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Head Teacher
Mrs Mary O'Brien
Education & Families
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School
Crowwood Crescent
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AIRDRIE

Return to School 2021-2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back to a new school year! I hope you and your families are all safe and well and I hope you have enjoyed the fantastic weather we have experienced this summer.

I would like to inform you of an addition to our staffing over the summer break. I am delighted to welcome Miss McCracken to our team on a full time basis for session 2021/2022. Miss McCracken will now be class teacher of Primary 2/3 with Mrs Stewart taking up the role of Attainment Challenge Teacher. This additional staffing has been very welcomed news for our school and allows us to ensure a higher level of targeted support in Literacy and Numeracy.

In my June newsletter I explained that another new member of staff, Miss Anderson, would be joining our team. Miss Anderson will now deliver teacher non-class contact time of 2.5 hours each week to P1/2, P4/5, P5/6 and P6/7 with Mrs Stewart delivering this additional time to P2/3. I am sure you will all join me in welcoming Miss McCracken and Miss Anderson to our lovely school community.

I am pleased to communicate our plans and advice ahead of our pupil's return to school next week. These plans have been formed taking direction from the Scottish Government's most recent guidance and the advice of North Lanarkshire Council. I apologise in advance for such a lengthy piece of communication, but I know you will understand the health and wellbeing of all pupils and staff is of paramount importance.

The following arrangements are to support a safe return to school for all children and staff. Please be aware that these may be subject to further change in the coming weeks, and our guidance and procedures will be closely monitored, reviewed, and updated as necessary.

Risk Assessment

The school environment has been fully risk assessed and our plans adhere to the latest guidance. Staff and children who develop the symptoms of COVID-19 (high temperature, new continuous cough or a loss or change to sense of smell or taste), or who test positive using PCR tests or Lateral Flow Device (LFD), must self-isolate immediately in line with current guidance from the NHS.

We will continue to work closely with our public health team, who are responsible for advising schools and the council about what should happen if there is an outbreak of coronavirus.

Derek Brown, Assistant Chief Executive, Education and Families, Civic Centre, Motherwell, ML1 1AB



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Hygiene Measures

The key personal hygiene measures that all children and staff should follow to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection are:

- frequent washing/sanitising of hands for 20 seconds and drying thoroughly, and always when entering/leaving the building, before/after eating and after using the toilet.
- encouraging children, young people and staff to avoid touching their faces including mouth, eyes and nose.
- using a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze, and use bins that are emptied regularly for tissue waste.

It will be the **responsibility of every individual** in the school to observe good hygiene practice to minimise the risk of infection.

Physical Distancing

There is no requirement for physical distancing between children in primary schools. Movement of children and staff between classrooms should be minimised wherever possible. Further mitigations in place, include:

- We will continue to encourage young people to maintain distance where possible, particularly indoors – encouraging young people not to crowd together.
- We will continue to discourage physical contact (hand to hand greeting/hugs).
- We will continue to use all the available space in classrooms, hall, and social spaces to promote distancing where possible.
- We will continue to operate a keep left policy in all areas of the school.
- Physical distancing between adults, and between adults and learners who are not from the same household, will be maintained.
- Parents and carers should continue to maintain their distance from other households when dropping off or collecting their child from school.

Face Coverings

- Anyone (whether child or adult) wishing to wear a face covering in any part of the school will be permitted to do so.
- Adults should wear face coverings wherever they cannot keep physical distance with other adults and/or children.
- Face coverings should be worn by parents and other visitors at the school (whether entering the building or otherwise), including parents at drop-off and pick-up.

School Uniform

We are requesting that all children come to school wearing their full uniform. This includes a white shirt, school tie and grey school trousers/skirt/pinafore, or school summer dress. Blazers continue to remain optional. As always, please ensure all items of your child's uniform are labelled with their name and class. This helps us greatly to return items of clothing to the correct child if they have been found. Please note that one of our safety measures will be to open all windows to ensure that the school is well ventilated, so wearing a school jumper or cardigan is strongly advised.

PE Kit

At present, children should continue to wear P.E kit to school on P.E days to avoid having to change in school. We will continue to have P.E outdoors as much as possible. However, indoors will be used if required due to weather. Please ensure your child is appropriately dressed for all aspects of outdoor learning. Dark coloured trainers and P.E kit is encouraged. If your child cannot tie shoe laces, please provide them with shoes without laces, eg velcro fastenings. Details of specific P.E days for each class will be issued next week.

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Equipment/Homework

Children may bring a school bag with their snack, packed lunch and FILLED water bottle, and for carrying homework back and forth. The school will provide all of the equipment necessary for each child to use in class, therefore pencil cases etc are not required.

Homework will commence week beginning Monday 30th August for all classes. The format for this will be a 4 week homework grid. Reading books will begin earlier than this to help build up routines prior to more regular homework starting.

Children **should not bring any personal belongings such as mobile phones or toys from home.**

Assemblies

We will continue to avoid holding assemblies and other types of large group gatherings in person, in keeping with the retention of existing mitigations. This precautionary approach reflects the unique environment in schools. I will continue to visit individual classes on a regular basis to deliver content that I would usually cover in an assembly until we are in position to have these events again.

Breakfast Club

Our breakfast service will start on Monday 16th August 2021, from 8.15-8.40am - with those children attending Breakfast Club being supervised until the start of the school day. If your child is attending Breakfast Club then they should arrive no later than 8.40am. The breakfast consists of cereal, milk and toast. This is free to pupils who are in Primary 1 - 4 and for pupils in Primary 5 - 7 who are in receipt of free school meals. For all other pupils the cost is £1 per day with a sliding scale for families of two at £1.50 per day and families of three at £1.80 per day.

Break / Lunch Arrangements

Staggered breaks / lunches will continue in order to reduce the number of pupils in the hall/playground at any one time. P1-3 will share the yard at break times and the hall at lunch time and P4-7 will do the same. We are no longer required to operate a 'bubble' system within Primary and Early Years settings. Therefore, there will no longer be designated areas for specific classes when accessing the playground at break times.

Lunchtime Arrangements

We are **encouraging all pupils to remain in school** at lunchtime. Lunch time will be from 12.30pm to 1.15pm for all pupils. Pupil meals will be pre-ordered daily. Our lunch menu operates on a three weekly cycle and can be accessed from this link. (www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-meals/meal-menus/primary-school-menu) All P1-P4 pupils are entitled to a universal free school meal. For pupils in P5-P7 the cost of a two-course lunch is £3.10, unless your child is entitled to free school meals.

To apply for free school meals, please download, complete and email your application to fsm@northlan.gov.uk or send your completed form to Revenue and Benefits Support Team, Dalziel Building, Ground Floor, Scott Street, Motherwell, ML1 1SH. The link to the form is included below:

https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/202107/CC_2021_00057%20FSMCG%20Application%20Form%20INTERACTIVE%20FINAL%202021.pdf

If your child is in P1-4 but otherwise would be entitled to a free meal, if not for the universal free meal, then I ask that you still complete the free school meals application. This information helps with longer term school funding.

Contact with the School

Derek Brown, Assistant Chief Executive, Education and Families, Civic Centre, Motherwell, ML1 1AB



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Please note that parents and carers **will not be permitted** to access our school grounds or the school building unless in exceptional circumstances and with prior arrangement being made with the school. Unfortunately, this includes the parents of our new Primary 1 pupils entering the P1 classroom. We will do everything we can to ensure our pupils are comfortable in their new surroundings.

Primary 1 Arrangements – First Day of School- Monday 16 August 2021

Start time - 9.30am/finish time- 2.30pm.

P.1 Pupils should arrive for school starting at 9.30am and enter through the main gate or Crown Street gate and wait in the infant yard (outside nursery entrance). Due to the nature of this very special occasion, a maximum of 2 adults can accompany each child in the yard on this first morning of starting school only. Following this first day, P1 children will enter the school grounds independently in the mornings and through the main door rather than waiting in the infant yard. Arrangements following this first day are detailed below under the arrangements for P1-3 children and please be assured that staff will be on hand at both gates to support children entering school in the mornings.

On the first day, staff will take a picture of each child sitting at their desk and these individual photographs will be sent to parents via Email during the first week. Children will also come home with an Acceptable Use of ICT/Photograph Permission form.

P1 children will finish at 2.30pm on this first day only. P1 parents are requested to collect their child from within the infant yard every day at home time (just as was done in nursery) and not just on this first day. For this reason, only one parent is permitted in the school grounds at collection time – including on the first day. Please ensure you maintain distance between other children and parents and please give staff time and space to walk the children out safely before calling on your child.

Nursery staff will work with Mrs Callaghan to support our new P1s as they settle in to school life, and to offer a familiar face during this initial transition period.

Mrs Callaghan fully understands the many emotions you as parents will be feeling at this exciting time when your child is starting school as she has her own child starting school on Monday. For this reason, Mrs Callaghan will not be available in the yard at 9.30am on the first day – it is important that she experiences this special time with her own child. However, nursery staff will be present along with Mrs Campbell and I.

We wish Mrs Callaghan and all our new P1s and their families well at this very exciting time.

Daily Entry/Exit arrangements for all Pupils

For the time being, a staggered entry and exit has to be maintained. This will be reviewed as soon as possible as I appreciate the complications that this can bring. Parents should not wait at the school gate once children have entered the school grounds. At exit times please stand clear of the gate to allow children the space that they need to exit safely.

Times are detailed below.

| Stage/Time | Start Time | Finish Time |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Nursery | 8.40am | 2.40pm |
| Primaries 1 to 3 | 8.50am | 2.50pm |
| Primaries 4 to 7 | 9.00am | 3.00pm |

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All children should enter through the main gate. Crown Street gate can continue to be used if this was the gate you requested last session. If you wish to start using this gate then please contact the school beforehand so we know which children to send to this gate at home time.

Once in the school grounds, **all children** should enter via the main entrance at the front of the school and through to the main yard to their class line – just exactly as was done last term.

At exit times, staff will accompany children to the main gate or Crown Street gate at the specified time. P1/2 parents should enter the infant playground to collect their child at the specified time and P2/3 parents should collect from the main gate or Crown Street if this gate has been agreed. This will reduce congestion at the gates and allow greater opportunity for staff to clearly see the adult for each child, particularly as P1-3 are so young.

P4-7 parents should collect their child from the main gate or Crown Street if this gate has been agreed.

Please do not stop/park cars on the yellow zig zag lines. If you have parked your car on the street outside the gates then please remain stationary whilst children are exiting to ensure all children can exit safely without the danger of moving cars as they cross the road to meet parents or to make their way home. Children exiting school only takes a few minutes so I ask for your patience. Once you have collected your own child please check that no classes are exiting before driving away.

If you are using Crown Street gate then I urge you to be mindful of our neighbours. Please do not park directly in front of the gate or on the 'Keep Clear' signs. This can cause a danger to our pupils and difficulties for our neighbours.

If a family member or childminder is dropping off or collecting your child then please make sure they are fully aware of these arrangements.

Please be assured that I am doing everything I can, within the current guidelines and advice, to ensure your child is fully supported on his/her return to school.

As always, if any matter gives you a cause for concern then please do let me or a member of the staff team know. As a reminder, I am now using my married name of Mrs O'Brien and our new contact details for the Senior Management Team are: Mrs O'Brien gw16mccreerymary@glow.sch.uk and Mrs Campbell, PT, gw09campbellcatheri9.sch.uk.

Thank you in advance for your continued support and co-operation in all school matters. We are all so excited to see the children back in school with us next week.

I look forward to working in partnership with you again this session.

Kind Regards,

Mary O'Brien

Head Teacher

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