



# Hillside School

## Newsletter - April 2020



Dear Parents, Carers and Friends of Hillside,

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family well during these uncertain times. The last few weeks have certainly been testing for us all, and brought challenges that none of us could have prepared for. In spite of this rollercoaster of challenges, there have been many special moments and I have been incredibly proud of the way our team at Hillside School have pulled together to navigate their way through any difficulties, the on-going resilience of our children and the continued support of our families. This has really made a huge difference to us all and we are so grateful to be part of 'Team Hillside'.

This newsletter will contain some highlights from the past term (there were lots of lovely things that happened too!), a staffing update, information about contacting the school via email and information about Home Learning. You will notice that there is no 'Dates for Your Diary Section'. As you will be fully aware, it is impossible to plan ahead for next term with any kind of certainty. Therefore, any dates you need to be aware of will be shared as and when we can confirm them. We are all hoping things return to normal as soon as is safely possible.

This will be the last newsletter I will write for a while, as I begin my maternity leave at the end of this week. I would like to thank our families for their good wishes and kind words over the last wee while, as I go off to start a different kind of adventure! Although it is difficult leaving the school during this time, I know I am passing the baton into safe hands. I have no doubt Mr Leslie will do a super job in leading Hillside School in my absence and will be well supported by the rest of the leadership team. I will be kept well up to date with news of the school and look forward to returning next year.

In the meantime, please keep safe and well!



Kind Regards  
Miss Munro



## Staffing Update



### Cheerio

At the end of this week we will be saying cheerio to Miss Amy Sked. We are sorry to be losing Miss Sked, but delighted she has secured the post of 'Nurture Teacher' at another Aberdeenshire School. Miss Sked will be missed by our pupils and staff, but we wish her well on her new adventure! Miss Read, who has worked with the P6 class for the whole of this session, will take over as their class teacher.

At the end of this week we are also saying cheerio to Mrs Anne Ritchie, our Nursery Early Years Practitioner. Mrs Ritchie has secured a promoted post as 'Lead Early Years Practitioner' at another Aberdeenshire school. We will miss her greatly, but wish her the best of luck at her new school!

### A Warm Welcome

As we say goodbye, we also say 'hello' to two new members of staff this/next term. Firstly, we would like to welcome Mrs Gemma Grieve to 'Team Hillside'. Mrs Grieve joins our leadership team this week as Depute Head Teacher. Next term we also welcome Mrs Stephanie Bain, who will be our Acting Depute Head Teacher. I know both ladies are looking forward to meeting our pupils and families in the coming months.

## Hillside Scottish Poetry Competition

Earlier this term, we held our FIRST EVER Hillside Scottish Poetry competition. A suggestion from parental feedback was that we had more 'wider achievement' opportunities in school. We plan to develop this in various ways, but this included our Scottish Poetry competition.

We were overwhelmed by the effort our P1-7 pupils put into learning their poems and I know the teachers really struggled to select finalists. Thank you for the work put into this at home!

On the day of the final, we had a panel of community judges, a piper, singing from the choir and of course a poetry recital from our finalists. It was a morning to remember and a new 'Hillside Tradition' we look forward to continuing.

## Australian Bushfire—Fundraising Appeal

Thank you to all our families who donated to our Australian Bushfire appeal. All money raised was split between the WWF Australia and The Australian Red Cross.

Unfortunately, due to the high winds that day, we were unable to create our 'Aussie Flag Drone Picture'. It was still great to see the pupils taking action on the day and a huge well done to P6/7 for organising.

## Home Learning in Term 4

We hope the home learning pack Hillside School put together has served you well over the past two weeks, We have enjoyed seeing the progress our pupils have made with Education City tasks and the progress, achievements and wonderful ideas for home learning posted on Twitter. However, during this period of school closure our team has been working incredibly hard to prepare for after the Easter holidays- seeking appropriate and manageable ways of continuing learning and teaching in term 4, suitable for our families and staff members. Please read on for a brief overview of some of the things to expect.

### Nursery

The Nursery team have continued to keep in contact with each other over the past few weeks, using the wonders of technology to share thoughts and ideas. We are very keen to offer suggestions for home learning, continue to celebrate wider achievements and begin to highlight valuable learning to aid Nursery—Primary 1 transition for our pre school pupils.

As a result the Nursery are launching their own Twitter account @HS\_Nursery

After the holidays, expect this page to be populated with our 'Tweet of the Day' which will offer home learning ideas linked to key aspects of play and the curriculum. In the meantime, please feel free to follow us.

### Primary 1—7

As of Monday 20th April, all Primary 1 -7 classes will be using Seesaw to offer continued learning and teaching experiences to our pupils. We do however, need parent/carer permissions before sending out pupil codes to enable our young people to access these experiences. If you are yet to complete the Google document sent to you at the start of the week, please do so as soon as is possible. Alternatively, if you have any questions/concerns about this please contact the school via the school email address. If you have given permission for Seesaw access, expect to receive your code on Monday 20th April.

There will be clear guidelines on the use of Seesaw, an agreed number of uploads across all classes and more information about what to expect regarding communication in the form of a home learning guide/newsletter in the first days of the new term.

## Email Communication During School Closure

If you email the school during our closure (term time), please allow approximately 1-2 working days for a response. You will understand our working environment and capacity has changed significantly and we may not always be able to get back straight away.

Thank you for your continued patience, understanding and support. We look forward to getting back in touch from Monday 20th April.

## Optional Art Activity

Please see a document attached for an opportunity to get involved with a whole school creative challenge (optional). This has been designed by our very own Mrs Whittington and would be a great way to celebrate Hillside when we eventually come back together.