



# Hermitage Primary School



Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2020

[enquiries-hermitageprimary@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries-hermitageprimary@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

Dear Parent / Carer

We hope you have enjoyed some form of summer break and we very much look forward to welcoming you and your child(ren) to Hermitage Primary at the start of their school journey with us.

The pandemic has altered things for all schools and our re-opening is a much anticipated event for many – but particularly for those who will begin as a new pupil.

As you know, the Scottish Government released its updated guidelines last week and Argyll and Bute Council subsequently issued a letter stating that all school pupils will return full time by Monday 17<sup>th</sup> and that individual schools may make alternative arrangements for the 11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> for a 'soft start'. At the same time, Head Teachers were asked to submit plans for these arrangements for approval which I did immediately. I have now received approval and can share the details with you, which have already been discussed with the Parent Council and issued to staff.

I have detailed below the arrangements we have made for the start of school for our new cohort of P1s. It is slightly different this year to accommodate a transition visit to settle your child in this new environment and to build up their experiences more steadily over the course of the first week.

Using the House Group structure we sent you detail of in June, we request children in **P1** attend as follows:

**Wednesday 12th August - (with parents to settle and leave)**

**9.30-11.30: Earth            12.45-2.45: Mars**

**Thursday 13th August – (with parents to settle and leave)**

**9.30-11.30: Jupiter        12.45-2.45: Saturn**

**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August – all children**

**9.15-2.45**

For your **first session**, on either Wednesday or Thursday, we ask that children are brought to school and enter via the Main Gate steps with parents and carers where you will be met by school staff and taken into the classrooms.

At these sessions you are welcome to stay for a little while and engage in some table activities with your child enabling them to feel secure and comfortable before taking your leave through the Main Door via the School Hall and Reception.

You are also welcome to take some photos but ***please ensure you only photograph your own child.***

On these days we ask you to come back to the **Main Door** to pick up your children directly from the classrooms at the end of their sessions.

On **Friday** we ask you to support your child in getting to the Main school gate to be met by school staff who will then take them directly to their classrooms.

Please use this opportunity to get them settled as quickly as possible in order to help them with the separation process.

From **Week 2 gates** open for drop-off, between **8.45-9.00am**.

In order to reduce numbers at the Main Gate we have opened up additional gates for children to use as their access and exit points.

All Gates will be clearly marked.

**P1-3 only will use - Main Gate**

P1 children should proceed up the steps and in through the gate to the P1 playground by **9am each morning** where they will be met each morning by staff and Big Buddies and will remain supervised until the 9am bell.

It doesn't normally take long for your child to settle into this routine and we ask for your co-operation in allowing your child the freedom to become independent. It is best that you **DO NOT** linger thus prolonging difficulties for both parent and child. In our experience we find that the child soon settles when their parent / carer is 'out of sight'.

**Exit at home time** for P1 is via the **Main School steps** each day at **2.55pm** and we ask waiting parents to gather and collect from this area where we will continue our practice of bringing class lines out to be safely dismissed.

In order to reduce congestion and crowding for waiting adults, we encourage all using a vehicle, to please try to park away from the school and walk to it to keep the areas safer for all.

While waiting outside the school please observe social distancing outside the gates and depart as quickly as possible.

*\*Please note any pupil using scooters / bicycles in P1 should use the Car Park entrance / ramp and follow the 'top path' to the Main Gate.*

During the day children will be kept to their stage as much as possible to minimise mixing across year groups. Movement within school will be reduced and P1 will use their dedicated playground space at breaktimes.

**Regular, supervised, hand-washing / sanitisation** will take place for all children at identified intervals throughout the day as per public health guidance for schools.

Please continue to remind your child to be responsible for their own hand hygiene, particularly after using the toilet and to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue to be disposed of in bins.

**Children should wear clean uniform each day.** The teacher will notify you of PE and Outdoor Learning days. On these days children should attend school wearing kit appropriate to the activity to eliminate the need for changing.

**Schoolbags** can be brought to school and your child will also be gifted a 'book bag' from our Parent Council to store future reading books and homework projects.

Children in P1 **need not bring stationery items** – these will be provided by the school for their sole, personal use.

No other unnecessary items should be brought from home.

**School lunches** will be available although in the early days these will most likely be cold, ‘packed’ style. You may prefer to provide a packed lunch for your own child.

All breaktimes and lunchtimes will be staggered to enable smaller groups to be supervised within the playground and dining hall and children will be retained within class groups in both spaces to reduce mixing across classes.

We provide regular Newsletters and these will keep you informed and updated with all that’s in place and going on, and our school website and Twitter feed also provide very useful sources of information. We will also continue to use and further develop Seesaw as a shared communication method around your child’s learning.

Regrettably, parents must contact the school by phone or email and should not enter the building unless absolutely necessary and only by prior arrangement.

Although many procedures have changed in schools order to keep everyone safe, some things haven’t changed – the care and attention we have for each of your children, the quality of teaching and support we offer to all and the passion to see them succeed in all they do.

We are sure it won’t take them too long to settle into our school and their new routines and we very much look forward to getting to know you and working together in a new school session, full of promise and opportunity for all.

Kind Regards

Elsbeth Davis  
Head Teacher