



Education , Communities & Organisational Development

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Newsletter:

Dear Parent/Carer

Happy New Year!

I am now in my 23rd year of teaching and have never been in a situation such as this, we are all truly going through a once in a lifetime event together! As your new headteacher I was really looking forward to seeing the children back in school and begin meeting families and the rest of our school community. We will find creative ways of getting to know each other as we navigate our way through this second lockdown.

I am in the process of building a virtual whole school assembly on Google Classrooms! I confess that I am learning how to use Google Classrooms as I used Microsoft Teams in previous jobs! Like you and the children, I am sure I will need help along the way, and it may not go as smoothly as I would like but I am going to try and upload an assembly on Friday 15th January. The staff (especially Miss Main) have been helping me already, so fingers crossed it will go well, if not.... we will try again another day!

Education during lockdown

Pilmuir Primary School is open for learning– virtually for all children through Google Classroom and also in school for supporting children of keyworkers and vulnerable families. Please know that we understand home learning is not the same as school, we ask that you don't put yourselves under pressure to try and turn your home into a school.

PUPILS SHOULD NOT BE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS DURING SCHOOL TIME UNLESS THEY ARE ATTENDING THE HUB

The wellbeing indicators of Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included (Getting It Right for Every Child – GIRFEC) are what we hope for all children. To help us all get back to life as we would like it, we are being asked to stay home as much as we possibly can to keep SAFE. Safe is our first wellbeing indicator, closely followed by Healthy for very good reasons. If we don't have these first two – it is very difficult for children to be ready to learn. We all need to ensure we are feeling safe and healthy as our top two priorities – if we can do this at home, then home learning has a better chance of success.

As with all learning journeys, there will be many twists and turns in the road ahead. Whilst we want to support purposeful learning, our priority is keeping SAFE. We will continue to work closely with our health, police and social work to support families during this period of home learning.

Whilst we want to keep the numbers in school to an absolute minimum to prevent the spread of Coronavirus, we are very aware that situations at home can change due to many factors. Please do get in touch with school at an early stage so we can support you and your children if there is anything you are concerned about. There are also many services and helpful links on our school website <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/my/pilmuirprimaryschool/> and also from www.moray.gov.uk

Home Learning

All teachers have been busy preparing and re-visiting skills from last lockdown to plan learning ready for Monday 11th January. Teachers have had to adapt the planned learning due to the lockdown being announced after we had finished for Christmas to make it more meaningful and easier to access as we won't be able to teach in the way we would like.

The whole school is undertaking a project (Inter-Disciplinary Learning – IDL) based on the Polar Regions and the Polar bear that Mr Tulloch sponsored as his leaving gift for the school. This will allow families to have activities that will link to each other and provide connected discussions at home that we will all be able to share when we return after the lockdown period.

Every child will have work allocated on Google Classroom and this can be accessed through Glow or via the app version of Google Classroom. Children will need their Glow user details and their password. We know it might take a bit of time to get back into the swing of online learning and there will be lots of links and help on our school website.

We would really like to get all pupils onto Google Classroom but know it can be tricky for many reasons. You will have been sent a message to check if any resources, such as a laptop, jotters and other resources might help you as families as we go through this second lockdown period. We are able to support families with laptops and Wi-Fi access. Please let us know what the challenges are and we will do everything we can to get children online.

We will email out the learning overview that is available on Google Classroom and provide paper packs where requested. Due to the stricter measures in place, it may take a couple of days to get the packs to you for the first couple of weeks as we respond to advice to keep everyone safe. Please store your child/ren's work in the folder and we will let you know how we will get the work from you if Google Classroom is not a possibility.

There will be a weekly wellbeing check-in for the children both in Google Classroom and in the paper packs. Again, please keep the paper versions in your child/ren's pack and we will collect them at a later date. Staff will be checking online learning daily and will provide 'live' feedback in typed message form in Google Classrooms: 9.30am-10.30am and again 2.30pm-3pm. We know that during the last lockdown, children may do work in the evenings and post questions, staff will pick those messages up the following day. On days where your child's teacher is working in the school another teacher will check in with the Google Classroom to answer questions and provide support.

Supports for families through lockdown

Grampian Coronavirus Assistance Hub www.gcah.org.uk/
Social Work 01343 554370 – Out of Hours 03457 565656
NHS Scotland: <https://www.scot.nhs.uk/>

Virtual attendance check:

I would be very grateful for your support by replying to the weekly check sent out using our Xpressions App (please contact the school office if you need more

details). There will be three options to choose from 1: Learning online 2: Paper pack learning 3: Needing support. This will enable us to check in with you and provide support. Non-responses will prompt a phone contact from school to check all is well in line with our safeguarding guidance.

If you are able to download the Xpressions App, replies are free and will not use up credit unlike a text message.

Please stay safe and be kind to yourselves!

Yours sincerely,

Helen Thorley
Acting Head Teacher