

Maidenhill Primary School

Head Teacher's Bulletin



Friday January 29th 2021

Dear Parents/ Carers

A year on from Maidenhill's 'official opening' and it seems easy in this current situation to lose track of time-hours blend into days and days blend into weeks. It is hard to believe that we are already at the end of January and that we are now 3 weeks into remote learning and 4 weeks into our hub provision.....and is it just me or are the nights already just getting the tiniest bit lighter? I like to think so anyway because even a hint of more daylight is enough to raise my spirits immeasurably.

We hear a lot about resilience and mental health at the moment in the media and from various national and local organisations. There is no doubt that the COVID pandemic has had a significant impact on the emotional wellbeing of children and adults. Sometimes, though, we don't recognise and celebrate enough just how resilient and adaptable we all are. Yes, things are difficult for all of us- yet every day, in hundreds of small ways, we cope and we survive. It can be easy to focus on the negative and ignore everything we have already achieved over the last year and, most importantly, everything our children have achieved. They are the motivator and, if things get hard, we know we endure because of them.

Next week is the Place2be's Children's Mental Health Week. Teachers will be planning to use some of the resources in their Google Classrooms and the website also includes a section for parents/ carers:

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk>

I say every week to make sure you get in touch with us if you are finding the current situation a challenge. We don't know all the answers but we can certainly try our best to point you in the right direction if we can. Please remember to use schoolmail@maidenhill.e-renfrew.sch.uk for all parent communication and leave any chat function on your child's Google Classroom for communication between teachers and children.

I have also attached a flyer for a new East Renfrewshire Larder initiative being run by a local volunteer group.

Remote Learning

Thanks to everyone who completed our parent/ carer survey on remote learning. We are currently analysing the results and hope to share our findings with you shortly.

A survey to gather our children's views on remote learning will go live within their Google Classrooms today. Our older children will have no problems completing this independently; younger children may need a bit of support from you, for which we will be very grateful.

I wrote to you earlier in the month with the polite request that parents are neither seen nor heard during Google Meets. I realise that this is not always easy and we really do appreciate how much you are doing to help facilitate access to our remote learning provision, particularly for our younger children.

However, it can be very difficult for our teachers to assess our children's understanding and progress when it is clear that tasks are not being completed independently (particularly when we can hear parents whispering the

answers to questions off camera!) We love your enthusiasm and really do welcome your support as we know without it many children would be struggling to organise their learning. However we would be extremely grateful if you can try to encourage as much independence as possible in the completion of tasks- remember it is absolutely OK for children to make mistakes; that is how they learn. Headphones are always a good idea but certainly whenever possible let children do as much for themselves as they can and take the opportunity to get on with all your own hard work or even have a well-earned breather for a few minutes at least. No one will think any less of you or your child!

Scottish Recital Competition

Well done to all the children who have taken part in our Scottish Recital Competition- what a fantastic effort. Children will be voting in the grand final today and the overall winner will be announced next week. Thanks to Mr Johnston for organising.

Virtual Assembly

We have set up a separate Google Classroom to allow us to have a short P1-7 assembly on Thursday 4 February at 2.30pm (guidance attached). Hopefully as many P1-7 children as possible will be able to join us for a great opportunity to maintain our whole-school identity and contact. Fingers crossed that technology (or more likely, my complete lack of any technological expertise) will not let us down and I do worry that it might be a somewhat stilted experience, but by lowering expectations in this way I am hoping that anything that goes right on the afternoon will seem like an absolute bonus!

Diary

Friday 5 February- INSET day (no remote learning or keyworker provision)

Monday 8 and Tuesday 9 February- February holiday (no remote learning or keyworker provision)

Wednesday 10 February- Remote learning and keyworker provision resume

Thursday 25 March- Parent Consultation Meetings ii- tbc.

Thursday 1 April - school closes for Spring holiday

Finally, I want to make special mention of the 10 or so new children who have joined us at Maidenhill since the Christmas holidays. You will appreciate that this is an incredibly challenging time for children to be joining a new school and we have been amazed by how confidently they have adapted to the situation and have joined their new Google Classrooms without, in most cases, having met their new teachers or classmates in person. All credit to them and their families. I am sure you will want to join me in extending the warmest of welcomes to our school community.

Take care,

**Alasdair McDonald
Head Teacher**