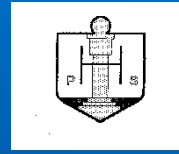


# Houston Primary School

*'Nurturing the Hearts and Minds of the Future'*



**Newsletter September 2021**

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back!

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family well. The return to school has been an exceptionally busy time.

As per Scottish Government advice, very little has changed around our school routines during the first 6 weeks back. Children no longer must keep to class bubbles which does allow a little more freedom of movement. This will be kept under review and changes made as the advice changes.

Our children continue to show great resilience and return each day excited to see their friends and learn together.

We extend a warm welcome to all those joining us for the first time at Houston Primary. We sincerely wish our new families a long and happy partnership with us and trust you are settling into village life.

Homework routines are re-establishing, and your child should have already logged into their new Google Classroom. These online classrooms will replace our previous Pupil Organiser. I would ask that any communication for the class teacher is emailed to the [houstonenquiries@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:houstonenquiries@renfrewshire.gov.uk) rather than in letter or note form, or by direct email as staff do not necessarily check emails throughout the day and something important could be missed. Our 'houstonenquiries' email is manned throughout the day, so any communication can be actioned.

Despite the current restrictions we remain proud of and committed to the positive relationships between ourselves, our families, and the wider community. Please send an email or telephone the office to arrange a mutually convenient time to talk if this is your preferred option.

## **Staffing News**

You received a letter last week communicating our profound sadness at the very sudden and tragic death of Lesley Laird, our EL&CC Senior. As our school community mourns Lesley's passing, her family are very much in our thoughts and prayers. Their loss is immeasurable.

There have been several changes to staffing in the school team at the start of session 21/22. Joining the Houston team this year is Mrs Connick, Miss Sahota, Miss McLean and Mrs Lammey. They all join us for the first time here at Houston Primary. Due to continuing maternity cover on the core staffing, Mr Patterson, Mr Burges and Mrs Steele continue with us and Mrs McGeoch will return to work following her maternity leave at the end of September.

## **Homework**

Home learning tasks will be communicated via Google Classroom as it remains the tool we will use to communicate about Homework and any messages/instructions from the Class Teacher (replacing the Personal Organiser). In a change from last year, children have been issued with homework jotters where their homework tasks will be completed. There is no need to photograph and upload documents. Class Teachers will view the homework completed in the jotters. Each child will use their GLOW login and password to access the Google Classroom tile which sits within GLOW. Alternatively, the Google Classroom App can be downloaded for easier access. Help guides can be accessed on the School Website>Pupil Zone>Online Learning <https://www.houstonprimaryschool> A copy is also attached for your information.

Our risk assessment allows PE to take place indoors as well as outdoors. We continue to encourage children to come to school dressed for PE on 'gym days'. Changing for gym is now permitted but with the popularity of the school badged tracksuits available in sizes to suit children across the whole school, this arrangement has worked well and one we will continue. All jewellery, including fitness watches, must be removed for PE. Anyone unable to remove earrings should bring medical tape to cover them in the earlobes. Long hair must be tied back.

A copy of the gym timetable is attached.

The **Annual Data Sheets** have already been sent home via schoolbags in A4 white envelopes. Please review the details we hold for your child on our Management Information System and make any amendments needed on the sheets and return them to school. Included in the envelope was an annual calendar of events. A number of these are 'to be confirmed' awaiting Scottish Government updates.

**ParentPay** is the cashless system used by Renfrewshire schools. Anyone new to the school has been issued with instructions on how to sign up. This online platform allows any parent/carer registered to receive email communications from the school, give consent for outings and make payments for trips and lunches.

**Text Messaging** is used less frequently as it is for very short messages only, due to the 121 character limit and is only sent to the main contact on your child's electronic file.

Thank you for your continued support with our drop off and collection routines. These are working well. I am delighted with the response to pleas to minimise adults on the paths surrounding the school to support Scottish Government advice to **physically distance** where possible and to **wear face masks** in crowded areas.

Our 'Sibling Meeting' point in the rear playground remains in operation. This allows younger siblings to meet up with older ones before leaving the school playground. The meeting point is by the basketball stands. School staff remain at the gates at the beginning and end of each day.

### **Changes to Contact Tracing**

In line with the wider changes to self-isolation guidance, in the event of a positive test, schools are no longer involved in contact tracing. This is now conducted by the Test and Protect team. You should continue to inform the school of any positive test results or if a pupil has been identified through Test and Protect and asked to isolate and go for a PCR test. Those with a positive test should continue to follow the guidance and isolate for 10 days. Those who receive a negative PCR result can return to school, even if a household member tests positive, as long as they do not display any symptoms.

### **Dates for the Diary**

06.09.21 – 24.10.21 - Morrisons 'Good to Grow' Voucher initiative  
24.09.21 - 27.09.21 (inclusive)- September weekend holiday  
28.09.21 - Maths Week Scotland  
11.10.21- 15.10.21 (inclusive)- October Holiday  
18.10.21 - Inservice day – Pupils off  
15.11.21 – Parent Interviews Planned for this week.  
Format tbc  
30.11.21 - St Andrews day holiday  
23.12.21 – 05.01.22 (inclusive) Christmas Holiday

### **Head Lice**

From time to time, we receive reports of head lice within the school. There is no particular season for head lice therefore please remain vigilant and check your child's head regularly. Information on how to spot and treat head lice can be found at <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/skin-hair-and-nails/head-lice-and-nits>

### **Dogs**

We have many pupils who are wary of dogs and they can be unpredictable around excitable children. If you are bringing a dog within the school area, please be aware of this. Also please ensure that the paths and grassy areas around the school are free from dog mess by picking up after your dog. It is not pleasant for anyone when dog mess is carried into the classroom on someone's shoe. Please remember there are no dogs permitted in the school grounds across Renfrewshire.

We look forward with hope to an exciting year ahead where school life starts to resemble life as we knew it. Thank you to our parents, carers and wider community members who consistently support our school. Particular thanks go to the faithful team who support the Intergenerational Gardening Club. At this time of year we start to enjoy the fruits of their labour. We have already enjoyed fragrant bunches of Sweet Peas, cabbages, soft fruit and most recently the successful potato harvest which won first prize at the Grow Your Own Potatoes, West of Scotland competition.



As always, if you have any questions or queries please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Yours sincerely

Jennifer Murray  
Head Teacher



*RNRA Level 1 Jade - 'We are committed to developing nurturing relationships'*

