



Hillside School and Nursery

Monday 15th June 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Thank you once again for being so patient as you await further information from us regarding a partial return to school in August.

All parents should have received our Director of Education's latest parental letter (sent on Friday), detailing the fact that class sizes at any one time must be significantly reduced, with schools having to consider social distancing and hygiene protocols and plan for a blend of school and home learning. The letter also states that schools aim to provide more information on operational plans throughout the final two weeks of the term, ahead of the summer holidays. If you did not receive this letter, then please contact the school office so we can reissue this to you. I am also aware that you may start to hear plans other schools are proposing. Please note that plans for Aberdeenshire schools have not yet been approved by the Local Authority.

The Chair of the Hillside Parent Group and I met (virtually) last Monday and an HPG meeting has been arranged for Tuesday. I will address the parent group and hope to respond to as many questions the HPG chair received last week as possible. There will still be questions I cannot answer this week, but I hope those in attendance will find the session useful. Key discussion points of the meeting will likely be shared thereafter by the Parent Group.

Our school staff have been working incredibly hard over the past two weeks, continuing to provide home learning through Seesaw. These activities are planned in accordance with the curriculum and will consolidate pupils learning. Where core activities can be completed, please continue to do so. We will continue to provide learning until Friday 3rd July 2020. In addition, we have been working hard to create classes for next session. This has been a more challenging process this year, given the need for class 'bubbles' but we are on track to share class information with you in time for the last week of term. From today, teachers will begin returning to school for work that cannot be achieved at home, including setting up classroom spaces for next session.

The information below details some of plans we have been working on for the coming weeks, which we hope our pupils will enjoy, including health week and a chance to regroup with their classes through Microsoft TEAMS.

As always, please take care and stay safe.

Kind regards,
Jordan Leslie
Acting Head Teacher

GLOW and Microsoft TEAMS

Whilst we as a school truly value Seesaw as one of the most accessible platforms for home learning, and are delighted at the positive response it has received from parents/carers, we have also continued to explore the possibility of sending all pupils user names and passwords for Education Scotland's GLOW platform. We have now managed to secure these for all pupils and will email these out to parents by Tuesday.

This will not replace Seesaw for main home learning but given that GLOW allows access to a safe version of Microsoft TEAMS (only accessible by pupils and staff where live messaging, teacher video and user audio can be used), we see the benefits of making use of this for transition.

As a result, during week beginning 22nd June there will be a session identified for your child(ren) to log in to TEAMS to see a video from their current teachers and make use of the instant messaging function or see and speak to their teacher live. Stay tuned to Seesaw accounts for information of what you child's class reunion will look like. Mrs Bain (Acting Depute Head Teacher) has worked hard to establish accounts for all pupils and has created a simple guide for accessing TEAMS through GLOW, which she will email along with usernames and passwords. Primary 4-7 pupils will likely be accustomed to using GLOW but Primary 1-3 pupils will need additional instruction.

Mrs Lindsay and Mr Smith trialled using TEAMS with Primary 7 pupils on Wednesday and will continue to offer a weekly class TEAMS meeting as part of **enhanced P7-S1 transition**.

For dates and times for all classes, please refer to the email Mrs Bain will send.

Health Week

Mr MacGregor, Miss Morrison and Mrs Bain have organised a Seesaw 'takeover' to promote Hillside's Health Week, which will run from **Monday 22nd June**. They will set **6** different challenges for pupils to complete and each challenge links to a different area of the Health and Wellbeing curriculum. There are 5 different levels for each challenge ranging from Beginner to Ultimate!

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Monday 15th June 2020

The 6 Health and Wellbeing uploads will replace some of the class teacher uploads for this week only. Class teachers, however, will continue to issue spelling, numeracy and reading this week and will support with health week tracking.

An email with full details will follow on Friday.



Happy Place Mats

As part of our nurturing schools working team, led by Mrs Petrie, we would like every pupil to complete a 'happy place mat' for their return to school after the holidays. This mat will support transition and will be used to remind children of things that make them happy. We feel that it will be a good resource for discussion and comfort and allows children to have a reminder of home with them when in school.

We want all our young people to have this and as staff begin returning to school, we would like to print and prepare these ahead of the summer holidays. However, we will need all our families to complete the activity on Seesaw first. The task was issued last Monday and an accompanying email was sent by Mrs Petrie. **We would love it if all task mats could be completed by Friday 19th June 2020.** Please refer to the task, where detailed instructions and a voiceover guide, can be found for all future Primary 1-7 pupils.

Additional Home Learning Suggestions

Aberdeenshire's Live Life Summer Reading Challenge

Summer Reading Challenge is completely different this year as it isn't just about reading! The challenge is fully accessible online for you to enjoy in the comfort of your home, garden or local area, all you have to do is register. By simply signing up online we will take you on a journey filled with fun, fantasy and action-packed activities for children and families of

all ages and interests. It will not only encourage you to access our digital library and read, listen and share books, it will also provide you with exciting sport, arts, craft, outdoor challenges linked to themes such as fantasy island, big read picnic and so much more.



The Challenge will start on **Monday 22nd June** and will run until **Saturday 22nd August 2020**. Alongside the reading challenge, there will be a creative competition for children to enter as in previous years.

Please see additional attachments for more information.

Here is the link to a short promo video to the Challenge.

<https://youtu.be/aU7DIrPAmKA>

Dekko Comics

*Dekko Comics teach lessons through fun and very wacky comic stories. They cover topics in **maths, English, science, history, geography and PSHE.** The 12 issues of Dekko Comics you see below have been uploaded online as a **FREE** resource to help with home-learning during the COVID-19 isolation. They contain 144 comic stories in total, plus extra material.*

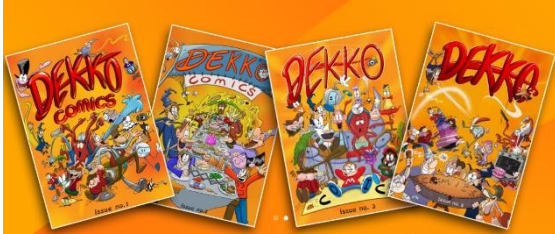
Dekko comics are for everyone but they have been proven to be especially helpful to children with dyslexia and reluctant readers. This offer was discovered and is recommended by our additional support for learning teacher, Miss Horne.

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Monday 15th June 2020

Follow this link to take a look at the free comics available:

<https://dekkocomics.com/issue-list-home>



Cooking Our Way Out of the Lockdown Blues

Fancy some more baking and cooking? See below for the latest 'Cooking Our Way out of the Lockdown Blues' issues.

<https://aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/school-info/meals/school-meals-lunchtime-recipe-ideas/>



Aberdeenshire Educational Psychology Website

A reminder of this very useful website in support of young people through this challenging time:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/as/aberdeenshireeps/>

The EPS also run a dedicated phone line for parents/carers who would like to talk through any education or wellbeing concerns about a child or young person. This is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9am to 3pm by calling 01779 403721. If parents would prefer a call back they can email eps@aberdeenshire.gov.uk with their name and number.

Education Scotland - Parental Newsletter

Education Scotland are releasing regular parental newsletters at the moment which include ideas, hints and tips for parents and carers. These include home learning suggestions including activities children can do independently and tasks families can do together. You can find all issues published so far by following the link below.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/scotland-learns/a-weekly-newsletter-for-parents-and-carers/>