Gartconner Primary School

Autumn Newsletter

2021

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Covid Update

We are seeing increasing numbers of positive cases in the school, particularly in P7. I hope we can keep numbers to a minimum as we head to winter and our families all remain safe and well; although, it feels inevitable that the high level in the community will continue to impact in school.

As always, look out for any new, continuous cough, high temperature or loss of taste or smell. If anyone in your household has any of these symptoms, the household should isolate and those with symptoms book a PCR test. Once you have the all clear via a negative result then pupils can return to school. Follow the latest government guidance on next steps if results are positive.

We always want to support children to minimise learning loss due to absences. If a child is off with Covid, staff will upload work on Seesaw to help support them. If you require any help with this, please contact the teacher in the first instance and she will direct your enquiry to the appropriate member of staff. If a child is ill, then please use your discretion as to what would be appropriate for them to do.

Parents’ Nights

All parents will have an opportunity to speak to their child's teacher in October. Appointments have been sent out and you will be able select a slot that best suits your schedule. If none of the available times suit then please let the office know and we will try to find an alternative slot.

Meet the Teacher

Unfortunately, we still can't meet face-to-face but we will try to pass on as much information as possible to parents through a short video from the teacher and a leaflet. Teachers will issue these directly to you through Seesaw. If you have any issues with accessing Seesaw please report this to Mrs Burns. [cburns@gartconner.e-dunbarton.sch.uk](mailto:cburns@gartconner.e-dunbarton.sch.uk)

Extra-curricular Clubs

We are still unable to run our usual diet of clubs after school but we are making plans to introduce these later in the year. The P7 pupil coaches have started up football coaching on Tuesday and Thursday at lunchtime. This will allow the school team to be reformed and we hope that we can arrange a few friendlies against local schools in the not too distant future. A big thanks to Leon, Murray and Peter for getting the sessions organised. Murray said, “We are hoping in the near future that we can participate in competitions and games. Leon added, “We have some really good talent in the team and some of the younger players coming through will give us competition and make the team stronger. The development squad and the youth team will be able to participate in football festivals when they restart.”

Head lice

It seems a long time since we have had any head lice in the school. They will make an inevitable return so please remember to check your child’s hair every week. NHS provide great advice if you find head lice in your child’s hair. Keeping hair tied back really helps with prevention of infestation.

Leadership Groups and Committees

Our normal pattern of leadership activities involves pupils working together across the school in individual committees. This year we have started with classes having a leadership role across the school to avoid any difficulties with covid restrictions. The exceptions to this are the Junior Management Team and Eco Committee. JMT members are elected from classes across the school and the Eco Committee will also have representatives from different classes.

Khalid, our JMT representative from P6 said, ”The JMT will be working to try and improve the school for all the pupils.”

Elise, P6, reported that at their last meeting they decided to start a suggestion box for each class to give children the chance to get their opinion on how they think they can improve the school.

Music

The Youth Music Initiative will be back in school to help develop the musical and percussion talents of our pupils. The P5 class will receive lessons in pipe band drumming and this will be free for all children in the class. This will run through to high school. The P6 class will receive lessons in brass instruments. We have instruments in the school already and tuition will be free for all children. The P7 children can audition for small group or individual lessons in brass and these will also be provided free of charge. We have had great success in the past with former pupils in high school going on to participate in the EDC orchestra.

Roald Dahl Day

A huge thank you to Mrs Gilmour and P3 pupils who run our Charity and Fundraising Committee for organising the event. This event was to raise money to build a reading nook in the playground. We have raised over a £100 so far and the money is still coming in. If you haven’t made a donation yet, it is not too late and you can pass it to your child’s class teacher.

Callum, P3, said, ”It was great fun and in class we read Revolting Rhymes. They were pretty brutal and a wee bit scary. Who knew Little Red Ridinghood was the one who killed the wolf!”

Lucy, P3, said, “We had a parade at the school outside in the playground and it was great fun to see all the costumes. In our class we played Roald Dahl charades. Thank you to everybody who helped us.”

COP 26

“We are all DOOMED!!!” Insists Matilda in P5/4 if we don’t start recycling and use less plastic and energy. She said, “I created my costume for Roald Dahl Day from recycled boxes from my house.”

Hayden our P5/4 representative on the Eco Committee said, “Matilda sounds a bit dramatic but she is right. We need to do something about littering and reducing the plastic we buy.”

We certainly have a lot of strong feelings about climate change amongst our pupils and what our school community can do to help. As part of the School Improvement Plan we are launching a new Learning for Sustainability initiative and this will be part of a 5-year plan to make the school and the local community as eco-friendly as possible. It will involve the school, nursery and community groups to ensure that we take a joined up approach to supporting our children’s future.

We will combine the improvement to our school playground with this work to ensure that the changes we make will benefit the children just now and in the future. The children will drive forward these initiative through their active participation in the committees and through questionnaires and assemblies.

COP 26 in Glasgow will start on Monday 1st November and run for two weeks. During this period, Donald Mcdonald of Sustrans will visit the school to take the children and staff out on Wild Walk guided tours in the local area.

Thanks to the sterling work of Leanne in our nursery, we will plant 100 trees that have been donated by the Woodland Trust as a legacy for COP 26. We will work in partnership with the nursery and use them to create sheltered spaces to help improve the natural environment around the edges of the playground. The trees can also help improve drainage in the waterlogged areas in the lower playground.

EDC have a link for a consultation about their provision of green space around the authority. Use this link here to give your opinion: www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/GreenspaceEDC

Loose Parts

A link has been sent out on Teams to vote for your preferred loose parts. We will be asking for donations soon. We will do this in small groups to avoid being overwhelmed with donations. Mrs Ewens is coordinating this and will contact parents via Seesaw. This will be completed by the end of October and the children can get playing as soon as possible after that. You can watch a great video about the importance and benefits of loose parts play in the primary school. Click here to play the video: [Loose Parts Play Video](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=you+tube+NLC+loose+parts&&view=detail&mid=023779A8061D26CCB324023779A8061D26CCB324&&FORM=VRDGAR&ru=/videos/search?q%3Dyou%20tube%20NLC%20loose%20parts%26qs%3Dn%26form%3DQBVR%26sp%3D-1%26pq%3Dyou%20tube%20nlc%20loose%20parts%26sc%3D0-24%26sk%3D%26cvid%3D4941D284F9E24AD8BEDD27A630DBF690)

Global Play Afternoons

Play is such a vital part of learning and gives pupils a chance to apply their skills in different contexts. Our play afternoons give pupils a chance across the school to develop their social skills and emotional wellbeing.

Bikeablility

This is for P7 only this year and will be at Level 2 where the children get out on to the local streets to show their proficiency in real traffic as they would do outside school. This is excellent road safety training and is fully risk assessed by the experienced trainers. Our new Junior Road Safety Officer will be in touch with parents about lots of new and exciting plans to improve cycling to school.

P7 Bikeability begins 22nd October for 3 weeks and pupils need helmets and appropriate attire for all weathers.

Bike to School Week begins on Tuesday 28th of September so please make a special effort to cycle or scoot to school. Please remember helmets.

Dates for the Diary

Every year we produce an outline plan of the year ahead and dates for key events. I have included the provisional list below for dates but with the caution that events and dates may be changed due to the prevailing restrictions at the time. This is likely to be inaccurate by the end of term so I will put out a new list in the next newsletter. Please disregard the older versions to ensure there are no mix up with changed dates.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **September** | **Correct as of 23 September 2021** | Notes |
| 17th | Roald Dahl Dress Up Day | Pupils who wish to take part |
| 23rd | Meet the Parents Workshop | Pre-recorded to be sent out to parents. |
| 24th | HOLIDAY |  |
| 27th | HOLIDAY |  |
| **October** |  |  |
| 1st | MAC Course | Cancelled |
| 7th | Parents Evening | Phone calls over the week |
| 8th | Inservice Day | Pupils should not attend |
| 11th -15th | October Week HOLIDAY |  |
| 27th | Bikeabilty | P7 for four Fridays |
| **November** |  |  |
| 16th | Dog Trust Workshops | P4-7 |
| **December** |  |  |
| 6th | Flu Vaccine | Pupils with consent |
| 6th | EDC Christmas Concert GRCH | Some P7 pupils TBC |
| 14th | PTA Christmas Fayre | 2.00 -4.30pm |
| 17th | Christmas assembly (Nativity)  Enterprise Event | P1  P1-P7 |
| 21st | **School closes 2.30pm** | NB: change from original date |
| **January** |  |  |
| 5th | Pupils & Staff return |  |
| 10th-15th | Registration Week | Online |
| **February** |  |  |
| 7th & 8th | HOLIDAY |  |
| 9th | Inservice Day | Pupils should not attend |
| 11th | Play 2 Learn | New P1 intake Aug 22 |
| 14th – 18th | Lendrick Muir Residential Trip | P7 pupils |
| **March** |  |  |
| 3rd | World Book Day |  |
| 31st | Report to Parents | Whole School |
| **April** |  |  |
| 1st | **School closes 2.30pm** |  |
| 4th -18th | Easter HOLIDAY |  |
| 19th (Tue) | Pupils & Staff Return |  |
| 29th | Letters to Buddies | New P1 intake Aug 22 |
| **May** |  |  |
| 2nd | HOLIDAY |  |
| 5th | Inservice | Pupils should not attend |
| 10th | Come Dine with Me | New P1 intake Aug 22 |
| 19th | Enhanced P1 transition | New P1 intake Aug 22 by invite |
| 20th | Global Play afternoon | Whole School |
| 25th | Parents Evening | Format TBC |
| 27th & 30th | HOLIDAY |  |
| **June** |  |  |
| 1st | P1 Induction | New P1 intake Aug 22 |
| 3rd | Global Play afternoon | Whole School |
| 6th | P1 Enhanced Transition | New P1 intake Aug 22 by invite |
| 14th | Sports Day & P4 Healthy Tuck Shop | Whole School |
| 15th | Luggiewalk & P5 Clean | Whole School |
| 16th | School Trip | Whole School |
| 17th | Prizegiving | Whole School |
| 20th | P7 Graduation | P7 |
| **22nd** | **School closes 1pm** |  |