



**Carrick Knowe Primary School
Newsletter
October 2020**



Achieving Excellence Together

Dear Parents & Carers,

I hope this newsletter finds you all well. We are nearly at the end of our first, most unusual term, and both our staff and children have coped admirably with all the changes to daily life in school. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support in following our procedures in order to keep everyone safe at this time.

At the risk of sounding like Jason Leitch (you will know his voice, even if you don't know who he is!!), we cannot become complacent and so I would really appreciate your continued support for as long as is necessary. We are following guidance issued by the Scottish Government and City of Edinburgh Council and as soon as we are able to relax any restrictions, we most definitely will!



Dates for your diary!

This section of our newsletter continues to be much smaller than usual!

1st October ~ Parent Council Meeting via Microsoft Teams. All welcome.

2nd October ~ Virtual Assembly ~ Kindness

Wk beg 5th October ~ Parent Consultation Week

9th October ~ Virtual Assembly ~ Celebrating Success

16th October ~ School closes for the October Week holiday. **We will close at our normal time and reopen for children on Tuesday 27th October.**

Monday 26th October is an In-Service day for staff.

30th October ~ Virtual Assembly

2nd November ~ Euro-Quiz final (re-scheduled from June 2020)

10th November ~ Parent Council Meeting via Microsoft Teams at 7pm. All welcome.

Week beg 16th October ~ Book Week Scotland

Road Safety

We are continuing to work in partnership with our Parent Council, City of Edinburgh Council colleagues and elected members to improve the safety of children on the roads outside the school building at the beginning and end of the school day. We should have an update for you soon, so watch this space!



Congratulations to CKPS Nursery Class!

A huge congratulations and well done to our Nursery Team on a fantastic Care Inspectorate report. The Care Inspectorate arrived unannounced at Carrick Knowe way back in February 2020 and were focusing on two Care Standards - '**Quality of care and support**' and '**Quality of environment**'. Both standards were graded at **5** - which is a grading of '**Very Good**'. The report highlighted the very good practice in different areas of the nursery and reflects the hard work and dedication of the whole nursery team. The full report can be accessed at <https://www.careinspectorate.com/index.php/inspection-reports>

Well done everyone!



Red/Yellow Slips

In previous years, we have used a system to alert parents of any issues with children's behaviour through the issuing of red and yellow slips. As part of our whole school positive behaviour strategy and policy, we have decided that we will no longer issue these slips. If there are any issues and the class teacher or any other member of staff wishes to speak to you, we will contact you via telephone or email.

School Renewal Plan

Our School Renewal Plan (formerly known as our School Improvement Plan) is almost complete and ready to be submitted to our Quality Improvement Officer (QIO). There are 3 themes in the plan - "Learning, Teaching & Assessment, with a focus on Digital Learning and Outdoor Learning"; "Health, Wellbeing & Resilience" and "Equalities, Equity & Inclusion". These are the common themes across all CEC schools this session. Once submitted, it will be available on our school website.

Our Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) plan has already been submitted. This continues to focus on raising attainment in literacy and numeracy and closing the poverty related attainment gap. Some of this funding has also been used to increase the number of i-Pads we have in school. This will ensure that, in the event of a blended model of learning being implemented (a blend of face to face and remote learning), we will be able to increase the number of children with access to a device.

We have also been working on our 'Blended Learning Strategy' which will also be shared with families and children soon. This will set out what 'blended learning' will actually look like in the event that we need to move to this model and what the responsibilities of staff, pupils and parents/carers would be in this situation.



A Reminder....

We still have some school uniform available if anyone requires it. Please email Laura Doig, our Home School Link Worker if you would like to request something. Her email is laura.doig@carrickknowe.edin.sch.uk



Primary 7 House/Sports Captains

Following the recent elections in school, the results are as follows.....

House Captains

Broom - Tom
Carrick - Ryan & Grace
Traquair - Makensie & Mia
Castle - Alexander & Bruce

Sports Captains

Broom - Struan & Jake
Carrick - Nate & Cody
Traquair - Cameron & Ross
Castle - Lexie & Oskars



Congratulations to all our elected House and Sports Captains and thank you to everyone who took part.

Parent /Carer Survey

A huge thank you to everyone who took the time to respond to the survey we issued a few weeks ago. We had 89 responses and the information gathered does really help us in continually improving as we move forwards.

There was some very positive feedback and lovely comments received regarding the transition back to school, and we really do appreciate hearing these.

The things going well for people included, 

- the one-way system in school
- children returning to 'routine and normality'
- the detailed information booklet issued before we came back in August
- the soft start and staggered drop off and pick up
- communication from the school

We also asked what could have been better. Most of these things are either out with our control or are in place for good reasons. I have responded to the most common responses below which hopefully help everyone understand the thinking behind decisions made.

- "Classes should be able to mix with each other"

As per the guidance issued across Scotland, children must remain in a consistent group (bubble). For most children, this is their class group. This is both to minimise the number of people a child may come into contact with daily and is vital to help us

quickly and accurately identify 'contacts' of any individual who may test positive for Covid-19.

- **"It would be better if the soft start time was earlier."**
As indicated in a previous letter to parents and carers, class teachers have a maximum contact time with the children each week. In the first two weeks, teachers went above and beyond to facilitate the earlier start. This is not something which could be continued indefinitely, hence the change in timing. I do understand this is not ideal for some working parents, but we are not in an ideal situation at the moment.
- **"It would be better if the children could have hot lunches."**
So far, children having school lunches have been provided with a packed lunch. The plan from catering colleagues is that after the October holiday week, a hot option, e.g. soup or a pasta pot will be included as part of the lunch if desired. We will of course keep you informed as soon as we have more information.
- **"The parking at the end of the day is still awful - the road should be closed to cars at the beginning and end of the day."**
We are currently in contact with the Road Safety and Active Travel Liaison Officer to try and bring some changes to help make the entry and exit to school safer. CKPS Parent Council have also supported us by contacting City of Edinburgh Council and others about this issue. We hope to see some changes soon!
- **"In winter, P.E. should be indoors."**
Guidance issued states that currently, P.E. should be taught outside. New guidance is due to be issued on 5th October. We may then be able to update our procedures in line with the advice given at that time.

- **"It would be better if the starting and finishing times for the different stages were closer together."**

The purpose of having staggered starting and finishing times for the children is to avoid having all children and adults attempting to enter or exit the school grounds at the same time and so maintain social distance. By giving a 'window' of time e.g. 3pm-3.15pm, it gives parents/carers of children at different stages the opportunity to collect one child at the very end of a 'time window' and collect the other at the beginning of the next 'time window'.

- **"Children should be outdoors more often during the school day."**

We are gradually increasing the amount of time children are spending learning outside. As a main priority in our School Renewal Plan, we are looking carefully at how we do this in a progressive and consistent way and that it is not an 'add-on' to the rest of the curriculum. In addition, under the current circumstances, we are not able to share or loan items of clothing e.g. jackets/wellies and so are reliant on children coming to school prepared for any wet/cold weather.



**MATH
ROCKS**

Maths Week

This week has been Maths Week at Carrick Knowe and the classes have been involved in lots of different numeracy and maths activities! Please take a look at our website to see a snapshot of what has been going on during the week. This includes our many maths lessons that have taken place outdoors as well as our 'Maths Treasure Hunts'.

Well done to everyone who took part in the **Sumdog competition**... **P7B** were crowned the winners by correctly answering **7278** questions!! Very impressive in just 4 days! **P4B** came a close second by correctly answering **6512** questions! I'm reliably informed by Mr Morley that the next school competition will be at the start of December!

Finally... at this time of year, as part of our Harvest celebrations we would usually be collecting food donations to be delivered to the local food bank. As we are unable to do this at the moment, we would like to invite any parent who wishes to do so, to donate via Parentpay. Any monetary donations received will be passed onto the Food Bank. We will send out a further communication next week when this becomes available on ParentPay. Thank you.



Remember...

...if you have any questions, queries or concerns, please come and speak to us!

As always, please let us know if you, or anyone you know, requires school information in a different language.

Gail MacLean
Headteacher

Website: www.carrickknoweprimary.com



@CarrickKhowe

"Great things are done by a series of small things brought together"

Vincent Van Gogh