



Faith Respect Responsibility Trust Team Work Success



St. Fillan's Primary School Newsletter

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February 2021

Our shared vision - "We are all learning, growing and succeeding together"

Our Shared Values:

R - Respect **R** - Responsibility **T** - Team work **F** - Faith **T** - Trust

S - Success



Head Teacher's February Message:

Welcome to our February Newsletter and we hope that this update finds you well. This newsletter will provide you with an update of school life.

We have been delighted to welcome our boys and girls in Primaries 1 to 3 back to school and we hope that it won't be too much longer until we are all able to unite as a learning community with the return of our bigger boys and girls in Primaries 4 to 7.

The nights are getting lighter and the weather is improving, so we can hopefully see the light and some hope as we progress with this academic year.

Mrs McPherson and I were delighted to host the whole school 'Golden Ticket Tea Party' which was an opportunity to celebrate the achievements and resilience of our children during their challenging times. We had over eighty children join with us and it was a delight to see all of their faces. Thank you to our families for collecting their golden envelope and for going 'Above and Beyond' to ensure the event was a success.

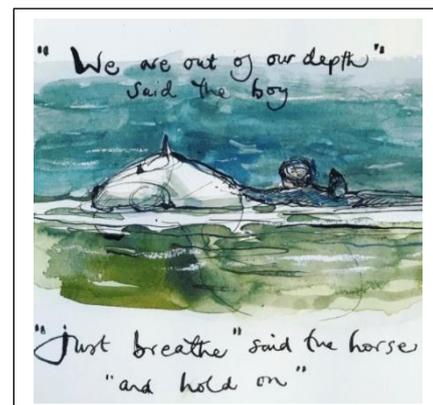
We miss each and every one of you and look forward to the time when we can reconnect, safely as a family and learning community.

Take care, stay safe and God bless,

Claire Mackenzie (Head Teacher)

#teamstfillans

#family



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The Religious Life and Ethos of our School:

Lent:

Ash Wednesday marked the beginning of the Season of Lent. A copy of Father Paul's 'Family Liturgy' was uploaded to Google Classrooms and I hope that you were able to access this and share it with your family.

As a school and faith community, we support the work of SCIAF and we are hoping to be able to do this during the month of March. This year's 'Wee Box Appeal' is focussed on South Sudan with a plea to support children who are suffering due to disability. Our children and families have always been very generous in supporting us with the work of SCIAF and we will update you with our plans and the children's ideas in due course.



Sacramental Update:

Many thanks to our Primary 4 parents/carers who have uplifted their child's Sacramental preparation pack from the school office. Preparations for the Sacrament of Reconciliation are well underway.

You will be aware that Reconciliation was scheduled for Wednesday 3rd March, however, due to the current situation, we are having to review our plans and we will need to secure another date. You will be informed in due course of the arrangements via electronic letter.

Health and Wellbeing:



Our children are provided with daily reminders in class and through Virtual Assemblies of the restrictions that are in place for their safety and the safety of others at this time.

We thank you for your continued co-operation by adhering to the mitigations that have been established under Tier 4 restrictions. As a gentle reminder, we would ask the following from our families at this time:

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- ✚ Entry into the school building is prohibited at this time for parents/carers. Access would be permitted by appointment only.
- ✚ We would advise for only one parent/carer to drop off/collect their child from school to avoid congestion, especially as there is limited space. Please familiarise yourself with the timings and entry/exit arrangements for your child's class.
- ✚ It would be beneficial to arrange a specific place/part of the playground or surrounding area to safely collect your child.
- ✚ The recommended two metre distancing between parents would be appreciated.
- ✚ Children are asked to leave the playground promptly when dismissed from school.
- ✚ We would be grateful if face masks were worn whilst dropping off/collecting children.
- ✚ As Professor Jason Leitch outlined in his recent letter, it is also advised that the children do not engage with one another through indoor playdates.

Emotionworks Recovery Programme:



The start of 2021 has been a challenging time for everyone due to the global pandemic and children being unable to attend school after Christmas for a considerable period of time. Health and wellbeing is a key priority for us as our children begin their phased return to school. As a school, we will take a responsive and proactive approach and use the 'Emotionworks Recovery Programme' to deliver relational and trauma informed practice to support all of our learners.

The programme focusses on the 3 R's of: relationships, regulation and relevance in learning and our Primary 1 to 3 children will begin this programme this week. Mrs McPherson will begin the process of engaging with children in Primaries 4 to 7 through Google Meets and re-introduce them to the Emotionworks cogs as an introduction to the programme, prior to their return to school.

Every learner requires a 'readiness to learn' and it is important that we assess the impact of lockdown on our children to identify any supports that may be required.

School Vision, Values and Aims:



Our school vision, values and aims are the beating heart of our school and the core beliefs of what we are aiming to achieve. As a Catholic School, we also follow the 'Charter for Catholic Schools' and our core values echo the values contained in the Gospels.

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This month, we will continue to focus on our core value of 'Team work' and the Gospel Value of 'Kindness.'

It has been lovely to see the power of collective 'Teamwork' in action over the last few weeks, with staff and families uniting to provide our children with the best possible experience despite all of the challenges we have faced. By continuing to work together, we will settle our Primary 1 to 3 children back into a structured routine where they will continue to thrive and grow. We look forward to applying the same principles for when our older children return.

Already we have 'caught' many of our children going 'Above and Beyond' to actively demonstrate kindness in action. We have witnessed children sharing compliments with one another, including everyone in playground games and offering a helping hand when someone has been in need.



Remote Learning and Pupil Engagement:



We have continued to track the levels of participation and engagement of our children with online tasks over the past several weeks of Lockdown.

Last week, we identified eighty six percent of our learners to have high levels of online engagement. We thank you for your support with this and we understand the pressures that have been placed on families with IT issues, sharing devices, connectivity problems and working from home arrangements, to name but a few!

We also recognise that our children have benefitted from many other experiences that families have been able to facilitate and a wealth of new

learning and skills have been developed as a result of families spending more time together.

We will continue to track the engagement levels of our Primary 4 to 7 children over the coming weeks and we would encourage our children to maintain their 'Can Do' mindset and apply themselves in the same way as they have already demonstrated.

Parental Feedback:

Many thanks to our families who were able to provide feedback to the Local Authority about their experiences of remote learning by completing the recent survey that was circulated.

We received twenty five completed surveys and we were overwhelmed by the positive feedback from our families in relation to the remote learning offer that we have provided over the last few weeks.

We will continue to review our offer, in light of changing circumstances and we will be gathering the views of all stakeholders when all of our children return to school.

I have outlined some of the parental comments below:

"I am very pleased with St Fillan's remote learning program. I feel all staff are working extremely hard to give the children fair, coherent and engaging learning opportunities. It is clear to see that the teachers at St Fillan's are going above and beyond at these difficult times. Many of the teachers also have young children of their own making their efforts even more commendable."

"Well done to the teachers at St Fillan's for putting in so much work to help the children get as good an experience as they can learning at home."

"I'm really pleased with what she's getting, it's not loads of work but enough to keep her engaged and learning. My main focus, in all honesty, is her staying upbeat, it's hard to know how all of this is affected their young minds. The teachers are doing a really grand job in such difficult circumstances."

"The video calls that the school have been able to do have been really beneficial for my child. As an only child this is their only opportunity to interact with

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other children and St Fillan's has done very well in achieving this and holding set activities for such a young age group."

Supports:

We are here to support you in anyway we can. There are also supports that the Local Authority and Scottish Government have signposted as outlined below:

- Skills for Recovery (<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/re/renfrewshirehwb/skills-forrecovery/>) is a digital programme that can help you and your family cope with difficult events and improve your wellbeing. You can work through the six digital leaflets in any order and at any pace.
- The 'Coping During Covid' is a support service for you and your child or children if you are worried about your wellbeing. Email reps@renfrewshire.gov.uk to ask to speak to someone and arrange an appointment.
- Our counselling service, The-Exchange, continues to offer support to our children and young people who are learning at home and those in school. The team will also check in with parents. New referrals can be made on The Exchange website (https://www.exchange-counselling.com/contact_us).
- Parent Club is a website packed full of practical strategies to support families at various stages in their child's development. There is a useful section on managing difficult behaviour and an extensive area for supports related to Coronavirus. (www.parentclub.scot)
- Scotland Learns, from Education Scotland, provides a range of ideas and suggestions of activities to help parents, carers and practitioners support children in the early years at home. This includes a weekly newsletter with helpful tips and hints.
- Parentzone has a range of advice, including a useful section offering support and advice on home learning - education.gov.scot/parentzone

If you are worried about your own, your child's or someone else's mental health and wellbeing it is important to seek help. Sources of support include:

- The NHS
- Scottish Government Clear Your Head Mental Health Campaign
- The Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH)
- Aye Feel – an emotional wellbeing site for young people
- Breathing Space or call 0800838587

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