

Newsletter

April 2021



Dear Parent / Carer

I cannot believe that we have just returned after our Easter Break and that our summer term has now started! Isn't time flying!! I hope you all had a lovely Easter Break and your children are all raring to go until we break for summer on 25 June 2021! It really is not that far away. I am hoping that our weather continues to improve – we were quite lucky over our Easter break. Let's hope that we end up having some lovely weather like we did last year and we can all enjoy being outside in the sunshine and warmth. (Please remember that if the weather does become very warm, you please put some sun screen on your child and send them in with a hat for when they are outside).

We have been updating our school app and facebook page with some news and dates and will continue to do so over the next couple of months before we break for summer. Please keep an eye on these so that you do not miss out on any information.



School will be closed to pupils only on Monday 24th May (this is an in-service day for staff).

If you have changed any of your contact numbers, please can you email the school with any new numbers so we have the most up to date information for you. Our email address is

Hawthornden.PS@midlothian.gov.uk Our school office will update any new numbers – please note,

when changing numbers, this should be done in writing or via email rather than calling us to change numbers.



For your information, we would like to let you know that the MUGA is open to the public in the evenings and at weekends/holidays. The external gate will be left unlocked but the internal gate into school grounds will be locked. We have had issues with dogs being allowed into the MUGA and being left to do their business and then it is left there. We would ask that if you own a dog, your child or you should not be taking it into the MUGA at any time. We will monitor this and report any abuse of this to Midlothian Council.



We wish to discourage pupils wearing watches to school that can connect to the internet. It is not appropriate for children to be making or receiving messages via these watches during the school day. If your child has one of these watches, please make sure you discuss this matter with them.

We have a number of parents who were contacted before lockdown, requesting that they repay dinner money debts to the school and only a small percentage of parents have done this – for which we would like to say a huge thank you. We do not want these debts to continue into our new term in August. If you receive a text from our school office regarding a dinner money debt that has been outstanding for some time, we would ask that you repay this debt preferably before mid May. If you are having difficulties repaying, then please call the school office to discuss. Please do not be embarrassed, we would prefer that you let us know, rather than do nothing at all. It is very important that you do not ignore these messages. Midlothian Council do contact us about outstanding debts and will send out debt letters which we would like to avoid.



At the moment, we are not sure what the situation is going to be with regards to school dinners for all pupils in August. As with most things at the moment, things change to COVID all the time! But, I would ask that going forward, please make sure their child's Parent Pay account is kept up to date and payments are made to keep the account in credit or if you pay for dinners using cash, please make sure this is sent in on a daily basis. If you do receive a text message to say your child is due dinner money then please pay this back to school immediately or credit your Parent Pay Account. We will be asking parents to bring a packed lunch into school for their child if you fail to pay back a debt after 3 meal payments are missed. Once the debt is repaid, then school dinners can continue as normal. Again, if you are having difficulties, it is important to let us know straight away.



We are currently in the process of working on our P1 and P7 Transition plans. Our Depute Head, Ruth Johnson is working with our Admin Assistant, Nicola Scott on all the paperwork for our new P1 parents and we aim to have this with parents by week commencing 10 May 2021. P1 parents have already been emailed regarding this. I am liaising with Lasswade High with regards to our P7s who will be moving on after the summer. All plans, are COVID dependent and subject to change. Please look out for updates.

P7 Leavers Treat – we are hoping that our P7 pupils will have a day at the beach as their treat this year – COVID dependent again! And obviously, we will have to keep an eye on the weather! Cross your fingers for a dry day! We are in the process of arranging this and will issue further information when we have it. The date we have in mind at the moment is Wednesday 23rd June. There will be more information issued nearer the time. Our P7 pupils are hoping to do some fundraising beforehand.



We are currently trialling a new resource in school for sexual health and relationships. This is being trialled over several classes. As soon as we have some feedback from our stakeholders on this, we will feed this back to you.

Please can I take this opportunity to ask that you take into account that our school office is very busy and that if you need to call the school your call is very important to us. I would like to remind you however, that at the moment, we have only 1 staff member in the office in the morning and 1 staff member in the afternoon. Even when our Administrative Assistant is able to return to school after shielding and there are 2 staff members in the office in the morning and afternoon, they will not always be able to be at their desks to answer the phone but we can assure you that if they are not answering it is because they are either on another call or dealing with another interruption eg first aid, giving out medication, assisting a staff



member/pupil/parent/visitor/contractor/delivery, answering the door, delivering messages or items parents have left for their child around the school. We have many parents who have been in our school reception in the past who have commented on their disbelief at how manic the office can be and at how run off their feet and busy the staff are! I have had parents (only a few) recently say to me they cannot get a reply when calling and I would like to assure you that our staff are very efficient and if they are not in the office, as soon as they return they check answering machine messages as a priority and pass messages on immediately or call back as soon as they are able. Please note that our school office closes at 4.00 pm on a Monday – Thursday and 12.30pm on a Friday, and during registration time (9.15-10.45 am). Registration is a top priority each day as we have to ensure that all pupils who left for school in the morning from home have reached school safely and nobody has gone missing on the way. If they do not appear then it is extremely important that parents are contacted as quickly as possible. However, messages can be left during this time and they will be picked up. If urgent, they will be responded to straight away.

We would like to say a huge thank you to our parent council and school community for organising our fabulous duck race last week! The event took place on Friday and I am delighted to advise that the winning class was P1A and Miss Cairns! Money is still to be counted, but we are hoping to have raised over £500! Thank you to everyone for supporting this event!



Our Sports Day this year will take a different format to our 'normal' event. At things stand at the moment, we are not permitted to have any parents attend this. We plan to have this held over the week, with classes participating within their 'bubbles'. If anything changes, we will certainly let you know. The plan is for it to happen week commencing 21 June.

For your information, Pupil Progress Reports will not be issued in a phased approach this year. We are planning to issue these week commencing 21 June.



The next couple of months are going to be busy, but we will do it! Let's hope the sunshine comes out and shines on all of us soon and that restrictions keep reducing and we can all get back to some type of 'normal'.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Mellon

Acting Head Teacher