



# Crookfur Primary School & Family Centre



Friday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Thank you for your continued support during this period of closure. We have received so many positive and encouraging messages since staff returned to work on 5<sup>th</sup> January, it has really helped keep our spirits up as we once again find ourselves planning and delivering remote learning experiences.

## Learning at Home - School

I know that learning at home can present real challenges. Please be assured that we know that you are doing all that you can to support your children at home. We know that there are lots of competing pressures on families and that there will be times when school work cannot be completed.

It will take time for us to find the right balance between planned learning and teaching and the amount of work that children are able to complete at home. It is important that children login and check in every day as we use this to help track children's engagement and identify if anyone is having difficulty.

Teachers will try to highlight core tasks that should be completed and provide extension materials for any children who wish some further challenge. Your feedback is very important in helping us determine whether we are setting too much, too little or whether it is just about right.

Next week I will send out an evaluation to identify what is going well and what we need to change to improve. For the moment, if there is anything that we can do to help, then please do not hesitate to contact the school ([SchoolMail@crookfur.e-renfrew.sch.uk](mailto:SchoolMail@crookfur.e-renfrew.sch.uk)) or telephone 0141 570 7120.

We have a few chromebooks left in school. If your child does not have access to a device, please contact us and we can arrange to lend them one. Please note, we have restricted this offer to one device per family.

I remind you that there are information guides and short video tutorials to support parents helping children access online learning. All devices are slightly different, but we have captured the main features of accessing using laptops/pcs, android and Apple devices. These are available on our school website,

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/er/Crookfur/coronavirus/learning-at-home-digital-support/>

Thank you all for safely collecting the home learning packs at the end of last week. We had an effective one way system in place and there was never any time where there was congestion or queueing. I am sure this is down to the real community effort that parents put in, collecting packs for neighbours and friends who lived nearby.

We are awaiting the First Minister's next announcement on Monday but are putting plans in place should the school closure continue. We will set up a selection of stationery supplies at the main entrance of the school if you need to borrow any materials to support ongoing learning at home.

If the closure is to continue, some classes may require to collect further resources e.g. reading books. Although the vast majority of materials are posted online, for some children, paper packs are needed, especially for the younger year groups.

We obviously want to keep the number of adults coming to the school to a minimum but if it is necessary to supplement the packs already issued, we will contact you and arrange a collection time. Again we will ensure all safety procedures are in place to support physical distancing and minimise any risk of transmission.

## **Learning at Home - Family Centre**

It is important for all staff to be visible to the children to help stay connected throughout the period of remote learning.

Our home learning ideas are informed by our “Intentional back drop planning” which will continue to drive the building blocks of literacy, numeracy and health and well-being for our young learners to ensure progression. The learning provision provided is through play and developmentally appropriate experiences.

We share home learning ideas daily on the blog which can be accessed via our Crookfur Family Centre website. This will include a story of the week, rhyme or song of the week, a skills based play experience and a range of other play ideas that promote learning in different curricular areas. A Crookfur Family Centre Google Drive is available for families to access various digital learning opportunities. This includes websites and apps promoting a range of different types of learning.

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/er/crookfurnursery/>

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/er/crookfurnursery/learning-at-home/>

Bookbug sessions led by the staff team will be available for families to access either through pre-recorded videos or hopefully live online sessions.

Families are encouraged to share their home learning via our @nurserycrookfur or by e-mailing into the school. Twitter will be also be used to signpost families to relevant supports, guidance and any other valuable information.

## **Live Interaction – Google Meet**

While learning at home, children have the opportunity for live interaction with their teachers twice per day (morning and afternoon). This enables them to ask any questions and let their teachers know how they are getting on with their learning.

Class teachers are keen to extend this from the text message format we are currently using to include video calls, using Google Meet. This will be introduced gradually from next week.

Please note, these are not live streamed teaching sessions. Google Meet will be used for interaction with small groups to follow up on set learning, provide tutorial support or just to check in. Some teachers may wish to set up a live meet for their whole class, perhaps to tell a story.

I have decided not to set up a formal timetable for these meetings and have left it to class teachers to arrange these sessions to fit with the children’s learning programmes. However, I appreciate that this may present difficulties for children who may be sharing a device with their siblings and also for parents to keep a track of planned sessions. Teachers will highlight planned Google Meets on their daily/weekly timetables posted on the Google Classroom.

We will review how successful (or unsuccessful) these sessions are in the first week and adapt as required. Please do not be concerned if children encounter any problems joining a Google Meet. We expect that there will be teething problems. These sessions will be optional and if your child does not join in they will not be disadvantaged.

A summary of our plans to use Google Meet is provided below

- ✓ Google Meet will be used for check ins and tutorial support with children, groups or whole classes. It will not be used for any direct teaching.
- ✓ This live interaction will form part of teachers’ daily interactions with children (morning and afternoon sessions).

- ✓ Teachers may not use Google Meet every day, but will still be online every day as they are at present.
- ✓ Not all children may be involved in a Google Meet each day, though all children will have an equal number of opportunities for this form of live interaction across the week.
- ✓ Google Meet sessions for small groups will be kept quite short e.g. 15 mins.
- ✓ Google Meet sessions will be set up for children in their Google Classroom and not through the Outlook calendar.
- ✓ If a child is unable to login to a Google Meet they will not be disadvantaged by this e.g. they can check in another way or at another time. If the session is a plenary following work that has been set, the teacher will note if any children do not attend and send them a private message to ask if there is anything that they need help with.

Mr McMillan has created a helpful video guide for children and parents to support safe and sensible use of Google Meet for video calls. This will be posted on your child's Google Classroom alongside the updated Responsible User Agreement.

Our Family Centre staff are also keen to find new ways to introduce live interaction for the children. This will need careful thought and planning but we hope to be up and running with some interactive stories and singing sessions soon.

### **Responsible User Agreement**

To safely use the Internet and digital technologies in school, all of our children follow a Responsible User Agreement. This agreement remains in place while learning at home.

We have ensured that the Responsible User Agreement has been updated to reflect the different technologies and platforms that children are accessing. On each Google Classroom, teachers have uploaded a digital form which highlights the important parts of the Responsible User Agreement which relate to video conferencing.

We have asked that the children agree to the following:

- ✓ When using Google Meet for live interaction, I will not take photos or make video recordings.
- ✓ When using Google Meet for live interaction, I will behave as I am expected to in a real classroom during a face-to-face lesson.
- ✓ I will make sure my microphone is on mute, unless I am invited to contribute.
- ✓ I will make sure that I choose an appropriate place to join the Google Meet and that no personal items can be seen by others.

It is important for everyone's safety that the children follow these rules. As I mentioned before, class teachers are keen to embrace this opportunity for live interaction and we trust that all users will abide by the Responsible User Agreement. The offer of video calls can be withdrawn and live interaction offered as text only in cases where the agreement has not been followed.

### **Communication with School**

Children are able to send messages to their class teacher through the Google Classroom, and the teacher will respond.

If parents/carers have a question or concern that they wish to highlight to the teacher, please contact the school by e-mail or telephone ([SchoolMail@crookfur.e-renfrew.sch.uk](mailto:SchoolMail@crookfur.e-renfrew.sch.uk); 0141 570 7120). Class teachers are not able to respond to parental concerns that are directed to them through Google Classroom. Thank you for your understanding.

All family centre enquiries can be directed to the family centre office 0141 570 7700 (9am-3pm). We will have a dedicated family centre mailbox for e-mails but until it is launched, please continue to e-mail [SchoolMail@croofkur.e-renfrew.sch.uk](mailto:SchoolMail@croofkur.e-renfrew.sch.uk)

### **Staffing Update**

I am pleased to let you know that after recruitment carried out at the end of last week, we have two new appointments within Croofur Family Centre.

Firstly, I am delighted that Mrs Elaine Bryers has been promoted to the role of Senior Child Development Officer. Elaine's knowledge, skills and passion for early learning and childcare impressed the panel immensely and I know that she will be an asset to our early years leadership team. In her new role, Elaine will continue as the Orange Group keyworker with Miss Wilson.

We have also appointed Mrs Gillian Plews to a part time business support assistant post within the family centre. Gillian is a parent within the primary school and some of you may know her from the fundraising committee. Gillian will work Mon-Fri mornings 8.45am-12.15pm alongside Georgia Bell in the family centre office.

Congratulations to both successful candidates.

I do hope that the children are settling in to their new routine at home. The children who have attended school provision this week have worked very hard, connecting their devices to our wifi system and getting used to some different classes and routines. They did all manage some fun times playing in the snow too.

We are keeping our fingers crossed that we are all back in school soon.

Have a lovely weekend and please stay safe.

Warmest wishes

*Sheena McGuigan*

Sheena McGuigan

Head Teacher