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Thursday 1st September 2022

Dear Families

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome everyone back to Laurencekirk School. I hope you all had a lovely summer break, although it does feel very distant now! It has been wonderful to have our school bustling again and especially lovely (as always) to welcome our new Primary One pupils who will be settling in beautifully. We have also welcomed a large number of new faces into school, both pupils and staff. It is super to have everyone on board.

A special mention to our new Primary 6 and Primary 7 cohorts who have quickly settled into their new roles and responsibilities. Primary 6 children have a special 'Cheery Chum' role where they support our younger pupils in the playground and our Primary 7 pupils have 'Zone Leaders' roles where they help with water/milk service, food scraping and corridor monitoring. These roles are hugely valued in school and a great start has been made.

Outdoor Learning

This week we have had an outdoor learning specialist (Kate Hookham from DoLearn) in working directly with our classes. This service has been purchased through an Education Scotland STEM grant and all lessons have focused on science, technology or engineering. This has been a super experience for our children but also for our staff who have enjoyed watching and learning from Kate who has really inspired. Please do ask your children what they were learning/doing in their session.

Our school is committed to delivering high quality outdoor learning and this work will help us all continue to do so.

Mindfulness

This term we are working with Gillian Watt of 123AndBreathe. This is a company which teaches mindfulness techniques to our children. Each class in the school will

work with Gillian weekly and will learn practical strategies to support their own wellbeing. There will be a session for parents who wish to learn more about this work and dates will follow once I have these. Our hope is that our children will be empowered to recognise, understand and respond to the range of emotions which they experience and be able to use these strategies in all areas of their life, now and in the future. This forms part of our Health and Wellbeing curriculum.

Poppy Field



Looking ahead to Armistice Day... This year we would like to bring back our 'poppy field tribute.' We would like to create a space for our children and the community to reflect. We have done this in the past and it has been very poignant. The poppy field also created a context for learning about conflict as well as the importance of tolerance and respect. We have some poppies which we have created from the bottoms of 2 litre juice bottles ready to use but need to create many more. We need your help! You can see from the picture here that when painted red, these look very 'poppy like.' We would be very grateful for any 2 litre juice bottle bottoms that you may have that could be handed in to school. They are quite difficult to cut – this is not something that children could do. Cut bottle bottoms would be great but we are very lucky that Mr Petrie (one of our janitors) will cut any whole bottles for us. So whole bottles would also be gratefully received. Children who are bringing in bottle bottoms/bottles can pop these in the box outside the School Office – all painting etc will be done with the children in school. Many thanks in advance for your support with this.

Safety in School

Road Safety

It has been brought to our attention through various members of the community, that some groups of children in Laurencekirk have been engaging in very dangerous activity on some of the local roads. Children have been spotted playing 'chicken' with the cars. Essentially this involves running out in front of moving traffic. This is highly dangerous and could result in serious injury or a fatal accident. I spoke with all Primary 5-7 children about this on Monday morning, and the dangers were made explicitly clear. I would recommend that parents take the opportunity to speak with their children about road safety. There are some harrowing news stories online regarding children 'playing chicken' with the cars and we were grateful to be able to intervene before any harm has been caused to any of our pupils or our local road users.

Walking to/from school is always preferable but we do know that for many of our families, walking is not always practical. If you are bringing your car to school, please adhere to our reverse parking policy and leave the bus pick up/drop off free. Also, there is a one way system in operation at the school. If you are parked by the school field, you must still adhere to this and drive all the way around. It is

unsafe to simply turn right for a quick exit. These measures are in place to keep all of our children safe.

Nails

A further reminder that children must not wear false nails to school. These are not appropriate for school and can cause injury and prohibit access to the curriculum.

Mobile Phones

We don't encourage our children to bring mobile phones in to school. Mobile phones should not be switched on in school grounds and should not be used at all during the school day.

Absences

Thank you to everyone who is calling the School Office to report absences promptly. This is very much appreciated by Mrs Clark and Mrs Simpson. This means that we know our children are safe and saves staff a great deal of time. Our answer phone is on 24 hours and messages are always picked up, so feel free to call in absences at any point.

Welcome Back! 😊

I would like to share a few 'save the dates' with you all:

Tuesday 4th October: 1345-1445 is our Open Afternoon. Parents are invited to come along to school and visit their child's classroom. This will be a great opportunity to see our wonderful school in action. More information to follow.

Wednesday 9th November and Thursday 10th November: Parents consultations. This will be a 10 minute appointment with your child's teacher to discuss learning, progress and next steps. More information to follow.

Friday 27th January 2023: Scottish themed Open Morning. (Times to be decided) Each year we undertake a whole school Scottish topic and we would like to invite you in to showcase our work. More information to follow.

Wednesday 10th May and Thursday 11th May 2023: Parents consultations. This will be a 10 minute appointment with your child's teacher to discuss learning, progress and next steps. More information to follow.

This year each class will be putting on an assembly. This means that the class will be sharing their learning with the wider school audience and we would like to invite families (2 invites per child) along to join in with this. Dates and times (always morning and always a Friday 😊) will follow shortly once we are all signed up!

We are really looking forward to sharing our school with you all once again.

Kindest Regards

Jill Smith
Head Teacher