

# Maidenhill Primary School

## Head Teacher's Update



Wednesday January 20<sup>th</sup> 2021

Dear Parents/ Carers

### Extension to Period of School Closure

Following the First Minister's statement to parliament, we are expecting that our school and nursery class will not now open to most children until the middle of February (most likely the 15<sup>th</sup>). It has also been indicated that any re-opening may take a phased approach, although this has not been confirmed. The opening arrangements are due to be reviewed again on February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Whilst the need for this remains apparent given the ongoing high levels of community transmission and the significant impact on the NHS, I appreciate that this will be disappointing news for many.

Please be assured our teachers will already be planning for 2 additional weeks (at least) of remote learning and will continue to work flat out to provide the levels of interaction the children have been responding so well to.

### Hub Provision

This time round, and following feedback from Head Teachers on some of the challenging decisions we were having to make during the last lockdown, the Education Department took the decision to coordinate applications for keyworker 'hub' provision centrally. This was most welcome and I am most thankful to all parents who took the time to make their application before the closing date during the first week of January. Unlike the previous lockdown, this allowed Head Teachers a few days of breathing space to plan for our hub provision, to delegate staff responsibilities and to ensure staffing rotas and resources were in place.

Since then, several families have continued to contact me directly to ask about hub provision for their children- this is understandable in some of the situations, particularly where circumstances/ work routines have changed since the initial announcement. So far we have managed to avoid having to use our class-committed teachers to staff our hub. This has meant that class-committed teachers have been able to concentrate on their remote learning provision and this has been instrumental in allowing us to increase levels of interaction with children through the Google Classroom platform. However we have now reached a bit of a tipping point, where the number of staff required to support our children in the hub may start to have an impact on the remote learning provision we are able to provide.

To this end, for any future enquiries, we will now have to prioritise families where both parents (or one parent within a single-parent family) are designated as Keyworkers Category 1. The definition for Category 1 is as follows:

Category 1 – Health and Care workers directly supporting COVID response and associated staff; Health and Care workers supporting life threatening emergency work as well as critical primary and community care provision; Energy suppliers (small numbers identified as top priority already); staff providing childcare / learning for other category 1 staff.

I am sure everyone will appreciate the juggling act involved in trying to keep everything as normal and productive for all our children whether they are in school or at home and I know you will understand that our hub provision is a finite resource. I am extremely grateful to everyone who has already had those potentially challenging conversations with their employers and made numerous sacrifices in order to work from home at this time. This has helped us greatly so far in keeping our in-school numbers to a manageable level.

However, if both parents fall into that category and have absolutely no other childcare options, then please of course get in touch and we will try our best to work something out where we can.

Take care,

Alasdair McDonald  
Head Teacher