



Castlehill—a community of learners



DIGITAL SCHOOLS
AWARDS SCOTLAND



Castlehill Primary, ELR and EYC Newsletter

September 2020

Integrity, Respect, Self-worth

I hope as we move into September this newsletter finds you all well. It's fair to say that this is the most challenging start to a school year that we all have ever experienced.

We continue to review our Risk Assessment weekly, involving both our teaching and non-teaching unions. This process means that we are being responsive to the wide range of challenges as much as we can be. The staff at Castlehill have been incredible in their support, flexibility and understanding in these difficult times.

We have appreciated the huge support from our parents in not sending children to school unwell and have begun to see the impact this week with absences falling and very few children having to go through the process of being taken to the 'isolation' room and going through a COVID test. We will continue to inform parents of updated guidance as it comes through.

Kind regards

Mandy Thompson

Head teacher

Castlehill Primary, ELR and EYC

Anti-Bullying

Due to lockdown, we weren't able to review our bullying policy in the way that we had hoped. We did however, manage to complete 5 sessions across our P5-7 pupils to explore their understanding of bullying and their views on the work we do as a school to prevent bullying.

The biggest thing that came from the work with the children was that they don't really see all the work we do on rights, core values and mental /emotional wellbeing as contributing to the anti-bullying agenda. We need to be far more explicit with this throughout our curriculum.

The main change to our Anti-bullying policy is that the policy now reflects the 'Respect for All' national guidance published in 2017. This guidance targets prejudice based attitudes and behaviours.

We had planned to share the revised Anti-bullying policy with the Parent Council before launching to the main parent body in May, but the current situation meant this became less of a priority. I hope to share the policy at the next Parent Council meeting and then to the wider parent body.

Staff

Below is a summary of our current staffing. In Scotland, each class teacher is entitled to weekly time out of class for planning and preparation. The teachers covering time out of class this session are: Miss MacDonald, Miss Davies, Mrs Cuthbertson and Mrs MacDonald.

- Room 7, Primary 1 with Mrs Duffy
- Room 8, Primary 1 with Mrs Cuthbert/Miss MacDonald
- Room 9, Primary 2 with Miss Brownlie
- Room 10, Primary 3 with Miss McIver/Mrs Cleland
- Room 11, Primary 7 with Ms McKendrick/Miss McIver
- Room 12, Primary 6 with Mrs Clark/Mrs L Robertson
- Room 13, Primary 5 with Miss Lindsay/Mrs McLaughlin
- Room 14, Primary 4 with Mrs R Robertson
- Room 15, ELR 2 with Miss McNeill
- Room 16, ELR 1 with Ms MacKay
- Room 17, ELR 3 with Mrs Southworth/Mrs Kerr/Mrs Guyan

Parents should note that the current situation means we are continually having to move staff around to cover absences due to COVID 19. We are always aware of the impact that staff changes have on children and their wellbeing and take this into consideration where possible.

Homework

We are currently revising our traditional approaches to homework and beginning to move to a more digital approach. This is involving staff training and will include support for parents and children.

East Dunbartonshire will soon be launching a 'Virtual EDC Primary School' which will provide support for digital learning as well as support for children who would benefit from additional intervention.

Although we fully recognise the limitations of a more digital approach and how this may challenge families, it will reduce resources going between home and school and provide a platform for children to maintain their education should they be self-isolating.

PE

The majority of children are thoroughly enjoying PE outdoors, especially having a non-uniform day that day!

We will not take the children out for PE in torrential rain, but if it's only slight rain the class will likely continue with their session. For this reason, if you can make sure your child comes to school on PE days with clothes that will keep them warm and dry outside.

Instrumental Tuition

I'm delighted to share that our visiting musical instructors will be starting virtual tuition.

Children who are currently learning an instrument should have received an email from their teacher. Please reply if you have, or let us know if you didn't get one. This email will have gone to your child's GLOW EMAIL account.

Water

Over the Summer the water system in the school had work done and I'm delighted to share that our supply from the taps is now from a mains water supply. This means that the water is now drinkable. We also had work completed last weekend as the hot water in many rooms and in the toilets was too hot. This has now been rectified.

Phased Entry and Exit

We continue to have a phased entry system with P4-7 accessing specific playground areas on arrival in the morning and P1-3 coming straight into school. This system is working reasonably well, but due to staffing difficulties we are struggling to supervise the number of infant children coming in so early. We would again ask parents to bring their children to school as close to 9am as possible. It may be that we need to review this system in the coming months.

As children in P6 and P7 are not able to access the shelters in the morning, if it is raining, we ask that children come to school as close to 9am as possible, and wear a warm waterproof jacket.

A reminder that parents are not allowed in the playground in the mornings. One parent for each of our P1-3 children only is allowed in the playground to support a safe handover at the end of the day. Parents must maintain a social distance of 2m from all other adults at all times. We ask that parents of children in P4-7 meet their children outside the school playground area at the end of the day.

Dates for your Diary

Wed 16 th Sep at 7:15pm (virtual)	Parent Council Meeting and AGM
Fri 25 th Sep	School Closed
Mon 28 th Sep	School Closed
Fri 9 th October	In-service Day. School closed for pupils.
Mon 12 th - Fri 16 th Oct	School Closed
Mon 21 st Dec - Mon 5 th Jan	School Closed ** 21 st December still to be confirmed as a holiday
Mon 8 th and Tue 9 th Feb	School Closed
Wed 10 th Feb	In-service Day. School closed for pupils.
Fri 2 nd - Fri 16 th April	School Closed
Mon 3 rd May	School Closed
Thu 6 th May	In-service Day. School closed for pupils.
Fri 28 th - Mon 31 st May	School Closed
Thu 24 th June	Last Day