**CHANGES TO SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Welcome to Term 4!

As you will be aware Mrs McLean will be supporting another school within East Ayrshire for the rest of this academic session. Therefore I will be Acting Head Teacher in Mrs McLean’s absence and Mr Jackson will be Acting Depute Head Teacher. We are very much looking forward to continuing to drive forward the school priorities and working closely as always with the whole school community.

However, if you do need to get in touch, please do not hesitate to call the school on 01290661350 or email laura.clapperton@eastayrshire.org.uk.

Laura Clapperton

Acting Head Teacher

**NEW STAFF MEMBERS**

I would like to welcome Mr Ryan Clark who will be teaching Primary 6/7, four days per week. However, Mr Clark is a familiar face as he has been with us teaching Physical Education and French two days per week to all classes, so will be well known to all children.

I would also like to welcome Mrs Kisty Mair who will now take over Mr Clark’s previous role and will be teaching in all classes Physical Education and French.

**IMPORTANT DATES FOR TERM 4**

Term four is an exceptionally busy but fun and engaging term for the children. I have attached a ‘Dates for the diary’ overview to this newsletter, in order to keep you informed of all the important dates for the term ahead.

**SPONSORED ART ATTACK**

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank you all again for the support that you gave to our ‘Sponsored Art Attack’. This was a hugely successful day where the children really enjoyed participating in a variety of art activities throughout the day. We raised an outstanding £1300! This money will be used to help reduce the cost of our school and ECC summer outings.

**SCHOOL TRIP**

On Wednesday 19th June, a whole school trip has been organised to Heads of Ayr Farm Park. The children will have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities and I am sure will be a fun day for all age groups. Due to your ongoing support through our sponsored Art Attack day, we will use this money to reduce the cost. I will provide further communication about this, nearer the time.

**REPORTING TO PARENTS/ CARERS**

As you will be aware from previous communication, we are piloting a new approach to reporting to parents/carers. This session there will be three parents afternoon/ evening sessions instead of two. The final session, where you will be able to discuss your child’s progress will be on **Thursday 30th May 2024.** Further information regarding appointments, will be sent to you, nearer the time.

A survey on reporting to parents/ carers will be communicated through our school app following the last session. This will enable us to gather your thoughts and views on the pilot and make a decision about which approach would be best take when reporting to parents/carers next session.

**HEALTH WEEK**

As part of our Health & Wellbeing programme, we are organising a Health Week beginning **20th May**. The children will have the opportunity to experience a variety of different sports throughout the week. There will also be visitors invited into school to provide talks/ activities on different aspects of health and wellbeing. Children can come to school wearing appropriate sports clothing for the week due to participating in daily physical activities.

We are keen to provide the children with different experiences during this week. Therefore we are keen to invite parents and carers into the school who may be able to provide talks/ activities linked to Health e.g. nursing, dental, emergency services, fitness or sports coaches etc.

If you feel you may be able to help, please contact Mr Christopher Jackson on 01290661350 or email c.jackson@eastayrshire.org.uk

**PATHS CELEBRATION**

Muirkirk PS & ECC were the first school within East Ayrshire to gain Barnarodo’s ‘model school’s award’ for our work on Social and Emotional wellbeing. The children who participated in our PATHS celebration presentation, have been invited to East Ayrshire Headquarters to speak to local councillors and our provost about the work of the school. Again, this work highlights the hard work of our whole school community and a lovely way to highlight our success! This will take place on **Tuesday 4th June 2024.**

**CLASS ASSEMBLIES**

To improve parental engagement and involvement within the school, we have decided to introduce class assemblies.

These assemblies will be led by the children, will be short and informative and will share learning with parents/carers and other relatives. To ensure we give you enough warning, please find the dates and times of each classes assembly below. We do hope you will be able to join us on these dates.

**P5/6 Friday 26th April - 9.30 am**

**P1/2 Wednesday 5th June -9.30am** \*Please note this date has changed from previous communication

**SUNNY WEATHER**

We are coming to that time of year where we will hopefully see some hot sunny weather. Therefore, the children will have more opportunities to participate in a variety of outdoor activities. Please remember to ensure your child is wearing sun screen and bring a hat on days when it is hot and sunny.

**MUIRKIRK PARENT COUNCIL**

We would be delighted to welcome any parents or carers to our next PTA meeting on Monday 13th May at 5pm in the community rooms.  This will be our last meeting before the summer term.  We are hoping to get a fundraising plan for the coming school year organised.

Please contact us on our Facebook page or via email muirkirkparentcouncil@yahoo.com if you would like to get involved or more any information.

This year we are using the money raised with our calendars to help fund the cost of the ECC and School trips.

**LEARNING IN MUIRKIRK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**P1/2**

It’s another busy term for Primary 1/2. We have a special visitor this term as Miss Stevenson will be joining Primary 1/2 for 6 weeks. This term we are using the story ‘Going on a Bear Hunt’ as inspiration for our topic. We will be looking at stories with bears, orienteering and mapping our local environment, going on hunts for different types of animal’s e.g. mini beasts, discovering what animals live in our area and researching different types of bears. We will also be using our knowledge of healthy foods to create a picnic to take on our outdoor activities as we plan and prepare a Teddy bear’s picnic. There will be lots of opportunities to be creative in music, drama and dancing as part of this topic.

Primary 1/2 will also be looking at plants and life cycles. We will be learning how to look after a baby and will have the opportunity to practice this in our role play area.

We have been working very hard on our maths skills and will be looking to at money this term, including identifying and using coins to pay for items, making amounts and giving change. We will have the chance to practice using the money in our ‘flower shop’.

Primary 1/2 will also continue to develop their knowledge of number and mental maths skills through our number ninja work.

In literacy we are working on finding and using information. We will use information we can find to help us write. Primary 1/2 are working very hard on their phonics and writing skills and are making super progress. We will continue to develop our knowledge of phonics and spelling. We are working on writing with more independence and adding more details as well as applying the tools for writing (punctuation, presentation, phonics) as well as focusing more on grammar.

We will be supported by P4/5 buddies when working on ICT and computing. In Health we will be looking at people who look after us and learning about our bodies.

We are looking forward to fun this term as well and are excited to welcome parents and carers to our class led assembly in May. We are also looking forward to our whole school trip towards the end of the year.

**P2/3**

Primary 2/3 have lots planed for our final term this year! Here are some of the areas that we will be learning about:

Within numeracy, we will recap our knowledge of multiplication and division strategies to start off. When we finish with this we will then move onto fractions, decimals and percentages. We will develop this by sharing concrete materials equally into groups, looking at fractions on a number line to build our understanding as well as using bar models to help us solve problems. We will also look at patterns and relationships by creating patterns using simple shapes, predicting what comes before and after in a sequence and finding patterns through problem solving activities. Within mathematics this term, our focus will be on angles, symmetry and transformation. We will get the chance to measure and record angles, compare the degrees in different types of angles and also find angles in our environment.

We will continue to build on our spelling each week within class and work on our knowledge of phonemes. Primary 2/3 will develop our knowledge of these phonemes through a range of activities such as diacritically marking, elkonin boxes, and partner dictation as well as our weekly dictation of our focus sound. We will also continue to do practical activities for spelling as well such as play doh mats, magnetic letters and writing our words in shaving foam or sand. Primary 2/3 also continue to build on our reading through use of our reading books each week. We will get the chance to read alongside the teacher in our groups and then work on our comprehension of the text through different questions that follow at the end of the books. Our writing focus this term is narrative and persuasive. We continue to build our common words and spelling through our writing.

Our topic for the final term will be ‘The Rainforest’. We are looking forward to finding out more about rainforests and where they are in the world. We will look at maps to help us locate them. We will also look plants and flowers of the rainforest and the life cycle of a plant. In order to do this, we will grow our own plants and log the changes we see. We will also look at the animals of the rainforest and group them into categories such as amphibian, mammal, retile etc. We will be able to use what we already know about carnivores, herbivores and omnivores to help with this. We hope to make our own rain catchers and use know we know about units of measurement to compare the rainfall in Muirkirk to the rainfall in the Amazon Rainforest. As a class, we will look at deforestation and what we can do to help prevent this. We will also look at the people that live in the rainforest and we will complete some fantastic art work based on this! To round off, we will look at the foods that come from the rainforest such as pineapple and chocolate and hopefully have a tasting session!

Within health and wellbeing, we will begin by looking at positive relationships and physical changes alongside what makes us unique and different. We will then finish off the term by looking at sexual health. We will look at the human body, how to look after our bodies and explain the need for privacy. We will also continue to work through the PATHS programme as we begin to explore manners, friendships and emotions. During our P.E times, we will also be doing basketball and rounders/ athletics.

In French, our focus will be on where you live, the local area and likes and dislikes. This will be alongside our revision of conversations.

**P4/5**

This term we will be focussing on fractions, expressions and equations and angles. Through factions, we will be placing fractions on a number line with fractions of the same denominator. We will be calculating a fraction of an amount and putting our division skills from last term into use here. We will discover equivalent fractions through practical activities and match fractions of the same value. Further to that, we will be exploring expressions and equations where we will explore greater than, smaller than and equal to calculations. In angles, we will be recognising right angles and their numerical value. Studying angles in the community and linking them to fractions by using the terms – half turn, quarter turn, three quarters. We will also study and explore obtuse and acute angles.

In reading, we will continue with our group reading books. We read 2/3 times a week in class and do activities associated with our texts. We are also starting a class novel called the BFG by Roald Dahl. This will lend itself to many fun activities and crazy words! In writing we are developing our skills of argument and persuasion. We will be linking our writing to our topic of Ancient Egypt. Our listening and talking activities take place continually in class and we will be issuing a letter home to ask your child to prepare a short solo talk.

Our Health and Wellbeing activities roll throughout the week where we have PE on a Monday and Wednesday. With the summer term, and hopefully the good weather, could you please send trainers with your child every day. That way we can always nip outside to catch up on Sports Championship events when the weather pleases us.

Outdoor Learning will be on alternate weeks of Wednesdays and Fridays. Children should come dressed appropriately for the weather. First session back outside is Friday 26th April.

We will be learning all about Ancient Egypt. Please ask your child what they have been learning about. We will be incorporating lots of super science and technology activities into these lessons.

**P5/6**

In term 4, Primary 5/6 will complete their study of the novel ‘Kensuke’s Kingdom’ by Michael Morpurgo. Through this novel, we will continue to explore plot, characters and settings and themes such as: survival, resilience and friendship. We will also continue to read read topical non-fiction related to world events as they occur. We will also sharpen our comprehension skills by using the ‘Cracking Comprehension’ resource. In writing, we will be exploring persuasive writing, instructions, non-chronological reports as well as some narrative writing. We will also continue to improve our handwriting and will continue to work on our Active Literacy spelling programme. In addition, we will be focussing on aspects of grammar such as: verb tenses, pronouns, subject /verb agreement and comparative and superlative adjectives.

In Numeracy, we will start the term by working on fractions. We will identify, colour and name fractions. We will also identify fractions on a number line as well as improper fractions and mixed numbers. We will then progress on to finding unit and non-unit fractions of quantities. We will also use bar modelling to clarify and interpret word problems involving fractions. We will then work on decimals up to hundredths and will also learn about percentages and the link between fractions, decimals and percentages.

In Health and Wellbeing, we will continue our work on the PATHS programme where the focus will be on the intensity of feelings. As part of RSHP we will be looking at various aspects of friendships. In P.E., the class will be working on their preparations for our Sports Championships. They will work on events such as high jump, long jump, standing high jump and javelin to name but a few.

In Social Subjects, as part of people and place, we will complete our study of Japan. As part of the topic, the children will learn about the Geography, Language, Food, Children, Religion and culture of Japan and will also take part in a Sushi making (and tasting!) session.

In Expressive Arts, we will continue to learn a stringed instrument as part of the Strings Project every Tuesday. In Technologies, we will be participating in a STEM transition project and will work on our word processing skills.

As part of outdoor learning, we will be learning to build a range of shelters, take part in fire building sessions which may involve some outdoor cooking and do various team building tasks. All in all another very busy term ahead!

**P6/7**

We have reached the final school term for the year and this term promises to be another busy and exciting one as we approach the summer holidays. We will be continuing our ‘Solar Punk’ topic. We will be naming and investigating renewable and non-renewable energy sources and considering their impact. We will also consider how to harness natural energy during our everyday life and tasks and discuss the effect of using the different types of energy sources. Another area of our topic we will be studying is ‘Our Community’. Throughout this area we will explore different voting systems from around the world and determining which best suits our community. It is important to voice our opinions and give our views on important matters and we will outline the ways in which decisions are reached and their effectiveness. We will look at the roles and responsibilities of those making decisions and determine who is best to fulfil these, worldwide and locally, through working together and considering each other’s needs and wellbeing.

Our main topic question this term is: ‘Can living things adapt to suit where they live?’ During these lessons we will examine features of Scottish landscape whilst researching its land use and impact. We will investigate natural disasters and examine how living things can and need to adapt to their environment.

In language and literacy, we will be developing our reading skills through weekly comprehension tasks related to our reading books in order to show solid understanding of what we are reading. We will explore different genres of books including non-fiction and poetry, whilst considering the key features and their impact on the reader. Weekly spelling activities will enable us to practice a wide range of strategies to allow us to spell common and unknown words accurately. We will explore various phonemes (sounds) and the different ways in which they can be represented. Elkonin boxes, diacritical marking and other spelling activities will enable us to break down and build words. For listening and talking, there will be plenty of opportunities to share ideas across the curriculum during individual and groups presentations related to IDL and topic work. In writing, we will be continuing to link our work to our topic to keep giving us a clear context which we can respond to. A big focus will be on personal writing also as we come to the end of the year and we either make the transition to a new class or to the academy.

During numeracy this term, we will revise our previous knowledge of fractions and establish the relationship between fractions decimals and percentages, converting between each entity. We will explore how to add and subtract fractions as well as finding fractions and percentages of a given number. We will apply and convert numbers using decimal notation. Perimeter and area is a topic we will be learning about in maths. Finding the perimeter and area of different shapes using a formula will be our key focus. Finally, we will continue to learn about time: telling the time, converting between 12hr and 24hr times, reading timetables and calculating intervals between two separate times, as well as exploring time differences across countries of the world and using tools such as stop watches, digital timers, etc to measure time.

For Health and Wellbeing, our PATHS lessons will allow us to explore and discuss conflict resolution. We will look at the different types of conflict and through drama and role play, act out scenarios and strategies for resolving problems we may encounter in our daily lives. We will also look at lessons which involve transitioning in order to achieve an understanding of our feelings and emotions as we encounter new beginnings and change to routines the older we grow. During PE we will begin preparation for sports day through practising athletics events including individual running, jumping and throwing events. We will also take part in gymnastics, concentrating on piecing together individual and group routines involving balance, movement and jumping. Our other health and wellbeing lessons will focus on relationships, sexual health and parenthood where we will learn about the changes our bodies will go through.

During Science we will be focusing on biodiversity and interdependence, specifically identifying and categorising living things. We will be discussing survival and extinction and related energy flow between plants and animal, as well as giving our opinions and views on the use of fertilisers. Social subjects will revolve around our topic question and involve describing features of land, its use and the environmental impact of human activity on land. Photography and editing skills will form the main priority of technology this term and online tools and platforms will be used to develop our editing skills. During Technologies we will understand how global lifestyles have influenced technologies used in everyday life and we will research the continuing developments. Plenty of time will be given to Expressive Arts through the Strings music project and group performances to the reaction of natural disasters. During French, we will study weather and time. An abundance of Outdoor Learning activities will take place related to other curricular areas such as Science, Social Studies, IDL and Technologies.

As ever it’s a busy term and one in which I’m sure we will all enjoy and learn lots from!