

Maidenhill Primary School

Head Teacher's Bulletin



Friday January 8th 2021

Dear Parents/ Carers

I hope everyone is well and that the kids (at least) have enjoyed their impromptu extra holiday week. Everyone I have spoken to so far has told me they were definitely on Santa's 'nice' list....of which I had no doubt whatsoever anyway!

This week in school has been pretty full-on and most of it has involved me talking. Between phone calls and Teams meetings, the only time I have really shut up is when I have been asleep. Writing this bulletin is actually giving me a bit of a break from using my voice and, probably more importantly, giving everyone else a break from having to listen to me....and if I ever get hold of the person who invented the 'risk assessment' I don't think I can be held responsible for my actions (although obviously keep that one to yourselves, please!)

Hub life

Following the council's online application system (a god-send- thank you, ERC!) our 'hub' allocation for the children of frontline keyworkers has been finalised and I have managed to speak to almost all parents involved. I think the central system had some difficulties recognising when families were trying to make the one application across multiple establishments but hopefully we have managed to iron out any anomalies.

Although we only have Maidenhill children with us (operating in three 'bubbles') the term 'hub' has carried over from the last lockdown and, just like then, our 'hubsters' remain a pleasure to work with. Like anything in life, things are always infinitely less stressful when new routines are quickly established and our hubsters are absolute experts at adjusting to new routines.

Our hub numbers in our P1-7 bubbles remains just within a comfortable level to allow our class-committed teachers to focus on their online learning provision. Your help with this has been greatly appreciated and I am grateful to you for only seeking hub provision where there is absolutely no other alternative.

Online Learning

Our online learning programme returns on Monday for our children from nursery-P7. Love it or hate it (and I am under no illusion about how much of a challenge it presents for our families) this is the situation we are in and all of our teachers are determined to make the best job of it they can.

As before, we will be using the Google Classroom platform to organise learning and most children are already very confident in accessing this. Miss Shaw and Miss Atkin have been updating our Remote Learning Guidance for Parents and I have attached it to this bulletin.

We have come a long way since March in terms of our understanding of and confidence in online learning platforms. These will never be a substitute for proper face-to-face interaction, but we are determined to enhance the interactive element of our provision this time round. Following a whole class check-in and register at 9.30 each morning, there may be further opportunities for 'live' check-ins, message boards, collaborative tasks etc. during the course of a day. Please see the attached guidance for further details and

whilst we are all getting used to new systems and routines, don't forget to be patient with yourself and with us when things don't always go to plan (and let's face it, nothing quite goes to plan anymore!)

Unlike the previous lockdown, there is no pause in new learning. This makes it increasingly important that all our children are engaging in as much of our online provision as they can in order to prevent further learning loss. However, don't panic- we know the strain of family circumstances means that not every child will be able to engage with absolutely everything that is going on every day. That's fine- be kind to yourself and don't put further pressure on what is already a stressful situation. We are all working as a team in challenging circumstances; I am confident that everyone will be doing their very best and I think we all need to be realistic about what is achievable. All of our kids returned confidently to school from the last lockdown and our teachers were amazed that the learning loss we had worried about at that point was nowhere near as bad as we had feared. That is down to your fantastic support and common sense approach and I know this time will be no different; it won't be easy but keep telling yourself that you got through it before and you will get through it again!

Miss Shaw and Miss Atkin will continue to monitor each class's provision throughout, so don't hesitate to get in touch if you are experiencing any difficulties or have any queries. Please note that the use of the Google Classroom platform would not be appropriate for interaction between parents/ carers and class teachers, either in terms of 'live' interaction (basically parents should not be seen and not be heard during any live check ins please, tempting though it may be to get involved!) or through message boards or chat streams. That does not mean that we don't want to hear from you (in fact, quite the opposite). Send us any concerns or questions to schoolmail@maidenhill.e-renfrew.sch.uk and Miss Shaw or Miss Atkin will liaise with the relevant class teacher and get back to you.

In addition, if access to devices proves problematic, do not hesitate to get in touch. The significant increase in the size of our 'hub' means this provision is limited, but the devices are here to be used and we will help out wherever we can.

I will continue to keep in touch at regular points and update you with any new information I have.

Good luck and take care,

Alasdair McDonald
Head Teacher