

SEAFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

 NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2020

**Dear Parents and Carers,**

I hope you managed to enjoy the Easter holiday period, in whatever form that took. Maybe it was just a break from online Learning, or perhaps eating lots of chocolate in lockdown at home. Although we are experiencing unique circumstances; we’re still very fortunate to live where we do, as we are so lucky to have open spaces such as the beautiful parks in Moray. If we all adhere to social distancing, there is no reason why we can’t enjoy daily exercise from our front door whether it be a walk, run or cycle.

As mentioned before, these are strange and unpredictable times for us all, so I want to thank you for your continued support in working with us so closely to help your children to learn at home. In doing this; we are supporting each other, supporting our wider community, and making the best out of challenging circumstances.

 Through taking a positive approach, we will get through the lockdown period together and come out of this stronger, with lots of new skills. We are all being challenged in terms of having to quickly learn lots of new ICT systems; video-conferencing with family, friends and colleagues in many different guises; economising, creative culinary skills and resilience. If we can capitalise on this situation in any way, then this is something to be pursued.

**Health and Wellbeing**

As we have said from the start, Health and Wellbeing is our first priority during this unique time. We are working together as a strong staff team, with between 50 and 60 Seafield Staff all working behind the scenes to support our pupils. We are doing this through team meetings via Microsoft Teams video-conferencing and Whole Staff messenger groups. We also have sub-groups to work in, so that all of our priorities are actioned.

As you know, we use group texting via the new Expressions system to communicate with you, Seafield App throughout the year to post key information and I post daily on Twitter @SeafieldHT which uploads directly onto the App News section. I would urge as many families as possible to follow Seafield on Twitter, as now more than ever I’m retweeting crucial information from the following parties

* Moray Council
* Moray Schools individually
* Vivienne Cross ~ Head of Schools and Curriculum
* NHS ~ local and National information, particularly from Professor Jason Leitch, Clinical Director
* Police Scotland ~ to include Moray Police
* Learning information
* Mental Health charities
* Financial Advice ~ local and National
* Armed Forces charities
* Active Schools
* 3rd Sector Agency Supports ~ such as Moray and Scottish Women’s Aid
* Funding Streams
* Seafield Childcare Hub

I would encourage all families to consider first and foremost children’s mental and emotional wellbeing during this time. As adults, it’s important that we shield children from much of the negative media out there and limit their access to this. Again, taking a positive but realistic approach is best, reassuring children and keeping them calm, which is what we do day to day in school. We have wonderful pupils at Seafield who take an enthusiastic approach to all the challenges we set, so let your children show you what they are really capable of.

As we know, physical activity is vital to good mental health, this can simply be a walk or an online workout. I hear Mr West’s posts are popular with children and adults alike, so have fun and join in. Outdoor space, time spent in nature and fresh air are also good for our wellbeing. While this may be challenging at the moment, there are still lots of possibilities not too far from our front doors.

We realise that good sleep routines may be a bit more challenging at the moment, but are aided by physical activity and time spent outdoors. We would encourage children to have as little screen time as possible, outwith their basic class work. I’ve always believed the hours before midnight are the ones which count. Be kind to yourselves and rest while we have this opportunity.

You will have heard mention of Donna Davies our Child and Adult Counsellor at Seafield. Donna is busy continuing with her caseload via various different platforms and using a bespoke package for each family she works with. Please contact Mrs Fisher on Seafield App, email your child’s class teacher, or contact me directly if you should wish some support from Donna.

**Online Learning**

Thank you for your patience with this, we appreciate that online systems can be difficult to navigate and take time, but through perseverance we get there in the end. As mentioned previously, Health and Wellbeing come first at a difficult time like this so the most important thing for us is to be maintaining contact between families and school staff by whatever system works best for you. If you are able to access online Learning, this is a real bonus. If you are having technical problems with this, we will have managed to communicate on the phone, by text, email or find a creative solution to the problem.

If the online approach is a struggle, the children also have A4 journals issued at the ‘end’ of term. I’m really looking forward to seeing their sketches, notes, newspaper cuttings, pictures and stories of what lockdown was like for them. This can serve as their diary to keep and to show future generations, as we are undoubtedly making history in 2020.

**English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

Our **English as an Additional Language** families are still able to access support from Mr Caddy and the EAL team who will be in touch via GLOW online learning or telephone. Please contact us at school by telephone or Seafield App if you wish to access this service for your children.

**Report Cards 19/20**

A big thank you to our staff team for their hard work in pulling together to ensure all report cards were ready to be issued to parents/carers early and before school closed unexpectedly. As you know, these were sent home via school bag mail, made available in school reception on Friday 20th March and Monday 23rd March for collection. We realise that collection may not have been possible for all families so we will keep report cards safely until schools reopen.

**Seafield Hub and Staffing**

As you may know, Seafield Hub is one of 8 Child Care Hubs in Moray for frontline staff’s children and we are delighted to be able to help in the battle against Covid 19, by doing this for our local area. As you will see on Twitter, the children are having great fun during their days at Seafield. Approximately 15 members of our staff are part of the volunteer team here and at one of the other Hubs too.

Please note that our Class Teacher arrangements have changed due to Hub staffing. It may be that your child/children is/are working with a different member of our Teaching Staff while their substantive teacher works as a Hub volunteer. Please note, our teaching staff continue to work to their terms and conditions, so will not be available out with school hours to reply to emails or to set homework during weekend periods. We are also mindful of children’s emotional and mental wellbeing; they need to play, relax and have some fun too. For this reason, our school policy is that we are setting no more than 3 pieces of work for each day. Ongoing Physical Education and Reading activities may be over and above the 3 activities.

**Child Protection**

The most important thing is children’s wellbeing and protection. Tracey Picksley, Home School Link Officer and I are running through weekly ‘registers’ every Friday. As would be procedure during the school term, we phone families with whom we haven’t had contact with throughout the school week. Please can I encourage you to make contact through any one of our systems so that we know all is well. You may wish to phone school, as messages will continue to be picked up by our office staff who are volunteering to be at work.

I hope that you are making the most of lockdown, taking some time to chill and still, maybe doing all these little jobs we never seem to get round to at home. Please stay safe, don’t take any chances and look after yourselves. Please do get in touch, as we are here to help if you need.

**Yours Sincerely**

**Morven Snodgrass**

**Head Teacher**