

August 2023



Dear Parents/Carers,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all of our children back to school after the summer holidays. As always, we are looking ahead to a busy and exciting year across our school community. We enjoyed a surprise visit last week from the Director of Education, Douglas Hutchison, who took time out of his busy schedule to have a tour of our fabulous school and meet lots of our staff and pupils.

I hope that that the information in this newsletter is helpful. Upcoming events and other school information is shared regularly on Seesaw so please ensure you have downloaded the Seesaw app. Seesaw allows teachers to share information with you about your child’s learning and experiences in school as well as class information.

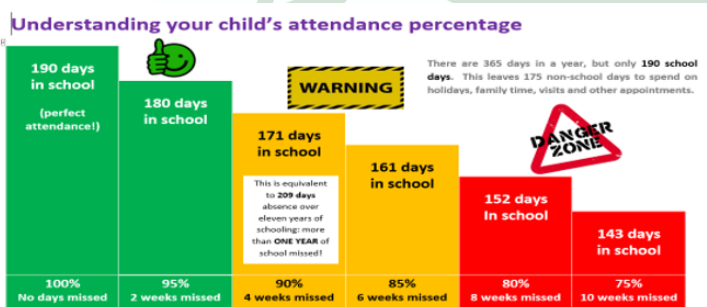
Any information about absences or appointments should be directed to the absence line or school office as appropriate. If you have concerns about an aspect of your child’s learning, progress or wellbeing, please email myself, Miss Kirk or Mrs McLaughlin for advice. We will also be able to arrange telephone appointments or meetings if required. Any school procedural enquiries should be directed to me.

School Information

All classes have a designated meeting area in the morning on the pitch or outside their classroom door. In the morning, pupils can enter the school by the gates at the far end of the pitch beside the tennis club car park or by the lane. May I respectfully remind you to leave the school grounds and surrounding area immediately after dropping off and picking up your child as it becomes congested very quickly making it difficult for some of our children to make their way safely through to the playground. Merrylee staff are present in the morning from 8.45am to assist children in getting to class so you can leave safe in the knowledge that your child will be looked after. Our Primary 7 pupils are also enjoying some buddying responsibilities and are on hand to support our new P1s.

We respectfully request your child arrives on time for school by 9am. Gates are open until 9.10am. If your child arrives after that time, please report to the school office.

Pupil Attendance Good attendance at school is a key factor in the success and progress of our children. We appreciate that sometimes your child does have to be absent from school due to ill health or personal



reasons. As parents and educators, we all recognise the value of our children attending school and the impact frequent absences may have. The infographic demonstrates the relation between absence and time lost at school. The attendance rate at Merrylee is currently 93.7% but as you can see from the

infographic, even 95% absence equates to 2 weeks of school missed. Children who do not attend school regularly may struggle to keep up with school work as well as missing out on the social aspect of school. If you are concerned about your child’s level of attendance, please don’t hesitate to get in touch for advice and support.



Please be aware that there are traffic restrictions in place outside the school at drop off and pick up times as part of Glasgow's School Streets campaign. This limits school traffic outside schools at drop off and pick up times. It's the law. #GCCRoadSafety #SchoolStreets

Please encourage your children to walk or cycle to school. The Merrylee Bike Bus runs on Fridays which is a great way to meet new parents and enjoy cycling to school.

The bike shed is opened at 8am and locked at 9.10am each morning. It is opened again between 3 and 3.30pm each day. As there are times when the shed is open and unattended, I recommend that your child uses a bike lock. The school cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage to property.

School Day

9am start of school day (designated area for lining up)

10.30-10.45am morning interval

12.15 – 1.10pm lunch

3.10pm end of school day

- P1 dismiss from the main front door
- P2 dismiss from the community door
- P3-7 are dismissed to the back of the school (please arrange a meeting point with your child)

Each class continues to have a designated entrance and exit, stairs and toilets. Good hygiene habits continue to be in place with handwashing etc. Please ensure your child comes to school with everything they may need, including a waterproof jacket. We respectfully request that you provide your child with a pair of indoor shoes to change into. This helps to keep our classroom carpets clean and safe for sitting on for class activities. A few classrooms have also had new carpets. All school uniform and personal items should be clearly labelled with your child's full name and class. Please encourage your child to take responsibility for their belongings. Lost property is stored at the community entrance.

Staff News

I am delighted to report that there have been no major changes to staffing this year. A warm welcome back to Miss McArthur who is covering P5/4 at the moment in Mrs Taylor's absence. Mrs Taylor hopes to be well enough to return to work very soon.

Congratulations also to Miss McElhone. Miss McElhone was seconded to an Acting Head position last year and has since been successfully appointed as head teacher to St Theresa's Primary. We wish her every success in her new post.

Our school catering Fuel Zone offer a choice of three options each day and menus run on a three-weekly cycle, allowing pupils to experience a variety of meals. They can also cater to specific dietary requirements including Halal, vegetarian (by request) and special medical diets (please inform catering staff). All primary 1-5 pupils can enjoy lunch absolutely free, while primaries 6-7 can receive a three course meal with a drink for £1.90. All meals are selected and paid for through Parentpay. Meal selections can be made up to three weeks in advance.

Fuel Zone also provide a **Breakfast Club** from 8am where pupils can start their day with cereal, toast with spread and/or jam, a piece of fruit and fruit juice. For those not currently entitled to a standard free school meal, including P1 to P5, there is a small charge of £2 per day. For siblings, the charge is £2 for the oldest child and £1 for subsequent children. This is a drop-in service so advance booking is not required.

Cost of the School Day & Sustainability



As always, we are very aware of the cost of the school day and are very grateful for all ideas and initiatives to support our school community. Don't forget to visit our preloved uniform area at the community entrance to reuse and recycle school uniform before going out to buy anything new.

We value opportunities to get out and about but are aware that the cost of trips can be challenging. We use the PA and school funds to subsidise all trips as much as possible. It is a challenging time for us all at the moment so please if, for any reason, you need some help paying for any school trips etc, do not hesitate to get in touch. All requests are handled with the utmost confidence and discretion and we would never want any child to be disadvantaged for financial reasons. This includes our P6 and P7 residential visits.

Your child may be **entitled to a clothing grant and or free school meals**. Please do not hesitate to apply. Information can be found on Glasgow City Council website. Not only will families benefit from any grants received, but the number of successful applications by families also benefits school staffing and budgets.

Snacks/water Please ensure that your child has a **water bottle** clearly marked with their name. This should be taken home at the end of each day for cleaning. The water can be topped up with fresh drinking water from the taps in every classroom. Please do not send juice as an alternative to water. Your child is encouraged to bring at least one piece of fruit each day and many classes will stop for a fruit break. Snacks for interval times should also be healthy.

Allergies We have a number of pupils and staff with severe nut allergies. Please note that snacks containing nuts are not allowed in school. This includes Nutella spread, peanut butter and many snack bars. Please check labels carefully.

Medication If your child requires prescribed medication during the course of the school day, please contact the school office. You will be required to complete a form giving us permission and instruction. Non-prescribed medication cannot be administered by staff. No child should carry medication in their bag, with the exception of inhalers.

Outdoor learning and play In Merrylee we strongly believe in the huge benefits of being outdoors. Every class will have an identified outdoor day (see below). There will also be other occasions when your child will learn outdoors including outdoor PE. Please ensure your child has a warm rain jacket as play will also be outdoors in all weathers unless it is deemed unsafe. Shoes can at times become wet or muddy so please provide a pair of shoes to wear indoors. An old pair of trainers or slip on sandshoes are ideal. Slippers are not suitable.

To protect our outdoor areas, an additional fence is being installed as a security measure which has given us the opportunity to create a designated P1 outdoor learning and play area. We look forward to developing this space in collaboration with our young learners.

Outdoor Days

- Mondays
- Tuesdays P3 P4/3 P4
- Wednesdays P6 P2
- Thursdays P5 P5/4
- Fridays P7

Mobile Phones

In the interests of safeguarding, pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones in school and we would strongly encourage that phones are left at home. If your child brings a phone to school, it will be collected at the start of each day and stored safely in the school office. Phones will be handed back at the end of the day.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any concerns or wish to discuss any matter.

Colette Haddock

Head Teacher

chaddock@merrylee-pri.glasgow.sch.uk

Miss Kirk (DHT P1-3) gw15kirkcatriona@glow.ea.glasgow.sch.uk

Mrs McLaughlin (DHT P4-7) gw10mclaughlinlynsey@glow.ea.glasgow.sch.uk

School office 0141 637 6798 (office hours Mon-Thur, 8am-4pm & Fri 8.30am-3.30pm)

Absence line 0141 287 0039

Dates for your diary (many more to come!)

Thursday 24 August P7 swimming block 1 to start @ Tollcross (Thursdays 1-1.45pm)

Tuesday 29 August Hillpark Brass Quintet mini-concert for P7 @ 1pm

Monday 4 September Pupil Voice Primary Forum @ City Chambers 10am (selected pupils)

Wednesday 6 September Meet the teacher 4-6pm (details to follow)

Tuesday 12 September	P7 Vision Checks
Friday 22 September	Holiday
Monday 25 September	Holiday
26-29 September	SUSTRANS Cycle to School Week
Tuesday 3 October	Open afternoon for prospective new P1 parents 2-2.30pm
Wednesday 4 October	Open afternoon for prospective new P1 parents 2-2.30pm
Monday 9 October	Pupil Voice Primary Forum @ City Chambers 10am (selected pupils)
Friday 13 October	In-service day
16-20 October	Holiday – October week
Thursday 2 November	P7 swimming – final session for block 1
Monday 9 November	Pupil Voice Primary Forum @ City Chambers 10am (selected pupils)
Thursday 16 November	Parent/Teacher consultations 4-7pm
Tuesday 21 November	Parent/Teacher consultations 4-7pm
Friday 22 December	School closes at 2.30pm for holidays

Residential Visits P6 & P7

P6 residential visit to Blairvadach Outdoor Centre	29 April- 3 May 2024
P7 residential visit to Galloway Outdoor Centre	to be confirmed

Further information on both visits will be issued soon.

MERRYLEE