



# St. Peter's Primary School Newsletter

May/June 2020



**Dear Parents/Carers,**

I hope this newsletter finds you all safe and well. The staff of St. Peter's Primary School and Early Learning and Childcare are missing our children and families during this unusual time of school closure. I am delighted with the variety of ways that we have found to stay in touch. The very helpful engagement with so many families has encouraged everyone in our school community to remain as positive as possible. Staff, as you know, have been going the extra mile to continue to provide lots of fun ways to help our children continue learning at home. I thank you all for embracing our efforts to continue teaching and learning experiences during this very difficult situation and making the most of the opportunities available. Hopefully, it won't be long before we can all see each other again.

## **Wellbeing**

As we all know the lockdown situation is having a massive effect on our daily lives. Regardless of age, this can be a difficult time and it is important we take care of all wellbeing needs. During this time, we may experience different feelings and react in different ways to situations. Here are some key points to consider which will hopefully help you throughout this time:

- Stay connected with others to maintain relationships
- Offer support to someone who needs it
- Talk about feelings with a friend/family member or recommended helplines (below)(NHS)
- Look after your own physical wellbeing, regular exercise and healthy eating routines
- Ensure regular sleeping patterns are maintained to recharge batteries and fight off illness
- Manage your media and information intake
- Create a new daily routine
- Keep your mind active - try reading, completing a jigsaw or crossword or a new hobby
- Build in a time for you to relax

Here are some points to consider when looking after your child's wellbeing:

- Listen and acknowledge your child's emotions, they may go through a range of feelings
- Provide clear and accurate information which they will understand
- Be aware of your own reactions
- Encourage physical exercise, mindful yoga, eating healthy and sleep patterns
- Create a new routine
- Limit exposure to online media
- Ask for help when it is needed – we are all in this together and there to support each other

## Renfrewshire ESP Support

A helpline service has been created by Renfrewshire ESP staffed by educational psychologists and specialised teachers. This is designed to support the wellbeing of children and families in order to help cope during this time. Information, guidance and materials can be found at <https://twitter.com/RenfrewshireEPS>. A referral for support can be made by our school staff so please keep us informed. Education Scotland have also created a resource aimed to support Parents/Carers to build their child's resilience <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/scotland-learns/health-and-wellbeing-activities/resilience-alphabet/>

## NHS support - Breathing Space Scotland

Another available support is Breathing Space which is a psychological counselling service for people in Scotland. The service is staffed by trained advisers who offer guidance and referral. It is funded by the Scottish Government Health Directorate and NHS 24 and is operationally managed by NHS 24. The telephone number is 0800 83 85 87.



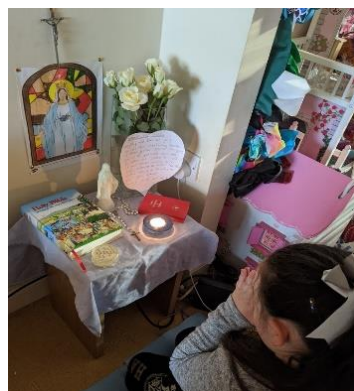
## **Religious Life of The School**

Please remember in your prayers all of the children in primary 4 who would have received the Sacrament of First Holy Communion and the children of primary 7 who would have received the Sacrament of Confirmation this term. While we are unaware at the moment of what this will look like when it takes place in the future, I am sure that plans will be made to ensure that these occasions will be very special celebrations for our pupils and their families.

There are live Masses from many parishes streamed regularly via facebook. I hope that you are able to join and celebrate Mass with others, it can really make you feel part of a community. Let's pray together that families will soon be properly reunited and life can return to some level of normality.

Many of our pupils took part in the Pope Francis Faith Award and some will soon be embarking upon this. Well done to those who have managed to complete the work and have this verified – we are all very proud of you!

You may have seen a picture of a lovely May altar shared by Bishop John on his facebook page. This was created by one of our pupils, Robyn Gilhooley, in her home. The children in primary 3 were learning about Mary Our Mother alongside May altars when Robyn decided to go and make one in her bedroom. What a beautiful thing to do! I am sure Robyn's family are very proud of her as are staff at the school.



## Staffing

Welcome back to Mrs Caitlin Maclean who has now returned from maternity leave. While we are unable to physically welcome Mrs Maclean back to school we are delighted that she is now engaging in our school activities, albeit in a virtual sense. Mrs Denise Dowling will remain with us until the end of term and will continue to provide online learning experiences for Primary 6/7. Mrs Maclean will support this work, engage in curriculum development activities and undertake management tasks as Principal Teacher during this time.



All St. Peter's staff are currently working from home and doing their best to support every child by creating online learning resources via google classroom and developing paper packs which have been delivered to many. Many staff are also working in the various hubs which have been created across Renfrewshire. We have a variety of teachers, support staff and early learning and childcare officers volunteering in hubs. I am very proud and absolutely delighted with the response of our staff to the current circumstances during covid-19 school closure. They are all remaining extremely positive and very eager to stay in touch with every child in their class. They are also enjoying the interaction they are having with all of you at this time. Please continue to support them while they embrace this new way of working.

## Home Learning

While this is an unfortunate situation that we could never imagine finding ourselves in, the response of our school community has been wonderful. Our pupils have been absolutely magnificent when engaging in tasks set by their teachers on a daily basis. Many have shown great resilience and have shared lots of excellent work which has been greatly appreciated by teaching staff. Please encourage your children to upload pictures of their work so that their teacher can give them feedback. Instructions for doing this can be found on the School App.

We hope that the feedback being given is helpful in indicating next steps for our children so that they can continue to progress. Staff are trying to provide a variety of tasks to keep things refreshing and exciting. Should your child find themselves having a little difficulty with something, please let the teacher know by sending an email to the glow address provided. If you are unable to find the address of the teacher, I am happy for you to contact me using the glow email address provided and I will pass the information on so that your child can be supported through tasks. Please remember that your child's wellbeing is also very important to us.

Thank you to the many parents/carers who have already provided lots of feedback to many staff members. This is very encouraging for staff while they are unable to have those face to face discussions with you. Your positive comments have been a source of strength and are greatly appreciated.



We are keen to ensure that all children are able to access online learning. Please contact Mrs Lawson, Mr McIntosh or I if accessing a device or wifi is a problem. We will do our best to support you and provide your child with what they need.

## Chain of Kindness Challenge

Last week was mental health awareness week and Mrs Thomson encouraged her class to complete a lovely chain of kindness challenge. All children were encouraged to print off or draw around a heart each day and write inside the heart something they did which showed an act of kindness. At the end they should have created a heart shaped chain of kindness. We thought this would be a lovely challenge to share with you and perhaps you could try this at home as a family.



## Pupil Achievements

Well done to Mateo de Medina Doig who was a winner in the Scottish Mathematical Council's Maths Challenge competition! We are very proud of Mateo who worked hard to receive a gold award. Fantastic!



## Communication

We are trying very hard to keep the lines of communication open. All teachers have an email address which should have been issued to you on 20 March 2020. Children also have access to this email address and are able to contact their teachers if they have any questions or would like to share information with them. Staff will do their very best to email back as soon as possible. Mrs Lawson and I have also shared our email addresses for you to be able to contact us directly at any time and we will also try to get in touch with you as soon as we possibly can to answer your queries. Our enquiries email address continues to be active too.

Mrs Lawson - [gw08kinneypatricia@glow.sch.uk](mailto:gw08kinneypatricia@glow.sch.uk)

Mrs Mazzoni – [gw07mazzonisharon@glow.sch.uk](mailto:gw07mazzonisharon@glow.sch.uk)

stpetersenquiries@renfrewshire.gov.uk

A huge thank you to Mrs Catherine McLean (Acting Principal Teacher) and Mrs Karen Ewing (Classroom Assistant) who have been extremely active in keeping our school website, app and twitter pages up to date. I encourage you to access these so that you are able to receive immediate updates as and when they happen.

Accessing Twitter - If you have a Twitter account, please follow us @SaintPetersPS. Anyone can view our Twitter page, even without an account by entering '@SaintPetersPS Twitter' into your internet search engine.

Accessing School App - Download 'School App for Parents' from your App Store. When you access for the first time you will be asked to enter our username and PIN number. Username: stpeters01 PIN: 4523

Mrs Lawson (DHT), Mrs Lorna Robertson (Senior ELCO) Mr McIntosh (Inclusion Support Assistant) and I have been checking-in with many families throughout this time via telephone calls and Mr McIntosh and I have made some short doorstep visits. Mrs Catherine McLean (Acting PT) has also managed to visit some families with additional paper based learning packs. We are so grateful that you are happy to engage with us and we are enjoying hearing all about your fun times. We also hope we are able to offer support as you share with us your challenges during lockdown. Remember that we also have families and are experiencing similar things so we can definitely relate to what you're going through and are enjoying the comfort of knowing that we are all in this together! If you have not had the opportunity to speak with any of us and would like a call please email me using the above email address and I will arrange for this to take place.



## Transitions

We are currently working with various partners to ensure that children who are making very important transitions are given as much support as possible. This involves all children making the transition from nursery to primary 1 and those who will sadly leave us at the end of primary 7 in June to move on to secondary school in August 2020.

St. Andrew's Academy have a Transition Zone which can be accessed by via the 'Pupil' tab on the school website. [www.standrewspaisley.com](http://www.standrewspaisley.com)

You may also like to follow St. Andrew's on Twitter. @St\_Andrews\_Acad

Mrs Laura Rennie, Transition Teacher, has made contact with the children via google classroom and continues to work with staff at Renfrewshire Council to ensure that our children are reassured and well prepared during this time.

I am aware that many celebrations usually take place at the end of the school session to mark these occasions. Staff are currently planning how to ensure that we are able to create activities that will help our children know how special they are as they move on to the next stage in their learning journey. Please be patient with us as we finalise the details. We will inform you as soon as these have been agreed.

We also have a Transition Zone on our Website for our new children starting in August. This zone can be found when you click on the Information Tab on our website. This area will be populated to keep our families up to date with current information about starting school and activities to help prepare your child for school. Mrs Lawson and I will be contacting our children and families throughout June to alleviate any anxieties about starting school.

We hope that this helps to alleviate any concerns or anxieties that you or your children may have. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any individual questions that you would like answered.



## Classification

We are aware that transitions are also very important as children move from one stage in our school to the next. Staff will usually spend time at this point of the year sharing essential information with the receiving teacher. This involves discussion about the learning styles of pupils, their strengths and areas for development as well as levels of attainment and achievement. This passing on of information will take place once classes for children have been established.

Normally, at this time, I would be providing you with details of the possible class structure for next school session 2020/2021 and allocated teachers. I would like to reassure you that much thought has gone into our proposed classification for next year and I will share with you our initial thoughts. These are subject to change and will depend on further government advice (national and local) as it is provided to us.

Primary 1	20 pupils	Mrs Annmarie Mitchell
Primary 1/2	20 pupils (8 P1s and 12 P2s)	Mrs Joyce Thomson
Primary 2/3	24 pupils (17 P2s and 7 P3s)	Mrs Caitlin Maclean
Primary 3	20 pupils	Mrs Grace Everett
Primary 4	26 pupils	Miss Yvonne Quinn (0.6 Mon-Wed)/Mrs Catherine McLean (0.4 Thursday and Friday)
Primary 4/5	22 pupils (7 P4s and 15 P5s)	Mrs Jane McFarlane (0.8 Mon-Tue & Thurs Fri) Mrs Catherine McLean (0.2 Wed)
Primary 5/6	24 pupils (7 P5s and 17 P6s)	Mrs Anne Campbell
Primary 6/7	24 pupils (18 P6s and 6 P7s)	Miss Emma Young
Primary 7	27 pupils	Miss Veronica Gordon
NCCT	Wed-Fri	Mrs Clair Duckett

We know that Scottish Government advice is telling us that pupils will not return to full classes for some time and in August we will begin a new approach of blended learning which consists of a balance of face to face interaction and online/home working. I know that this will raise a lot of concern among many families and I want to whole heartedly reassure you that we will do everything we possibly can to support you all at this time. There will be many questions that unfortunately cannot be answered fully at the moment but as soon as we can provide you with further details we will do so.

## Free Meal and Clothing Grants

Renfrewshire Council has a section on their website which provides you with information in order that you can make your application. Please look closely at this and I strongly encourage you to make an application if you feel you are eligible. These can be made at any time of the year. The following link should take you straight to the area of the website:

<http://renfrewshire.gov.uk/Freeschoolmealsandclothinggrants>



## School Improvement Planning

I usually ask for your views regarding what should be included in our school improvement plan at this time of year. I hope to issue electronic surveys in the very near future and I would be so grateful if you could please take time to complete these. Alternatively, you could email me directly if there is something that you consider to be a priority and would like this included in our improvement plan. Your views are very important to us and form the basis of our development work.



## Returning to School

Since lockdown began, Renfrewshire Council leaders have encouraged staff to consider what the recovery of this school closure would look like. We have been working hard to plan ahead while ensuring the safety, health and wellbeing of all. You will be aware that our First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, has now announced that pupils will not return to school until August 2020 and when they do return they will be returning to experience a blended approach to learning which means pupils will spend some of their time in school experiencing face to face learning opportunities with their teacher and their peers while the rest of the time will be spent at home. I am sure you will understand that there are so many considerations to ensure that this is carried out as safely as possible. When children are not at school they will continue to participate in online learning based tasks set by school staff via google classroom. At the moment, I am sure you will appreciate that there are many aspects of this to be discussed as a staff team and in collaboration with Renfrewshire Council managers and our director, Mr Steven Quinn. This means that the information I can provide at this present time is very limited and I apologise for this as I know that you will have many questions you would like to be answered. I would, however, like to engage with you so that we can move forward and work closely together to support each other as this new way of helping our children to grow and learn is developed. I would like to reassure you that the health and wellbeing of our children will be our first priority during our planning process.



## Parent Council

Paul Doherty, our Parent Council Chairperson, has kindly been in touch with you all to inform of the recent activities that school staff have been undertaking to plan for the recovery of our school closure during covid-19. There will be a parent council meeting via skype at 4.30pm on 2 June organised by Paul and he would be delighted to hear from those of you who would like to attend this. I will do my best to alleviate your concerns and provide answers to the questions I am able to address during the meeting. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

A massive thank you to the parent council for the work that has been carried out throughout the course of the year. Your efforts have been tremendous in supporting every aspect of the life and work of the school. The financial contributions you have made to the school will be put to extremely good use while we work hard to enhance our outdoor learning experiences. This will involve purchasing lots of items and embracing many new and innovative approaches. We can expect our outdoor learning pursuits to be plentiful in the coming year. Mrs Catherine McLean

has been carrying out lots of extensive work focused on this with many members of our staff team keen to be involved. Please let us know if you would like to contribute to this in any way you can. This will continue as a priority into our new school session 2020/2021.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank you for the fantastic support you have provided to our staff team during a very unusual set of circumstances. We recognise that everyone will be experiencing ups and downs and we hope that you consider us a support to you. Let's keep the lines of communication open and do all we can to make sure that the children of St. Peter's feel supported, valued and loved.

We look forward to seeing you all again some time soon,

Best wishes,

*Sharon Mazzoni*

Head Teacher



**Respect**

**Responsibility**

**Kindness**

**Fairness**

**Honesty**