

Maidenhill Primary School

Head Teacher's Update



Monday August 10 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers

Hope everyone is well.

The big day is almost upon us and it's certainly been a long time coming! I feel I'm actually starting to forget what life, and certainly education, was like pre-COVID!

With the First Minister's announcement on schools being made less than 2 weeks ago and with the guidance for reopening schools only being published that day, I am sure you can appreciate how hectic (and sometimes manic) the last 11 days have been. That being said, I am sure I speak for everyone at Maidenhill when I tell you how much we are looking forward to welcoming all children back on Wednesday.

Although things won't be quite back to the way they were pre-lockdown (the children have the intricacies of my one way system to look forward to!) we are committed to ensuring, first and foremost, that our children feel comfortable and happy to return. Experience has firmly led me to believe that children at this age are not naturally anxious and are often much more adaptable than the adults around them. Our role will be to make sure that any anxieties are listened to and discussed, but also to make sure that we don't create any additional anxiety through our own behaviours.

With guidance indicating that social distancing between children themselves is not required, the majority of changes in our routines are designed to allow staff and parents/ carers to maintain appropriate social distancing. As ever, things are subject to change and we will review routines regularly and update you.

Day 1 Itinerary

From 8.00 Nursery class children begin arriving. Parents should wait with children at entrance plaza until welcomed by a member of nursery staff.

8.45 MUGA gate opened to welcome all children in P2-7 back to the playground; children travelling by bus escorted into playground via the MUGA gate

8.55 P2-7 children line up and enter school building with new teachers

9.15 New children (P2-7) may congregate at entrance plaza and will be met by Miss Atkin (if happy to do so, new children may alternatively join their classmates in the playground before the bell and join their class line with everyone else)

9.20 MUGA gate opened to welcome all new Primary 1 children. Children and a maximum of 2 parents/ carers may enter playground to be met by Mr Johnston, Miss Livingstone and Miss Shaw.

9.30 All P1 parents/ carers clear of playground

2.55 MUGA gates opened for 1 parent/carer. Parents/carers have the responsibility to ensure appropriate social distancing between family groups. Classes released one at a time into the MUGA. Children travelling by bus escorted to the bus.

Drop off and Pick up

I gave an indication on Friday of our new drop off and pick up arrangements. With the exception of our new Primary 1 parents on Wednesday, we are unfortunately no longer able to have parents in our playground. Children from P1- P7 should now be dropped off at the MUGA gate. The drop off bays in the car park next to the MUGA gate will no longer be in use to allow for additional space.

At the end of the school day, **1 parent/ carer** may enter the MUGA as long as they ensure appropriate social distancing between family groups. Teachers will release children a class at a time into the MUGA.

Drop off and pick up for nursery children will be to the right of the entrance plaza at the main entrance to the school.

Intervals and Lunch

The space and facilities at Maidenhill mean that it is unlikely we will need to stagger morning interval although we will keep this under review. This will allow us to maintain our usual levels of adult supervision within the playground and still give the opportunity for siblings to touch base. Healthy snacks can be brought in for interval.

Lunch, however, will now take place over 2 distinct sittings:

12.30 P1-3 children in lunch hall; P4-7 in playground

12.55 P4-7 children in lunch hall or atrium (packed lunches); P1-3 children in playground

Children in P1-3 will be given additional time if required. Experience has shown that our P4-7s will have no trouble finishing their full lunch in the time allocated, but will obviously be given additional time if they wish!

Shielding

As I don't currently hold information on any children who have been shielding over the period of lockdown, I would be grateful if you could get in touch over the next few days if this applies. If your child had a medical reason to shield up until August 1, please let me know.

Communication

One of the biggest areas of challenge for everyone over lockdown has been communication. The novelty of virtual meetings has definitely worn off!

That being said, the Education Department has indicated that the roll-out of GoogleMeet across the authority is imminent. This will hopefully be of great benefit to all parent meetings and will hopefully address the privacy issues that are still outstanding with Zoom.

In the meantime all communication should remain by phone or via schoolmail@maidenhill.e-renfrew.sch.uk. If you feel that it is essential to visit our school office or to speak to a member of staff in person, I would be grateful if you could make an appointment giving us at least 24 hours notice. Your understanding in this matter is much appreciated and hopefully this change can be relaxed before too long.

Medication

In order for any medication (including inhalers) to be administered in school, I must authorise an Administration of Medication form. Please contact our school office to arrange to complete- please note that a new form must be completed/ updated each session.

Handwashing

One of the most important mitigations we can put in place is our approach to handwashing. We are returning to our structured 6 points in the day when all children are asked to wash their hands. In addition, children will be free to wash their hands at any further points they wish. This will be reinforced by positive hand hygiene messages and discussions in each class. Some parents may wish to send in an individual, labelled bottle/container of hand moisturiser. This may be kept in children's own trays in school if they wish.

I am looking forward to catching up on Wednesday (at an appropriate social distance, of course) and please don't worry if you are still unsure about any of our new procedures- I will be on hand as always to boss everyone about (COVID hasn't changed things that much!)

Take care,

Alasdair McDonald
Head Teacher