



Castlehill—a community of learners



DIGITAL SCHOOLS  
AWARDS SCOTLAND



# Castlehill Primary, ELR and EYC Newsletter

## October 2020

*Integrity, Respect, Self-worth*

I hope you all enjoyed the sunshine over the September weekend. It was just glorious. Here's hoping the October week is just as lovely!

The return to school and the EYC (nursery) continues to be relatively successful. Risk measures put in place seem to be working well, with only minor tweaks having to be made. As the pandemic becomes more prevalent in the community we are anticipating more staff absences. We acknowledge that children having different Teachers, Support Staff and Early Years Workers is challenging, and will do our best to maintain consistency where we can.

Can I ask that parents are mindful that the climbing frame, sandpit and trim trail should not be used at this time. If parents could also try not to wave through the windows at the children once they are in class.

Kind regards

*Mandy Thompson*

Head teacher  
Castlehill Primary, ELR and EYC

### Early Years Centre (Nursery)

The EYC improvement plan continues to take the form of an action plan following our visit from HMIE last November. I will issue a summary of our progress and next steps to nursery parents next week.

Due to the current pandemic, and the associated workload, Kirsty Mahindru, Head of Centre, from Oakburn in Milngavie will be supporting the EYC until Oakburn opens in the New Year.

### In-service

Planned in-service activities for school and nursery are detailed below:

#### School

- Spelling training - whole school approach
- Clicker training - supporting literacy skills
- Time to create online/digital learning linked to plans from Oct - Dec 2020

#### Nursery

- Planning in the moment training
- Self-evaluation linked to PDRs
- E-journal training
- Quality interactions training

### NUTS

As we have several children in school and EYC who suffer from nut allergies, I would ask that all parents are careful when providing snack and/or lunches. For many allergy sufferers being in the presence of nuts can cause a reaction. Please check food labels carefully and do not send in any products that contain nuts. This will help us make sure everyone is safe.

### Head Lice/Threadworm

Please check your child regularly for both threadworm and head lice. There is no exclusion period should a child have threadworm or head lice, but we would appreciate if parents could contact the school or EYC to confirm any cases as this allows us to establish whether we have an outbreak or not. Please do not post information about outbreaks on social media as it can lead to speculation and/or teasing.

### Vandalism

You may be aware that the school and EYC has been the brunt of continued, low level, vandalism over the last few months. This has involved benches being moved, cycle and scooter racks being moved, bottles being smashed, litter and cans being left lying and children trying to get up onto the roof of the building. If you see any suspicious activity in school grounds, please phone the Police.

### Students

Student teacher placements will be starting after the October break. We have been given details of the COVID-19 measures that Universities have put in place for student teachers. Each student, similar to any supply member of staff, will meet with me, the Head Teacher, before starting. The school risk assessment will be shared and discussed in detail.

### 'Meet the Teacher' and Reporting Guidance

Traditionally we would have had a meeting the teacher event in school for parents to meet their child's new teacher, see the classroom and get information on planned learning and routines for this term. Unfortunately, this has not been able to happen this session. I hope that the class newsletters sent out a few weeks ago have helped provide some information about learning taking part this session in your child's class. We hope to send out more information in the coming weeks.

Reporting guidance during the Covid pandemic was issued to schools this week. We will be discussing this with staff next week and with our Parent Council, We will share details of agreed reporting systems as soon as we can.

### Cashless Catering

There are several schools across the Council who currently have a cashless catering system in place. The plan is for this system to be rolled out to all schools in a phased approach. I will provide you with more details on this as I receive it.

### Digital Learning/Homework

A huge part of our recovery plan, which is replacing our usual school improvement plan, is digital learning. It's acknowledged that digital learning needs to continue as a focus in current times and this will involve a significant level of staff training and development. Should any child have to self-isolate, there is an expectation that online learning will be provided.

Staff have been engaging in training since coming back in August. P4-7 have started to access their homework on Microsoft Teams over the last 2 weeks. P1-3 will start accessing homework online after the October break. By setting homework online staff, children and parents will become more and more confident accessing learning in this way.

We appreciate that the use of new digital platforms can be very challenging and will continue to support children and families as much as we can through sessions in class as well as 'How to' guides for parents.

### Outdoor Education

We are now in the position where school trips and outdoor education experiences are now allowed to take place. This is however, is affected by the use of transport which remains under strict restrictions. As residential trips continue to be on hold, we are planning to give our P7s as many outdoor education experiences as possible. This has started with bikeability sessions during September. We are currently exploring what other experiences we can offer at this time.

### Counselling

You may be aware through lockdown, that virtual/telephone counselling was being offered to all P6 and P7 children. This service is to continue to be offered. We're being allocated one half day a fortnight where children, with parental consent, can take part in counselling via telephone or through virtual meetings. This would happen during the school day. Children can access this service for any reason, but common referrals are for anxiety, low mood, relationship difficulties. If you have a child in P6 or P7 who you feel would benefit from this service, please get in touch.

### PE Guidelines

The guidelines from August in relation to PE have been that PE sessions should take place outdoors. This has been going very well. Most staff and pupils have really been enjoying outdoor PE. The COVID-19 Sub-advisory group has advised that from 5<sup>th</sup> Oct, indoor Physical Education in schools, for pupils of all ages can take place. At the moment our school hall is being used to house furniture from classes that was taken out to free up space and support staff to maintain 2m distance where possible. It's also being used as a breakout staff room and meeting room. The dining hall will be timetabled for PE, but it is envisaged that most classes will continue to use the pitch, so please make sure your child comes to school with warm clothes, especially as things begin to get a bit colder.

## Fundraising Update

Please find below an update from Elaine Sibbald, our ever dedicated Fundraising Team Coordinator. Elaine has been working so hard on exploring different ways to continue to raise school funds in these difficult times. A huge thanks to Elaine for her time and effort. It is very much appreciated. Thanks also to Alison MacDonald who worked with Elaine over the last few years to raise such an amazing amount of money for our wee school. Alison has now moved on, but I'd like to take this opportunity to thank her on behalf of the school.

Hi everyone.

As you can imagine, it's been a pretty quiet time in fundraising circles lately. At this time of year, we're usually frantically organising the Hallowe'en Disco and planning the Christmas Fayre but, alas, not in 2020. There are, however, a few things on the go that we do need your support with:

- We recently launched **Your School Lottery** ([www.yourschoollottery.co.uk](http://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk)). If you've not already signed up, please have a look and buy a ticket, if you are able. Some great prizes are up for grabs and the school get a healthy commission on all ticket sales.
- If you still need labels for uniforms/equipment, please consider **STIKINS** ([www.stikins.co.uk](http://www.stikins.co.uk)). Again, the school get a commission on all sales.
- If you have any school uniform items to sell or donate, please consider doing so via **UNIFORMLY** ([www.uniformly.co.uk](http://www.uniformly.co.uk)). This is a great way, not only of being environmentally friendly, but of helping out others in the school community. There is the option to donate all or part of the proceeds of your sale to the school fundraising account.
- The **Christmas card** project is underway and the children's works of art will be winging their way home shortly. The process is slightly different this year and full details will be provided. Please ensure that orders are placed by the deadline and that the art work is returned to the school on time to allow it to be sent off for scanning. Again, the school get a good commission on all orders placed.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday 30 October 2020 - Wear your Hallowe'en costume to school day. (£1 donation).

We're working on other ideas for Hallowe'en, Christmas and beyond..... any suggestions are more than welcome ([lainnys@hotmail.com](mailto:lainnys@hotmail.com)).

### Flu Vaccinations

Flu Vaccinations for school aged children are due to take place on the afternoon of Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December. Details of how this will be undertaken in the current circumstances are detailed below:

- The Assembly hall will be used. It will be set up in the morning and remain like this all day to ensure hygiene protocols;
- 9 Members of NHS Staff will attend. They will each be provided with a table and chair, 2m apart;
- Children must sanitise hands before going in for their vaccination, and again after;
- NHS staff will be wearing PPE - Gloves, mask, visor and apron. School staff will prepare the children for this.

### Dates for your Diary

Fri 9 <sup>th</sup> October	In-service Day. School and nursery closed for pupils.
Mon 12 <sup>th</sup> - Fri 16 <sup>th</sup> Oct	School Closed
Friday 30 October	Wear your Hallowe'en costume to school day. (£1 donation).
Wed 9 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Flu Vaccinations
Tue 22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec - Mon 4 <sup>th</sup> Jan	School Closed Pupils return Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> Jan
Fri 25 <sup>th</sup> Dec - Mon 4 <sup>th</sup> Jan	EYC closed. Children return Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> Jan
Mon 8 <sup>th</sup> and Tue 9 <sup>th</sup> Feb	School Closed
Wed 10 <sup>th</sup> Feb	In-service Day. School and EYC closed for pupils.
Fri 2 <sup>nd</sup> - Fri 16 <sup>th</sup> April	School Closed
Fri 2 <sup>nd</sup> and Mon 5 <sup>th</sup> April	EYC Closed
Mon 3 <sup>rd</sup> May	School and EYC Closed
Thu 6 <sup>th</sup> May	In-service Day. School and EYC closed for pupils.
Fri 28 <sup>th</sup> - Mon 31 <sup>st</sup> May	School and EYC Closed
Thu 24 <sup>th</sup> June	Last Day
Mon 19 <sup>th</sup> July	EYC closed