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Ratho Primary School

Head Teacher Newsletter: 21st May 2021

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Head Teacher's Welcome

Dear Ratho Primary School Community,

We have our final holiday weekend of the session with our holiday on Monday 24th May. Thereafter I can hardly believe that there will be only 5 weeks remaining until the end of session. Obviously, we are very busy here at school preparing to round out the year. Primary 1, Primary 4 and Primary 7 children have been undertaking the Scottish National Standardised Assessments and teachers of all classes have been gathering evidence of progress to report on children for the end of session. We have also completed Parent/Carer consultations this week… I hope all parents/carers enjoyed having the opportunity to discuss their children's progress with their class teacher.

The focus for our assemblies over the past fortnight has been to 'Challenge our Mindset' and also to promote Friendship and Kindness. We are certainly looking out for examples of friendship and kindness within the school I will be delighted to hear from any pupils (or family) that want to share and highlight examples of how they are living and demonstrating either Friendship and Kindness, or in fact any of our other school values of: Respect, Responsibility, Honesty. We want all our pupils and their families to embrace and demonstrate these values and I will be happy to celebrate any positive examples with the pupils and the school community.

Many thanks for your continued support of this wonderful school! As always, don't hesitate to get in touch with the school if you require help or have a query.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Gibb, Head Teacher.

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Staffing News

Congratulations to Mrs Lynne Smith who has been appointed to the role of full-time, permanent Depute Head Teacher at Ratho Primary School. Mrs Smith begins in her substantive Depute Head Teacher role from the 1st June 2021 and we look forward to providing a stable Senior Leadership team at Ratho for many years to come. For the duration of this session, Mrs Smith will retain her class commitment to P7a on a Monday and Tuesday so as to provide continuity for those pupils in their final month of primary school.

Parent Consultations

We have successfully completed our final round of parental consultations. Many thanks to all the parents and carers who signed up using the online booking tool and huge thanks to all the teachers for making sure we contacted as many parents as possible… Teachers also called/tried to call many parents/carers who did not book a consultation and I'm pleased to inform that we achieved a consultation with 95% of our parents and carers. Any parents who did not book and we couldn't get hold of are welcome to phone the school to discuss.

Class organisation next session & end of session reports.

I have had feedback that during their consultations, many parents & carers enquired about the organisation of classes for next session and that there have been many queries about composite classes at Ratho Primary School. Composite classes are commonplace across Scotland and placement in a composite class is in no way detrimental to a child's education. In the next newsletter I will provide information to reassure parents with these concerns.

I then intend to share details of classes and teachers when we issue the end of session reports on 11th June 2021. We will ensure that pupils who need extra support in transitioning to their new class will have opportunities to meet and understand the changes that happen at the end of a school session.

Transition Arrangements

Transitions for pupils starting and leaving Primary will take place throughout June. Nursery pupils will begin familiarising themselves with the full school campus and viewing the Canalside View building as part of their transition to Primary 1. We will issue new P1 starting information on 11th June to support new P1 parents and will then host a virtual meeting the following week to answer any questions and further discuss any relevant information with new P1 parents.

Primary 7s have already begun their preparations for transition to High School and we have been sharing information and having relevant meetings with Balerno High School to prepare. The children will enjoy a virtual transition week from week beginning the 14th June whereby they have interactive activities with the high school all week replacing the traditional 'in-person' visits.

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End of Session Arrangements

Unfortunately, all events must take place within the current bubble guidance. We still intend to host a 'Health Week / Sports Days', but will be adhering to restrictions and will not be able to invite parents to attend. We will issue further information in due course. You can view current Government guidance here:

https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-reducing-the-risks-in-schools/

https://www.gov.scot/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-scotlands-route-map/

Primary 7 will be able to enjoy an 'Outdoors Day' whereby we have hired 'MyAdventure' to provide a day of Canoeing and 'Bushcraft'! We have then made arrangements to give them the best version of our traditional 'Leavers events' that we possibly can within guidance! A letter specific to P7 parents and carers has been issued alongside this newsletter.

Ratho School Voice

The Ratho School Voice held another well attended meeting earlier this month. They have very kindly agreed to help fund some of the costs towards the Primary 7s Outdoor Day and end of session celebrations. In addition, they are again funding the P7 jumpers for our current P6s to wear next year and they are purchasing all P7s a "Leavers 2021 Hoodie" as a leaving gift! Many thanks to all in RSV for your generosity and support of and for the school! Please search for them on Facebook (their page is: Ratho School Voice – RSV). ALternatively get in touch through class reps or through the school.

Ratho Gala Day

The Primary 7s were delighted to help decide the theme of this year's Ratho Gala Day. They have come up with the theme of 'Under the Sea / Oceans'. The Gala day will be on 12th June and the Gala Committee have organised many events that they are able to host within current Covid restrictions. Look out for further information within the community!

Ask the Pupils About…

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

Nursery	Nursery are loving 'The Smeds and The Smoos' by Julia Donaldson and getting involved in the city-wide transition project. At mini forest we are learning about fire safety and making hot drinks to enjoy with snack.
Primary 1	P1 have 5 new members of the class now! We have 5 Painted Lady butterfly caterpillars that we are looking after and observing every day as they get bigger and bigger! We are looking forward to learning about the life cycle of the butterfly by nurturing our own caterpillars and letting them go in the school garden to help pollinate the flowers.

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Primary 1/2	We're enjoying using our observation skills to watch our caterpillars Tiny Timmy, Batman, James, Jasmine and Lily grow. We are excited to see the different stages of their life cycle and watch them transform into butterflies. Our butterflies are going to help display symmetry in nature which is the maths topic we are starting to explore.
Primary 2	Primary 2 have been learning about different types of words - this week we have been focussing on nouns. We learnt that nouns are naming words and can be used to label people, places or things.
Primary 3	P3 have become parents to broad bean plants and received the first of six music inputs from the National Youth Choir of Scotland.
Primary 3/4	This week, P3/4 have been working on our inference skills. We looked at different objects and used clues and our existing knowledge to help us work out who the objects might belong to.
Primary 4	This week P4 have been learning about endangered animals. We chose an animal to focus on and created informative pieces of writing on them.
Primary 5	P5 have had great fun working in groups either indoors or outdoors. They have shown an increasingly considerate and kind attitude to each other - well done P5!
Primary 5/6	Primary 5/6 have been learning about playwriting techniques, focusing on character development and dialogue. Also please note – There is a change to P5/6's P.E. days to Tuesday and Thursday.
Primary 6	P6 started block coding on Micro:bits ahead of the 'Do Your :Bit Challenge' over the coming weeks.
Primary 7a Primary 7b	P7 have been working through a variety of transition tasks to prepare them for High School.
Art and Design	P3 and P4 have been developing their use of watercolours to blend colours together to create landscapes before adding the forth rail bridge. P3/4 have been learning how to shape, join and make marks in clay to create their secret doors. P5 and P6 have been creating sculptures, inspired by the artist Alberto Giacometti. P7s are working on an independent art project on the theme of 'My journey through primary school'.
STEM	In STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) we have been continuing our Mission to Mars projects. The Young STEM Leaders did an amazing job leading our Online STEM Club last week - next one is Friday 4 June.
Additional Support for Learning	If you have concerns about your child's speech and language or health, well being and development (Occupational Therapy) you can contact these services direct to talk through your concerns with a professional. For more information check out Speech and Language https://www.lets-talk.scot.nhs.uk/contact/ Occupational Therapy https://enquire.org.uk/service/nhs-lothian-occupational-therapy-department-city-of-edinburgh/

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Letter from the City of Edinburgh Council

Please see the letter issued by the Council sent to all parents with this newsletter today.

Dates for the Rest of Session 2020-21.

I have made dates for the session a newsletter standing item since my first newsletter in mid-March. This will continue and I will include the printable calendar as the final page of each newsletter. I have further clarity on the change of holiday dates that I announced in the newsletter of 26th March.

At its March meeting, the Education, Children and Families Committee agreed to change the scheduled Christmas holiday dates from Friday 24 December 2021 - Monday 10 January 2022 to Monday 20 December 2021 - Tuesday 4 January 2022. The change was based on a similar amendment to the previous year's holiday dates. The reasons for the change are set out in this committee report:

https://democracy.edinburgh.gov.uk/documents/s31995/7.10%20School%20Session%20Dates%20Amendment%202021-22.pdf

The report did not include consideration of the in-service day after the holidays. This will be Wednesday 5 January 2022. To ensure that pupils are in school for the required 190 days, the summer term will be amended to finish on **Friday 1 July 2022** instead of **Thursday 30 June** (pending approval at Committee).

Final mid-term holiday: Monday 24 May 2021, Victoria Day
Term ends: Friday 25 June 2021.
Pupils return for the beginning of Session 2021-22: 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

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March 2021

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April 2021

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November 2021

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February 2022

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March 2022

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April 2022

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May 2022

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June 2022

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July 2022

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School Closed/Holidays

Teacher In-Service Day (closed for pupils)