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Education Department
Giffnock Primary School
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17th April 2020

Dear Parent/ Carer

Given the unique circumstances that we all find ourselves within, I felt that this letter would be helpful in clarifying certain issues for the coming weeks. We remain in very challenging times and I am acutely aware of how difficult a situation this is for many of our children, families and wider community. On behalf of all the staff at Giffnock, we continue to wish you the best of health and hope that you are coping as well as possible.

Although Giffnock Primary School premises remain closed at this time, many of you will be aware that, since Monday 23rd March, we have been supporting the children of key worker families through school day provision at 'hub' schools of OLM and Glen Family Centre. These 'hubs' have been organised across East Renfrewshire for geographic groups of schools, to support these children and families as best we can. It remains unclear as to how long this overall situation will remain the case however we will of course keep you updated.

As a school, we fully understand how difficult it continues to be to re-organise our daily lives. We know that, for many of you, the practicalities of organising adults' working lives alongside our children's learning at home is very challenging. Where family members may also be unwell, we know that it may not be possible to complete daily learning activities. As a school, we want you to know that we understand this and that the learning activities being provided must of course fit within what is possible for you and your children. The first priority must remain everyone's health and wellbeing.

For all of our children, our 'Remote Learning' provision of activities will remain in place and resume again on Monday 20th April. For our P1-7 children, their class Google Classrooms are the central focus for interaction and learning; for our nursery children, this remains through our website and Nursery Twitter feed. 'Remote Learning' is about more than just a computer screen and you will already have seen that a range of the learning activities that our teachers are providing are also designed to engage and interest our children in other meaningful ways. This balance is important and will remain a guiding principle in the weeks ahead.

At this time, we wanted to share a few key points regarding Remote Learning:

- For our P1-7 children, their Google Classroom remains the central focus for learning and the best and closest area for interaction with our class teachers. Our teachers know our children as learners very well and the planning and preparation for learning is outlined there each day. It is also the only space through which we can ascertain daily awareness of a child's wellbeing and engagement with learning. So where at all possible, we would ask that your child(ren) puts a daily 'check-in', by posting at least a short daily 'hello' in the Stream area of their Google Classroom. Many of our children are, as applicable, then uploading other completed activities in the 'Classwork' area of their Google Classroom but this daily check-in is an important, minimum indicator for us.

Mhairi Shaw, Director of Education, East Renfrewshire Offices, 211 Main St, Barrhead, G78 1SY

- In connection with the above point, and for your information, where we have not heard from any of our children for a few days and we do not have any contact from the parents/ carer to explain the situation, members of our staff team have been reaching out to the family as we would normally, in order to check that the child and family are safe and well. The daily check-in to the class Google Classroom therefore further supports this sharing of information.
- There are 'how to' guides and other help available on our website should you need these to support accessing home/ Remote Learning:
<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/er/Giffnock/parents/remote-learning/>
<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/er/Giffnock/giffnock-nursery-class/nursery-remote-learning/>
- Our class teachers are monitoring their Google Classrooms during the day and have regular interaction and feedback with individual children. Please be aware that they are not however able to give immediate feedback to all questions/ learning activities shared by our children. Rather, general feedback will be provided as appropriate during the course of the day/ week. Please also be aware that, where children post questions or learning after the end of our 'normal' school day, the class teacher will not necessarily be able to respond that day.
- The class 'Stream' area has many posts within it each day and feedback from our families has suggested that this area has already become dense with information. So the class Stream will be cleared at the end of each week, so that the area feels less cluttered and easier to use.
- Many other schools across Scotland are using the Glow portal and Google Classrooms. Given the high number of individuals trying to access these same areas at this time, there have been some problems logging in. Where this may happen, please just advise your child to wait a short time and try again; in most instances, this is enough to allow access.

Following the first two weeks of these new ways of learning and teaching, the staff team have evaluated our processes so far and we have made amendments as we have felt necessary. This will continue to be the case and we would also like to take account of your and your children's perspectives. To this end, a Forms survey link will be emailed to you during the week beginning Monday 20th April and I hope that you can spend a few minutes completing it, in order for us to further understand your thoughts and ideas.

Finally, we want to support and help all of our families in any way that we can. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in contact with us. The main school email will be the best place to do so at this time: schoolmail@giffnock.e-renfrew.sch.uk

Kind regards,



Rob Lawson
Head Teacher