



Hermitage Primary School



Wednesday 5th August 2020

enquiries-hermitageprimary@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Dear Parent / Carer

We hope you have enjoyed some form of summer break and like us, are looking forward to the start of school next week.

March was a long time ago and we are all very keen to return to our classes, teachers, friends and all that school brings.

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 17th and that individual schools may make alternative arrangements for the 11th-14th 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.

Some children will be eager to get back, others may feel a little more reticent; our aim is to support every member of our school community in the best way we can. Therefore we are phasing the start for everyone, initially bringing children in in smaller groups for a day to afford a little time to meet their new teacher and to be introduced to some of the procedures and measures we have to adapt to in order to keep everyone safe and healthy, before finally joining together as a class by the end of the first week.

We request children in **P2-P7** attend as follows:

Wednesday 12th August – Earth and Mars

Thursday 13th August – Jupiter and Saturn (and all new pupils enrolling at Hermitage Primary)

Friday 14th August – all children return to school

(Separate details have been sent to P1 families)

Gates will be open at the usual time for drop-off, between **8.45-9.00am**.

However, 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.

Please adhere to the undernoted in order to support this new procedure:

P1-3 – Main Gate

P4, 5 – Grant Street Gate

P6, 7 – 'Parklands' Gate (top gate on Grant Street)

Children should proceed in through their designated gate to the playground where they will remain supervised until the 9am bell.

On their first day, they should line up in their 'old' line space where they will be met by their new teacher and escorted to class.

Exit at home time will also be via these designated gates, 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 children who are able to come and go independently. Perhaps you could use some remaining holiday time to plan and practise the walk between home and school, using safer routes, manned by crossing patrols and/or traffic lights and taking great care at road crossings.

If total independent travel isn't yet possible for your child, we'd encourage you to identify a 'meeting point' further from the school where you can wait for your child to get to upon dismissal. For those who still need to drop off or pick up their children, please observe social distancing outside the gates and depart as quickly as possible. If using a vehicle, please try to park away from the school and walk to it to keep the areas safer for all.

**Please note any pupil using scooters / bicycles in P4-7 should use the 'Parklands' Gate at the top of Grant Street.*

During the day children will be kept to their classes as much as possible to minimise mixing across groups. Movement within school will be reduced and class groups will be kept together at break times, rotating through identified playground zones.

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 although a flexible approach will be taken as we are aware it may be difficult to shop for many items.

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 and basic stationery kits can be brought to school. Children will be asked to leave their pencil cases and equipment in their trays 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.

Our regular Newsletters will begin again as we start and these will keep you informed and updated with all that's in place and going on, and although we will no longer be able to use our printed Personal Planners, we intend to 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 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 back into new routines and look forward together to a new school session, full of promise and opportunity for all.

Kind Regards

Elspeth Davis, Head Teacher