

Dear Parent / Carer

I hope this newsletter finds you all safe and healthy. What a strange month we have had. I am actually writing this whilst sitting in the back garden in the glorious sunshine enjoying the last day of the Easter holidays. Being in lockdown I have even managed to paint the garden fence, a job I have been putting off for a long time.

I would like to begin by thanking you all for your support and patience with us the last few weeks of term. I would also like to mention the staff both teaching and support staff who were amazing in the last days before the school building closed. With very little notice they pulled together some key resources and work for children and I hope this will be useful to you.

Online Learning from Home

School officially resumes today, Monday 20th April 2020. However, as you know lockdown continues and therefore so does online learning from home. This is all new to staff too. The few weeks before the Easter break we were using Microsoft Teams to have staff meetings and using Google Classrooms to support learning, both of which are new to us but we continue to learn as we go.

If you have no online access please let us know through the enquiries email and we will try and get paper based work sent out to you.

Primary 1 and 2 – in the few weeks before the break we discovered that not many children in P1 and 2 were accessing any of the lessons provided by teachers each day. It may be some were finding it tricky to access Google Classroom as it does require reading and following of instructions. We are therefore going to focus more on Seesaw which the children all use in school and Reading Eggs. Class Teachers will set work every day on Seesaw and children can upload this again for their teacher to see and provide feedback for them.

Primary 3 to 7 – Google Classroom will be the main focus for online learning. Class Teachers will upload tasks every day. Ideally we would like children to log on every day and complete the tasks set by the teacher. The stream allows the children to chat to their teacher and ask questions about the task. The classwork is where work will be uploaded. Children can either return their work to Google Classroom or to Seesaw. The QR code for this is in their pack. This will allow them to add to their school folder so that all of their work from this session is together in one place.

If possible we would love the children to log on each day in the morning for their daily tasks. We are trying to ensure that the children continue to make progress in their learning in preparation for next session. This will also help you to create a routine for children and allow them to feel that school days are different from weekends or holidays. (If you tell them their teacher is expecting to hear from them it might help! Fingers crossed). We are here to support the learning and progress of your children in what ever way we can.

Reading Eggs

Reading Eggs is a subscription which has been paid by the school for every pupil in the school Primary 1 to Primary 7. Each child should begin by doing a placement test (which many did before the holidays) and then they will be provided with appropriate reading. This also ensures the difficulty increases as your child progresses and the class teacher can see their engagement and progress. Please make use of this it is a great resource and is paid for so we are keen to find out what you think about it. Two very short instructional videos were made and shared (through school app and twitter) on how to enrol your child online with their Reading Eggs account.

LINKS ON HOW TO ACCESS SEESAW, READING EGGS & GOOGLE CLASSROOM ARE IN YOUR CHILD'S HOMELEARNING PACK. FURTHER ADVICE ON ACCESSING GOOGLE CLASSROOM AND READING

EGGS CAN ALL BE FOUND ON THE SCHOOL APP AS THIS WAS SHARED PRIOR TO THE EASTER HOLIDAYS. SCHOOL APP LINK CAN FOUND ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE

<http://enquire.org.uk/service/www.st-pauls.renfrewshire.sch.uk>

Wider Achievement

As you know we value all learning both in school and out of school. During lockdown your children may have learned new skills or knowledge. They may have helped with cooking or gardening. Please share this with us for a virtual Achievement Leaf. I also have an orange token here which again can be issued virtually.

Parents' Evening

As you may remember Parents' Evening was due to take place on 24th March 2020. It is our intention to provide Parents' Evening via a telephone call from the class teacher. During the first 2 weeks in May I will arrange for the class teacher to call you and provide a verbal update on the progress your child made from October (the last parents' evening) till 20th March when the school building closed. They will, as usual, also give you some idea of the areas your child should work on in term 4. I trust this will be satisfactory at this challenging time and hope this reassures you of our commitment to work in partnership with you to support your child.

Pastoral Support

Mrs Nicholson, Mrs Murdoch and myself will continue to check-in with you in the coming weeks. The number may be a mobile you do not recognise or it may be a blocked number. Please answer as we are keen to find out if you need anything and we may be able to refer onto other services if required. The focus for this contact is to ensure everyone is safe and well and has enough access to food and offer any advice we can regarding learning. As before Mrs Nicholson will contact P1-3, Mrs Murdoch P4 and the Anchor Base and myself P5-7.

Contacting the School

As you know there is no-one in the school building at the moment but if you email the enquires email it has been diverted and will come directly to myself.

stpaulsenquiries@renfrewshire.gov.uk If you are very worried or concerned about anything send an email to that and I will get in touch. There is also lots of advice on Renfrewshire Council website.

Advice – can be found at the link below

<http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/coronavirus-emergencycontacts>

School Trips

In line with advice provided from Renfrewshire Council all school trips between now and the end of June have been cancelled. As you know we had various trips organised with the money from Cash for Kids raised by the Parent Council. Most of these will probably be re-arranged for next session but for now have been cancelled. This includes our whole school summer trip.

Primary 7 Transition

Before the holidays Mrs Nicholson had a virtual transition meeting with St Andrew's Academy and I am liaising with Mr Henry and the Head Teachers of other high school where some of our children will be going. These discussions and sharing of information would normally have happened face to face. But please be assured that they will continue and we will ensure key information is shared for their transition.

I am personally still hopeful to be back in June to allow some celebrations. However, in the meantime children will work on their P7 Profile for high school and we are looking into creating a virtual Yearbook.

Support from Agencies

Home Link and Place2be support will continue via regular phone calls. We are having weekly discussions to share information and ensure you are well supported.

Hub Schools

Some of our staff, teaching and support staff, are working at hub schools providing childcare for those who are key workers. We also have a few children who are in hubs instead of being at home with their families. We thank the key workers and staff from our school community who are working to help and support others.

Receiving Sacraments

This week I will be thinking of our Primary 7 children who were due to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation on Thursday 23rd April. As you know all plans for the celebration of sacraments are postponed. As yet I have no further information about this but I will keep those parents involved informed of any updates.

I hope I have not bombarded you with too much information. I just wanted to give you an update and remind our youngsters that school is back on. While we would ideally love all our children to be engaging in all of the lessons the class teachers plan and upload we also know that may not be possible. The older children P5-7 are more independent and should be able to access the work online themselves. However, we appreciate the younger children will need support. Class teachers are mindful of this and trying to set a mix of simple games and tasks.

I know from speaking to some of you on the phone that you may be balancing shift work as a keyworker and caring for your children. You may be unwell yourself or have others in the house unwell. We are aware of this. Our goal is to provide as much support and work as we can to ensure continued progress without putting additional pressure on families. The most important thing is that all our children and families are safe and healthy.

Kind Regards

Louise A. Maher