds, they will move on to Active Literacy Spelling. This very successful programme allows children not only to develop their knowledge of phonics but also to develop their knowledge of spelling strategies. The programme takes an active, problem-solving approach to spelling that children find engaging and fun.

Teachers are beginning to use Active Literacy approaches using ‘tricky’ words, teaching children how to carry out Active Learning activities and how to apply the strategies. We hope that you will be able to join us in our Sharing our Learning sessions as this will help you to support your child with spelling homework. There will also be Literacy workshops during the Sharing our Learning week.

**School Improvement Priority Three: Health and Wellbeing**

Mrs MacLeod has been the school lead on Nurture and has been working with colleagues across the Lornshill Cluster on developing the way in which we undertake Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings. We are currently scheduling our first TAC meetings for later in the term and sending out invitations.

Liz Owen, our Educational Psychologist, will be delivering training on The Nurture Principles at the end of September.

During this term, we are working on developing the new House System and our children are enjoying weekly House Golden Time following on from our assemblies. It is wonderful to see our children playing so well together across classes and year groups and to see new relationships forming.

Sensory Circuits will begin again as soon as staff have been trained and children’s programmes reassessed by Gillian Kenmure, Occupational Therapist.

**School Improvement Priority Four: Curriculum and DYW**

We are currently arranging opportunities for our children to work with Robertsons Construction and to learn more about our new school and the skills involved in the building of the Tullibody South Campus. There are several interesting ideas being discussed and we will give you the details as they’re finalised. We will also be hosting a World of Work Week again this year as part of Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) and this is very early warning that we will be looking for volunteers to come in and talk to children about their work. Robertsons have expressed eagerness to be involved in World of Work Week which is planned to take place in March.

**PE**

The cost of sports activities beyond the school is set to rise to £2 as we have to cover the cost of transport to and from events.

Mrs Caproni will be ordering the sports kit that you and the children decided to spend our Participatory Budgeting money on. I know this will help our children to feel even more motivated and proud as they represent our school.

**Sharing our Learning**

This is an opportunity for family members to come into class to work alongside their children. We will offer three slots and would ask you to let us know which session you will be able to attend as that will ensure that we don’t have overcrowded classrooms. Letters with return slips will be issued soon. The sessions are planned for:

* Monday 17th September @ 2.20pm (except for P3/2)
* Wednesday, 19th September @ 9.05am (except for P4)
* Friday, 21st September @ 9.05am

**Literacy Workshops**

There will be Literacy workshops to help families to support their children with home learning during the Sharing our Learning Week. Topics will include:

* Spelling – Read Write Inc and Active Literacy
* Reading – Read Write Inc and the new Reading Programme
* Wriiting – Writing homework

These sessions are planned for:

* Monday 17th September @ 1.50pm
* Wednesday, 19th September @ 9.35am
* Wednesday, 19th September @ 6.30pm
* Friday, 21st September @ 9.35am

**Home Learning**

Our new Home Learning policy states that children will receive Core homework learning tasks in Literacy and Numeracy which must be done. In addition, there are Extension tasks that will help a child to further develop and apply their learning and skills. Core Homework tasks usually relate to the Home Learning books that we have been producing as a school for the past two years.

We are currently revising those books to include Active Literacy spelling lists and guidance on both Active Literacy and the Reading Programme. We will publish new versions of the books as soon as we have completed our training on the new Reading Programme and have all the information that we need. Thank you for your patience.

**Volunteering**

We are always happy to work with our families in the school so if you have time on your hands, please let us know. We’ll put you to good use; reading to children; helping with admin and displays; cooking; craft; being our librarian; helping with structured play; working in our garden; coaching a sport etc. Whatever skills you have, we will be very grateful for any offers.

**Parent Council AGM**

The role of the Parent Council is especially important as we prepare for the move to the Tullibody South campus. At our AGM our current Parent Council leadership team will resign and a new team (which may consist of the current members) will be proposed, seconded and elected or re-elected. Also at this meeting, there will be a Headteacher’s report outlining the school’s progress over the past year and our plans for the next session. There will be time for debate and discussion on whole school topics that you wish to raise. Please come along if you can, the meetings last an hour, at most, and are an informal way to support our school and find out more about all that is going on.

Please note that the date of the meeting has changed again. It is now scheduled for the 12th of September at 6.30pm.

**St Modan’s Transition**

The model of transition visits to St Modan’s has changed this year. The children will still have a block of visits in both P6 and P7 but there will be three longer sessions per block rather than six shorter visits. In addition, there are two P7 days in June at a time when it is especially reassuring to the children to spend time in the secondary. One day will be an activities day and the other day will involve the children following an S1 timetable and getting experience of moving around the school between lessons. Our visits will take place on 31.10.18, 07.11.18 and 14.11.18. The P6 and P7 Parents’ Information Meeting is on 23.10.18. Further details will follow.

**Dates for Diary**

These dates are provisional and may change with circumstances.

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| 12th September | Parent Council AGM @ 6.30pm in school. Please come if you can. |
| 17th September | Sharing our Learning @ 2.20pm (except P3/2) |
| 17th September | Literacy Workshop @ 1.50pm |
| 19th September | Sharing our Learning @ 9.05am (except P4) |
| 19th September | Literacy Workshop @ 9.35am |
| 19th September | Literacy Workshop @ 6.30pm |
| 21st September | Sharing our Learning @ 9.05am |
| 21st September | Literacy Workshop @ 9.35am |
| **15th – 19th October** | **OCTOBER WEEK HOLIDAYS** |
| 22nd October – 26th October | Snapshot Jotter Week (details to follow) |
| 23rd October | St Modan’s P6 & P7 Parents’ Information Evening (details to follow) |
| 30th October | Parents’ Evening (details to follow) |
| 8th November | Flu Immunisations |
| **28th-29th November** | **INSERVICE DAYS (School closed to children)** |
| 11th December | St Modan’s Community Concert – details to follow |
| **24th December – 4th January** | **CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS** |