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Ratho Primary School

Head Teacher Newsletter: 26th March 2021

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Head Teacher's Welcome

Dear Ratho Primary School Community,

It has been fantastic to have had a full and busy school for the last two weeks! The Nursery – P3 pupils are mostly well adjusted, used to their routines and have been well engaged in their learning and activities. After two weeks back, the P4-7 pupils are generally excited, happy and enjoying being back with their peers. We must remember that it is not easy for our young people… They have been through a lot of change and disruption, as have we all! It heartening to see the resilience and positive attitude of so many and also the support and friendship the children have for each other when they need it. Please see the below NHS guides for parents/carers to support children in getting back to school.

I am progressing with learning the children's names having spent a little time in each class; it is a joy getting to know the pupils, their nature and their character! However, between adhering to Covid restrictions and very busy days, I still need a bit of time before I know them all! Thanks to all the parents and carers who have greeted me at the gates, please do take a moment to introduce yourself and ask for a chat if you wish! If you need to speak to me on any school related matter, whether formal or informal, I will do my best to make myself available or will get back to you.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Gibb, Head Teacher.

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Staffing News

We were very sad to hear Depute Head Teacher Chris Welander's announcement that he will be leaving Ratho Primary School. Hopefully you have had a chance to read his letter issued yesterday (Thursday 25th March). We wish him well as he leaves to join Ratho's previous Headteacher, Rachel Glover as part of the new Senior Leadership Team at Duddingston Primary School. His last day at Ratho Primary School will be the 30th April. We will begin the recruitment process as soon as possible and I will be in touch with further details when I am able.

Covid Safety Measures and Return to School details

Many thanks to all for their continued observation of Covid safety measures. Wearing face coverings, physical distancing and staggered times help everyone keep as safe as possible. We appreciate that the path running through school grounds is narrow but please can adults do their best to keep distance between adults and between adults and children from different families. Also, can we remind parents/carers that only one adult should accompany their children during drop-off/pick-up times. Thank you for your cooperation.

Cars at drop-off and pick-up times

Could all drivers please consider if they need to drive children to school… Could you 'park and stride' or could you walk? Parents/Carers should not use the school car park and the village areas of Main street, School Wynd, North Street and Hallcroft estate are narrow and not conducive for large numbers of cars to be manoeuvring to drop-off and pick-up children. The volume of vehicular traffic around the school at these times presents a risk to children's safety as they arrive/leave school. Please consider if you can help keep the children safer by not driving to school or by parking in a safe area and walking in. Thank you for your cooperation.

Dogs within school grounds

We have had concerns raised regarding dogs in the school ground. We also have had many instances of dog fouling within school grounds. I am sure that the fouling is not from owners who are parents/carers and I appreciate that the community access school grounds after school hours. However, I have queried the school's position and the school grounds begin at the black barrier/gate by the library and run to the top of the path that joins North Street. There are signs at both ends of this path declaring 'No Dogs Allowed'… Can dog owners please consider whether they should be bringing their dogs to school? Thank you for your cooperation.

Community requests

Following last newsletter's request for help with building a community library, upon reflection, 'Community Library' is probably the wrong term. What I'm thinking of is more of a simple book exchange for all ages, open and accessible to the community and housed in an outdoor, weathertight bookcase. So again, if you know of a local joiner, carpenter or handyperson who would be able to help, please get in touch!

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Ratho School Voice

I'm delighted to share good news from the Ratho School Voice… They have agreed to fund £2000 of improvement work for the school! In the **Nursery grounds** the open play area within the nursery garden which once had grass was just mud and dirt… We have installed sleepers and borders and filled with woodchip, thus making a safe, clean area. The RSV have paid for half the costs… Thank you! We have also purchased **Groupcall**. This is a communication tool/programme which should enable better communications between the school and parents. It requires an annual fee and the RSV have paid for the first year… Thank you!

We hugely appreciate the R.S.V.'s contribution to the school and they are now busy with the **"RSV Easter Egg-straveganza!"** This includes; Find the famous bunnies, Egg decorating competition and a Virtual Easter bonnet parade! **Please look at the Facebook page, RSV 2021 - Easter Egg-straveganza for all the details.** Have fun with your family and raise money for the school this Easter Weekend!

https://www.facebook.com/groups/3924514467560383/?ref=share

Dunblane Memorial

Following the 25th Anniversary of the tragedy at Dunblane Primary on 13th March, Mr MacKerracher has cleared and created space around Ratho Primary School's tree and memorial. Mr MacKerracher has also cleared the post and wire fencing around the school's woodland area adjoining the Ratho Community Woodland. Huge thanks to him for his great work for the school!

City of Edinburgh Council Surveys

A reminder about these surveys which are still open: The City of Edinburgh Council survey about the timing of school holidays over the next three years is open until Thursday 1 April 2021. The link is: https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/schsd2022

The 'Spaces for People' online questionnaire is open until 5th April 2021 Please fill in the online questionnaire (click for the link). You can find out more information at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/spacesforpeople

Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood

We will be starting a whole school six week block of learning about relationships, sexual health and parenthood on the week beginning Monday 26th April. This is a well established programme in our school that was updated by school staff two years ago to include some new resources from the www.rshp.scot website - a national, government-endorsed range of teaching and learning resources.

We would normally teach this content in February but felt it appropriate to have all children back in school before starting learning of this nature. Our range of parent booklets and the words that are discussed at each stage can be found on our website for you to read over. These are found here: http://rathoprimary.org.uk/rshp/

There is also an NHS guide on how to talk to your children about Relationships and Sexual Health.

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Gym days

Below is a summary of each class' gym days so you know when to send your children into school in their PE kit.

Class	Gym Days
P1	Wednesday and Thursday
P1/2	Tuesday, Wednesday for P.E and Forest Thursday
P2	Tuesday, Thursday and Forest Friday
P3	Monday and Tuesday
P3/4	Tuesday and Friday
P4	Thursday and Friday but will change to Wednesday and Friday after the holidays
P5	Tuesday and Wednesday
P5/6	Tuesday and Friday
P6	Monday and Wednesday and then Wednesday and Friday after the holidays
P7a	Monday and Tuesday
P7b	Monday and Thursday

Ask your kids about…

Below is a summary of some of the wonderful learning happening in school and at home this week!

Nursery	Nursery continue to explore our topic of 'People Who Help Us' and are enjoying playing in our medical centre role play and making 'x-ray' art. At mini forest we are learning about fire safety.
Primary 1	P1 have been finding tiny words hiding in a picture with the magnifying glasses and writing them on a whiteboard. We have begun to practice our football skills in PE.
Primary 1/2	We are collecting different objects in our indoor and outdoor classroom and asking questions to gather information on what we find. We are looking at different ways we can organise and display this information. This week we have been having fun using tally marks.
Primary 2	P2 have been following our Keeping Myself Safe programme and learning what to do if we get lost.

	We have also been thinking about making friends and what kind of things we are looking for in a good friend.
Primary 3	P3 have started to look at different ways to handle information. We will be creating our own bar graphs and tally charts.
Primary 3/4	P3/4 have been creating their own "Tree of Life". This week we have looked at our strengths, hopes and wishes and the people that support us. We have really enjoyed leaving little positive messages on each other's trees too!
Primary 4	P4 have been learning about Viking longships. We practised finding information in a non-fiction text and created our own Viking longships
Primary 5	Primary 5 have been learning the vocabulary for their favourite animals in French
Primary 5/6	Since returning to class, primary 5/6 have been creating their own 'Tree of Life'. The Tree of Life is a tool that uses different parts of a tree as metaphors to represent different aspects of their lives, helping them to rebuild relationships, positive self-perception and belonging
Primary 6	P6 have been starting to write news reports and create video news bulletins using a greenscreen app on the iPads in class.
Primary 7a Primary 7b	P7 have been conducting surveys in their class. They have been presenting their findings as bar graphs, line graphs and pie charts. They have also written questions for others to answer using the information they have gathered.
Art and Design	P6/7 are learning to compare abs contrast different drawing materials whilst developing their observational drawing skills. P5 have been learning how to shape, join and make marks in clay, creating secret doors. P3s and p4s have been created brightly coloured paper flower collages.
STEM	In STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), we have a Mission to Mars theme. P3-P7 are learning about the Perseverance rover, which landed on Mars in February. Ask your child how it travelled from Earth to Mars!
Additional Support for Learning	If you have concerns regarding your child's speech, language or communication you can call the Speech and Language Therapy Service direct. You don't need to go to your GP, Health Visitor or School to access this service. Check out https://www.lets-talk.scot.nhs.uk/contact/ for more details and to access resources and tips!

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Additional Support for Learning

NHS Guide on Children returning to school

NHS Grampian have produced the following guides to support parents and carers in helping their children come back to learning in school. They can be accessed using the links below:

- It's ok to worry about going back to school: resource pack for parents
- It's ok to worry about going back to school: resource pack for parents of neurodiverse children
- Coming out of lockdown - managing worries: a guide for parents/carers of children and young people with long-term health conditions

Wall of Awe-STEM-ness - Amazing STEM work across Ratho Primary School

Mrs Dixon, our STEM Teacher, has picked out some videos and photos of the super STEM work sent in so far from P1-P7 and uploaded them here: https://sway.office.com/kX6YXER9YRq83XnD?ref=Link . This is a live link which is being added to all the time during remote learning - new photos and videos will be added at the top. Well done to everybody who is featured!

Dates for the rest of session 2020-21.

With unfortunate bad luck in terms of timing, the calendar I supplied with the last newsletter was amended by the Council the very same day! The dates around the Christmas holidays in December 2021 have changed. Please see the updated calendar and this sessions' important dates below.

Term ends:	Thursday 1 April 2021 (at usual staggered finishing times).
Easter holidays:	Friday 2 to Monday 19 April 2021 inclusive
Term starts:	Tuesday 20 April 2021
Mid term holidays:	Monday 3 May 2021, May Day Tuesday 4 May 2021, In service / staff only day Monday 24 May 2021, Victoria Day
Term ends:	Friday 25 June 2021.

Please note that pupils return for the beginning of Session 2021-22 on Wednesday 18th August 2021.

Please contact us via the school office for any queries, questions or anything we can help with. Many thanks for your support!

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February 2021

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March 2021

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April 2021

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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
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May 2021

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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June 2021

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20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

July 2021

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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

August 2021

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29	30	31				

September 2021

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October 2021

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November 2021

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December 2021

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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January 2022

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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

February 2022

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

March 2022

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

April 2022

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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May 2022

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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29	30	31				

June 2022

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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July 2022

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
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School Closed/Holidays

Teacher In-Service Day (closed for pupils)