



Stonehouse Primary
September Newsletter 2021



We have had a fantastic start back to the term. Our pupils have returned, or in the case of our new primary ones started, with a terrific enthusiasm for school life and readiness to learn. Most of our classes have groups of children who have been separated for the last couple of years and have now been merged back together. They are coping brilliantly with this and making new friendships while still maintaining old ones. The removal of zones from our playground has helped with this process and the children are enjoying having the full playground to explore and play in. The staff (teaching, support and facilities) have worked extremely hard to make the school a fun, safe, happy place to develop and learn with support and challenge for all.

Health and Safety:

You will be aware that we have felt able to make some changes to school life allowing more freedom within classrooms and outdoors. Currently we are still not permitted to hold indoor assemblies so will continue with outdoor or virtual ones. Regular hand washing and good ventilation continues. We ask that any child with a cough, raised temperature or loss of taste or smell is not sent to school and that a PCR test is booked. Please keep us informed of tests booked and results. As soon as a negative result is attained a child can return to school if they feel well enough (even if it is half way through the school day). We have already had some positive cases in school since our return; there is valuable NHS information about the new rules and systems in place on our school website.

Please remember that the school car park is for the exclusive use of staff, ASN taxis and blue badge holders only. Parents/carers are welcome to park their car in St Ninian's church car park.

Meet the Teacher:

Unfortunately we are not yet allowed to invite parents and carers into our school building. In a non-restriction year we would hold a "Meet the teacher" night in the school for parents and children to visit classrooms and chat to teachers. In it's place we are putting together a video with a short clip from each teacher and Early Years practitioner introducing themselves. This will be posted on twitter and on Google Classroom. Additionally staff are completing a biography which will be sent home in paper form to their own class and then all will be posted on Google Classroom.

Homelearning:

Homelearning is not compulsory for any child, but at Stonehouse Primary we are keen to encourage parental participation in the progress made by children. Additional learning at home can consolidate skills and knowledge and allow children to practise and improve. Homelearning should be **fun** and **active**. This year we aim to use the Google classroom skills gained (by children and their carers) during 2 lockdowns as the vehicle for suggesting homelearning. More detailed information was given on this subject earlier this week.

New Headteacher:

The process of appointing a permanent headteacher by SLC has now started. We will keep you informed of all developments. Meanwhile Mrs Joyce Crighton will continue in the acting headteacher role supported by depute Mrs Jane Hall and acting depute Mrs Carol Hunter, acting principal teacher Mrs Emmi Searle and the rest of the staff.



Fund raising:

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic and the restrictions it brought, our school fund has dwindled and no large fund raising activities have been possible. We are hoping to plan a few activities in the coming months which raise some money for the school. All monies raised go towards resources to support learning and teaching. Our first event is the sponsored obstacle course taking place this Thursday. Many thanks for your continued support.



Pupil diaries and communication:

We ask that children bring their diaries to school every day and that parents check them nightly for attitude and behaviour updates, information about targets and learning questions. The diaries have plenty space for parental comments or simple questions. We would encourage parents with information to give about family circumstances or concerns about learning or behaviour to call the school (01698 792377) to speak with a member of the senior leadership team. There is a section in the diary for achievements outside school which, if completed at home, can be celebrated in school. We would love this to be used more across the school.

Physical Education:

We are delighted that this session we have been able to return to indoor PE. Children will be able to take part in 2 hours of Physical exercise every week, 1 hour indoor and 1 outdoor. We are still not able to change for PE in school so we ask that on PE days children come to school in appropriate sportswear (no football strips). Please be aware that outdoor sessions will take place in all but the most severe, wet and windy weather so clothing should be suitable for this. PE days can be found in pupil diaries.



Writing:

This session we have a focus on raising attainment in writing and will be looking at various strategies to do so. Our starting point is an attempt to increase the levels of writing for enjoyment, by including a “Write time” every day. Children will be encouraged to write purely for fun and for any purpose, jokes, poems, recipes, stories, comic strips, posters, labelled drawings etc. Raised enthusiasm and confidence to put pencil to paper will give a solid foundation on which to build improved spelling, grammar, punctuation, structure and vocabulary. The children will all have a “write time” book which will be covered in wrapping paper – if you have any spare rolls of patterned, motif or sparkly wrapping paper we would very much appreciate them. Additionally any donations or interesting writing equipment eg gel pens, fancy pens/pencils etc would also be gratefully received.



Class Newsletters:

Each class will be given a newsletter this week written by their teacher which details the learning planned to take place in the coming weeks. This information will provide the opportunity for parents/carers to engage in learning conversations with their child.

Diary Dates:

2nd Sept – Sponsored obstacle course

Week beg 20th Sept – Rugby week (details to follow)

7th Sept – Pre-school Vision screening

Friday 24th & Monday 27th Sept – Holiday (school closed)



As always if you wish to ask a question about any of the above or any other school matter please do not hesitate to call.

