



Thornliebank Primary School and Nursery Class



September 2020 Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers

It has been a very busy and productive few weeks as we have settled in to this new year at school and nursery. The children are adapting so well to the changes we have put in place and are showing great resilience and positivity in class and around the school and nursery. We continue to reinforce the importance of good hand hygiene and encourage all children and adults to stick to the Health and Safety rules and routines that are in place.

I hope that this newsletter will give you a flavour of what is going on around the school and nursery, but if you have any questions or queries please contact me, Mrs Wilson or Mrs McGarvey via the school office.

Kind regards

Mrs Miller (Head Teacher)

Absence reporting

Over the first few weeks of term, we have recorded significantly higher absence rates than in previous years. This is to be expected at this time, and has been the case across the country.

For any absence, please contact us before school starts (the office is staffed from 8.15am) to notify us if your child will not be in. Please note that the office staff will not advise on whether or not your child should come to school - that is your decision to make as a parent/carer, and we would refer you to Scottish Government guidance for any COVID-specific queries.

We ask that you inform us immediately if your child is being tested for COVID-19, as we are required to report on this to Environmental Health on a daily basis.

Current guidance states that any child displaying the following symptoms **SHOULD NOT** come into school or nursery; they should isolate at home until a test can be arranged:

- new or continuous cough, high temperature, loss of or change to sense of smell or taste.

Any child who begins to display symptoms in school or nursery will be taken to our isolation room and their parent/carer contacted to collect them immediately and arrange for a test.

Government Test and Protect procedures will then apply.

Social distancing in school

You will already be aware that children are not required to socially distance from each other either indoors or outdoors. However, the advice still states that adults should socially distance from each other and from children in school. This is proving to be quite challenging, both for our staff and for the children, and we are continually thinking of ways to reinforce the message and remind the children about social distancing from adults. It would be helpful if you could help to reinforce this at home, by discussing the importance of this with your child, as well as being a good role model in terms of social distancing from other adults, particularly when waiting at the school gates.

Senior Leadership Team

As we were not able to hold our 'Meet the Teacher' event, I am aware that not all of our parents and carers will be familiar with our leadership team, who would normally have the opportunity to introduce themselves on the night. Hopefully you have seen the short videos that we have sent out, but here is a brief reminder of our leadership team and their roles. Mrs McGarvey is our Principal Teacher. She has pastoral responsibility for Primary 1 to 3, teaches Primary 3 one or two days per week and leads school and nursery Health and Wellbeing developments. Mrs Wilson is our Depute Head Teacher. She has pastoral responsibility for Primary 4 to 7, is our Additional Support Needs co-ordinator, and leads school and nursery developments in Numeracy and Mathematics. You can contact any one of us via the school office.

School trips and excursions

You may already be aware that some of the guidance around non-residential school trips has changed in recent weeks. We are very fortunate to have lovely outdoor spaces within walking distance from the school, and we aim to make best use of these spaces to enhance our outdoor learning opportunities. Primary 2 have already been on a walk in the local area and the nursery are planning visits to 'the forest' very soon. Please ensure you have completed and returned all parts of the data check to ensure your child can participate in walks and activities in our local area.

Unfortunately, the guidance around residential visits has not changed. As a result, we are unable to confirm whether our Primary 7 trip to Lockerbie Manor will go ahead as planned this year (it usually takes place in March). We are liaising with Giffnock and Braidbar primaries on this, and are awaiting further national and local authority guidance. I know the children will have been looking forward to this, as it is a big event in their Primary 7 year, but we are unable to commit at the moment. As soon as we have further information, we will share this with our Primary 7 pupils and their parents and carers.

Flu vaccines

Parents and carers of children from Primary 1 to 7 should have had a consent form for their flu vaccine. NHS Scotland will be visiting school on 9th October to administer the vaccine, and we have already been working closely with our NHS colleagues to ensure all Health and Safety requirements are met. Please complete and return the form if you have not done so already.

Parent Council

We are very fortunate to be well supported by an active Parent Council here at Thornliebank. This year will be more challenging than most for our Parent Council, in terms of restrictions around organising events, but I know they will continue to work hard and support the school in any way they can. The first meeting of the Parent Council is planned for this Wednesday 9th September at 7.00pm at Woodfarm High School.

New staff members

We have been lucky to welcome some new staff members to the Thornliebank team this session, and they are all settling in well. Mr Eadie, Miss Orr and Miss Gill are our new teachers, and Mr Wescott and Miss Miller have joined us as Pupil Support Assistants.

Holidays and In-service Days

Please note that school and nursery will be closed on the following days for the September Weekend: Thursday 24th, Friday 25th and Monday 28th September. Children return on Tuesday 29th.

We will stop at the usual time on Friday 9th October for the October Week. Children will be off from Monday 12th to Monday 19th October, inclusive (Monday 19th is an In-Service Day for school and nursery staff).

Our Core Values

This month, we are promoting the most recent addition to our core values - EFFORT. We are encouraging everyone to put in maximum effort to all aspects of their learning and wider school life such as building relationships. We will recognise children who are showing great effort in all the usual ways, including positive notes home, certificates and 'shout outs' at our virtual assemblies. Please talk about effort with your child and encourage them to always try their best.

Nursery News!

We are delighted to say that our nursery children have settled in so well this year! They are building lovely friendships with their peers as well as the adults in the nursery. Our returning children have very quickly adapted to the new routines, and our brand new children have surprised and amazed us with their resilience as they have settled into their new nursery without their parent or carer being able to come inside with them.

We would like to thank all of our nursery families for their support as we have come back, and for adhering to the new restrictions, particularly when waiting to drop your child off or pick them up. Please let us know if you have any comments or suggestions on how we could improve our new arrangements - we are always keen to hear your thoughts.

The children have been making the most of the increased time outdoors, having lots of fun with bubbles, puddles and mud in the garden. The nursery now has its own 'Goody Foody Garden' where the children are helping to grow a variety of herbs, fruit and vegetables while learning about how to look after them and what to do with them once they have grown. There are also lots of different herbs, plants and flowers in the nursery playground that the children are taking care of, and they are attracting some lovely butterflies too.

We love to celebrate achievements in nursery and last week some Golden Envelopes were delivered for some of the nursery children. Each week, the nursery staff will nominate children for certificates to recognise achievements including showing kindness, trying hard, being a good friend, good listening and sharing.

We are really keen to share the children's experiences and have been posting photos regularly on Twitter. Please follow us @ThornliebankNC to see pictures of the children playing and learning indoors and outdoors. We are also continuing to use Learning Journals where the children can record photos and other evidence of their learning with a little help from an adult. The children love looking back through their Learning Journals and sharing them with their friends and the adults in nursery. We will be sending these home as well, to allow them to share them with their family, and you can add in photos and moments from home.

As always, please speak to any member of the nursery team if you have any questions or queries - we are all here to help!