



GULLANE PRIMARY SCHOOL  
OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2020

Dear Parents,

As the country starts to adapt to the latest round of restrictions imposed as a result of COVID-19, we are becoming a little more used to our new way of working. It is not always easy and can take a bit longer than we would like, e.g. organising a 'meeting', but we are all aware of the importance of following the guidance to ensure the safety of pupils and staff, and their families. We would request your assistance in this by always ensuring that, where required, only one parent drops-off/picks-up children and that you follow social distancing guidance at all times.

Elections have taken place for our House Captains and Pupil Councillors. This will be a challenging year for both groups as they try to work around restrictions but I am sure that they will rise to it.

*Donald M. McCallum*



**OCTOBER HOLIDAY**

The school will close at the usual time on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> October and re-open for pupils, as normal, on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup>.



**PARENT PARTNERSHIP**



The next meeting of the partnership will take place, via Google Meet, at 7.00 pm on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November.

All parents/carers are welcome to join in.

**LEARNING CONVERSATIONS**



As mentioned in our September newsletter, as a result of COVID-19, we are unable to hold face-to-face Learning Conversations. Due to the technical and security issues associated with Google Meets, we will be following East Lothian guidance and providing a short written progress summary. This will come home on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October. This summary will give an update of your child's progress in Literacy, Numeracy and Health and wellbeing. Should you have a specific concern you wish to raise you should indicate this in the box provided and your child's class teacher will get back to you.

As always, there should be no major surprises in your child's report. If your child's teacher had a concern they will have raised this with you. Equally, if you have any information that might be relevant to your child's learning and progress you should let us know as soon as possible and not wait for a Learning Conversation to do so.



**CONSTRUCTION WORK**



Work has finished on the new drainage system and the next step will be to put in the foundations for the sports hall and new nursery. The steel frame for the new buildings will be erected shortly after that.

Internally, ceiling tiles in the hall, upper corridor and P5/6 classroom have been removed to allow for further work in the October holidays on connecting an electricity supply to the new sports hall.

The following link will take you to a recent press release from East Lothian Council:

<https://www.hubsoutheastscotland.co.uk/news/work-underway-on-gullane-primary-school-expansion/>



## FENCE



Work will start in the October break to replace the perimeter fence on the west (Millenium Woods) and south (field) sides of the school with 1800mm black mesh fencing.

The work will include replacing the single gate in the west fence with a double gate. This should make social distancing easier at this point, as well as allowing access for the grass cutter.



## BUILDING RESILIENCE



RESPECT YOURSELF

We will shortly be launching Unit 3 of the above programme. The main focus of this unit is on the importance of recognising and valuing ourselves as individuals. People who respect themselves, like themselves. They have a core set of moral values that are not based on what they can or can't do, or in comparing themselves to others. Nobody's perfect - but learning to accept ourselves warts-and-all, identifying our strengths and looking after ourselves and our bodies increases our enjoyment of life and wellbeing. Research is clear that looking after our body is also of paramount importance for our health. Good sleep, nutrition and exercise have all been correlated with better mental and physical health outcomes.



## ALLERGIES



Again, we would remind you that we have pupils in school who are allergic to nuts. We would ask your support in looking after their health by not providing your child/ren with snacks or packed lunches that may contain nuts. Please note - this also applies to food packaging sent in for junk modelling eg no Crunchy Nut Cornflake boxes.



## DRESS FOR THE WEATHER



Now that autumn is upon us, and the weather becomes colder and damper, it is essential that all children are sent to school with a warm, and waterproof, jacket or coat.

As we know only too well, the weather in Scotland is very unpredictable and what might start off as a nice day may well not end up that way!

We would also request that children do not arrive at school earlier than 08:40.



## DOGS



PLEASE NOTE: In the interest of health and safety, we would like to remind you that dogs **are not permitted** on any part of the school grounds.



## AROUND THE CLASSES



Nursery thematic learning is moving onto autumn and harvest. The children were all

very excited to spot a combine harvester in the field while out on a walk and we are hoping to see more. We have been using the big book to plan with the children

and have been discussing what they know already and what they would like to learn. We will be looking at which foods can be harvested and will taste a variety of these for snack - sharing our likes and dislikes. We will be exploring grains through sensory play and using our creativity in the art area. On Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> of October we will be having a small Halloween celebration. Children are welcome to dress up in their costumes but, please, no masks as the children can become frightened.

We would like to remind parents that a lot of our nursery day is spent outdoors therefore the children should have clothing suitable for all weathers.

The Nursery Team



P1 are very happy to have started reading at home, we have been enjoying stories about Kipper and his family. The children are starting to recognise the names of the people in the family. It has been a busy time learning three sounds a week since the start of term and I would like to thank you for supporting your child with this at home. They have been working hard on word building, sounding out each letter and reading the word.

In number, the children are writing, ordering and reading numbers. They do number activities in different ways. They learn through play, practical activities and they also use jotters to record work.

After October, as the days get shorter, the class will be learning about Time. Clock times, daily timetables, days of the week, seasons and months of the year. This ties in with our learning about the Sun, Moon and Stars.

The children are enjoying art activities and have taken care to produce lovely line drawings; they also had a great time creating junk model buildings based upon those around Gullane. They have been enjoying PE activities and have been working on keeping their space bubbles, as well as putting together simple dance sequences.

The class are now in a good daily routine, they have had a lot to remember since the beginning of term

and I am enjoying working with everyone. Well done, P1!

Mrs Grainger



P1/2 have been focusing on HWB. We have been thinking about our emotions and how to be kind and respect each other. We are now learning about dinosaurs. We have looked at their diets and made our own ice eggs, which we enjoyed hatching. Primary 1 are doing really well to learn their sounds and are excited to be getting their first reading book home. Primary 2 have been identifying proper and common nouns and using the alphabet to put words in order.

In numeracy, P1 have been focusing on numbers to 30 and P2 on numbers to 120. We have been doing lots of counting, sequencing, addition, subtraction and solving number problems.

The boys and girls are becoming very supportive of one another and forming lovely friendships, both in class and outside in the playground. We have both enjoyed getting to know the children and watch them adapt to the life of school after lockdown. They have responded really well to the structure of the school day and following school rules. We are very proud of them.

Mrs Cooper and Mrs Hope



P2/3 have settled well into a lovely routine. They are a calm and hard working class and it is lovely to see them make new friends both in class and out in the playground. Through IDL, the children have been focussing on and learning about being unique, being a good friend, being kind and respectful to all. We have been doing this through Circle Time, writing, arts and crafts and stories.

In Writing, the children are focussing on personal accounts. They are being encouraged to write as independently as possible; remembering punctuation and reading their writing back to check if it makes sense. Children have now been put into spelling groups

and I will be monitoring their progress regularly. The children are also enjoying reading daily and doing grammar lessons and comprehension tasks to support and enhance understanding.

In number so far, we have been recognising and ordering numbers, saying number sequences forwards and backwards and using a number square to support this, when necessary. We have also just started to look at number bonds to 10 and beyond and have been familiarising ourselves with using ten frames again. Children are working within a number range that pushes them to the best of their abilities - we play games, do active tasks and regularly use IT to support this. In the next couple of weeks we will be learning about telling the time.

In Health and Wellbeing, we have several strategies embedded into the class routine to support children with sharing how they are feeling. Each child has a painted stone that they 'check in' with every morning. I will follow up with children who are maybe feeling worried, upset or sad. Children 'check in' after break and lunch too. After lunch we always have a period of mindfulness, to help us to calm ourselves ready for the afternoon. We do mindful drawing, moving, reading and listening. The children are an absolute pleasure to teach in PE. Our current focus is on moving in different ways. The children are always attentive and enjoy learning new skills, techniques and games.

P2/3 are showing good resilience and understanding of the new school rules and routines. I am proud to be their teacher.

Ms Gordon



P3 have settled in well to life in school following the holidays and lockdown and have been working very hard.

In Numeracy, I have been assessing the children's understanding of work normally covered as part of East Lothian's P2 Frameworks. This has enabled me to address any needs and then start to work on this year's curriculum. Until the October week, we will have been looking at: number sequences and counting in 2s, simple multiplication (Building arrays of 2s), division (sharing) and

fractions. Some children have been challenged with other patterns e.g. counting in 3s, 5s and 10s.

In Literacy, the Amazing Ants and Busy Bees are now working on tasks to practise Common Words, both at home and school. The Clever Crickets are working through a booklet and other tasks on simpler spelling patterns. In Writing, the children have been creating their own imaginary pet, writing about a favourite toy and what might happen if it came alive and writing about their feelings. In handwriting, the focus is on size and the correct letter formation, before moving on to joining. Reading groups have been running smoothly and all the children have been assessed to ensure they are in the correct group/level. As always, it would be helpful if parents sign when reading is heard and encourage their child to put the book, record and blue bag straight into their school bag for the next day.

In Health and wellbeing, as well as continuing to explore feelings, we have been revising the Building Resilience work from last year on calm/difficult waters and support from our back up teams. We will soon be moving on to the next section 'Respecting Yourself.' After the October week, the children will have PE with Miss Gordon every second Tuesday and either one or 2 sessions a week with me while we look at fitness and dance.

In Science, we are briefly looking at the changes to water when it evaporates, condenses, freezes or melts. We are briefly looking at Rights, Responsibilities and Discrimination. We will work together to plan a history based IDL, after the break. We will continue to have Mrs Askew, music specialist, every second Friday until the holiday week. After this we will have art every second Friday with Mr Connell. After the October week, the children will have Mrs MacIver for an hour one day per week for Maths.

Up until the September weekend, we were practising a number of 'Google Classroom skills' for homework, which most of the children completed successfully each week. These were to make sure the children were equipped for future homework or, should the need arise again, to learn at home for a period of time. Weekly notes/homework will continue to be posted in Google Classroom on a Monday to be checked with your child. For the last 3 weeks until the October week, Homework will be differentiated spelling tasks to support the work done in class. A

Home Learning jotter is being issued for written tasks (to be kept at home) and weekly assignments posted in Google Classroom.

As some of the children have been running out of pencils, rubbers etc. I would ask parents check to see if pencil case stock needs replenished. I would rather that novelty items e.g. oversized pencil were not brought to school.

Thanks to the parents who are remembering to wait in the allocated area at the end of the day. It makes handing over the children easier and I can also get to see what you look like!

Well done to Lawson and Amelie for being voted as Class Reps! And to all the others who put themselves forward and prepared speeches. You ALL did very well.

Thanks as always for your support.

Mr McEwan



**P4** children are becoming more familiar with their school routine and expectations.

This term, as well as tuning in to our health and well being, we have been looking at how land is used in Scotland, in particular, East Lothian where satellite imagery clearly shows an extensive use of land for farming. This led to our current interdisciplinary topic about Farming. The children should be able to tell you the three main types of farming in Scotland. They have been developing their research skills to find out how climate and land dictates what can be farmed and where. Also about how technology has developed over the centuries to looking at how the modern day farmer uses equipment to support their yields.

Well done for those who have continued to develop their I.T. skills by accessing the P4 Google Classroom. The weekly spelling focus words are posted on the P4 Google Classroom along with spelling activity suggestions. There is a bank of useful information for both parents and pupils to access in this online classroom to support their learning. I have been posting weekly information about the children's learning under 'Main Learning

for the Week', with the aim of providing informative home/school links.

Practising time with your child will support the current maths focus; looking at 5 minute intervals as well as digital to analogue time e.g. 11:45 = quarter to 12. We are looking at place value in numeracy and more information, with supportive video links, is accessible via our Google Classroom. There is also information about our literacy focus.

Look after each other and stay safe

Mrs Cowie



**P4/5** have been learning about building and maintaining friendships, stereotypes, and gender equality, and we've managed to do most of these sessions outdoors in the

sunshine. We have also been learning about individuality, looking at the different skills and abilities that we all have, and how these can influence the things that we enjoy doing individually and with friends.

In PE, we have been playing different invasion games outdoors, making the most of the fine weather we have been having. The class were also given a game design task, and we looked at the various elements that make games successful and enjoyable before the pupils worked in small groups to put together a new game for the class. The games have been so well planned and presented to the class, and we have all had great fun playing them so far.

In numeracy, we have been further developing knowledge and understanding of place value, and are continuing to develop and apply strategies in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, and ways of recording solutions to challenges. We have been working well, practising multiplication and division facts, and the results are already showing in our daily numeracy challenges. In maths, we have been working on symmetry, and will soon be covering angles and coordinates.

In Literacy, along with weekly work in spelling, grammar, comprehension and reading, the class have been further developing many skills through interdisciplinary learning (IDL) activities, such as reading for information, taking notes, and creating new texts. Talking and listening skills are also

developed in IDL tasks. The class have enjoyed their first extended piece of writing, which started with a photo stimulus of mysterious potting shed, and they have all worked incredibly well to create their own stories. Our next piece of writing, which we have just started, will develop the skill of showing rather than telling the reader the emotions of the main character. We used a music video as our starting point for this task.

The pupils have been working in small groups to research the ecosystem of a chosen overseas country, comparing and contrasting this with one in the UK. The use of ICT is embedded within this task, and the pupils have been learning about some of the features of Google apps, to help them work together as a group. Each group has also been finding out about the lifestyle and culture of the chosen country, and will soon be presenting their findings to the class.

We are learning about The Jacobite Uprisings as one of our interdisciplinary learning experiences of the term, a context that was suggested by the pupils. This is such a rich and interesting project, and we will be researching key figures and events, and finding out about the impact this period of Scotland's history had on the country. We have been further developing IT and literacy skills as we work collaboratively, again using the Google suite of apps. We looked at the famous painting, 'An Incident in the Rebellion of 1745' by David Morier, and we have decided to have a go at making a large mural of the painting, with each pupil completing one part to create a shared picture.

In Technologies, the class have been learning some coding skills, using a variety of resources, including an online programme of lessons, and also BBC micro:bits. So far, the class have coded the micro:bits to make working pedometers, digital thermometers, and a teleporting duck that moves to the micro:bit of a classmate!

The class were given a home learning task to choose and prepare a short science experiment or demonstration to present to the class. The focus in class will be on the presentations skills, as well as learning in sciences, and each pupil will get feedback from the rest of the class. In the past, this task has generated a lot of discussion about so many areas of sciences, and how these relate to the real world and scientific developments. I'm very much

looking forward to seeing what each pupil comes up with to share with the class.

In art, Mr Connell gave the pupils the choice of a stag or a golden eagle for their first project of the session, building on the skills of sketching, drawing, adding tone and colour. These are already looking fantastic, and will make a lovely display in class.

Mr Adamson



**P5/6** have been very busy learning all about Democracy and how it works. We managed to speak to education officers from the Parliament at Westminster during our live online lesson and we are now very involved in our own political campaigns. Alongside the P6 class, we have created 'parties' and are now working on a manifesto to use in our campaign leaflets, posters and speeches, which we can share with other classes digitally. Our election will take place before the October break and we are very excited to set up our polling station and cast our votes! After the October break we will begin a Science focus within our IDL of 'H2O'. We will be investigating the 'Water Cycle', changing states of water, buoyancy, water purification, water conservation, how sound travels through water.....and lots more!

Our writing focus has moved to using persuasive techniques (to help us with our political campaigning) and we will also go on to 'reporting' when recording results and reporting our findings in Science.

In maths/numeracy, we have been doing LOTS of work on subtraction and addition strategies and are moving on to revising/developing multiplication and division strategies. Mrs MacIver is working on number patterns with the children and after the October break we will be building on knowledge and understanding of angles and position and movement by using angles and compass points.

We are doing our best to be outdoors as much as we can whilst the weather is still being kind. We are lucky to be able to do P.E on the astro-turf and have been learning 'foot-golf' and improving skills in football, rounders and a variety of team games.

We are also beginning the next part of our school resilience programme and continue to do frequent

Health and Wellbeing activities and discussions to help the children cope with this new way of working/living.

I will post the odd update or photos on our Google Classroom stream which, hopefully, the children will share with you!

Mrs Gordon

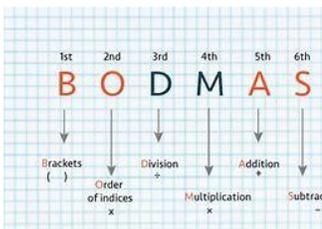


**P6** pupils have been settling into the new term well and getting to grips with the new routines. We have been getting used to washing our hands when

first arriving at school, before and after break time, before and after lunchtime, and again at the end of the school day. I have been encouraging pupils to keep their water bottles under their desks and keeping pencil cases and other stationery in their desk drawers to reduce the clutter on their desks. I have also asked that pupils refrain from bringing toys and unnecessary fidget devices in from home in an effort to reduce the risk of virus transmission and to reduce in-class distractions.

Well done to all of the pupils who have been engaging with the spelling and Mathletics homework set every week, and who have been trying out the games and other activities related to our IDL topic of Democracy. I have been very impressed with the pupil's enthusiasm in setting up their own political parties, creating logos, writing their policies and manifestos and creating promotional leaflets. We had a spirited debate in class and look forward to filming party political broadcasts in preparation for our mock election. The manifestos for each political party will be published on Google Classroom in the near future.

Mrs Hill



**P7** have all shown enthusiasm, resilience and an eagerness to be back in school and I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know them. In these strange

circumstances, it would be easy to feel overwhelmed and anxious, but the P7s have taken to the new rules in place well and have quickly got a grip of the new routine. We have been joined by four new pupils since the start of term who the class have welcomed in warmly.

Our focus since the start of session has been around the core subjects - numeracy, literacy and health and wellbeing. In numeracy, we have revised and extended our knowledge of place value, using the four operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) both mentally and in formal algorithms, rounding and the order of operations, known as BODMAS. It was important to me that the first part of term was spent informally assessing to see which areas of number need to be developed further and to gauge how confident the class are in their numeracy after a lockdown. We shall continue to have focused numeracy sessions weekly alongside looking at time, shape and angles for this term.

Our first IDL (interdisciplinary learning) of the term was tied to the novel 'Wonder' by R.J Palacio. The class thoroughly enjoyed this story, and it linked wonderfully to the themes of kindness, friendships and resilience. We have used these themes to help shape a positive ethos in our classroom which we discuss frequently.

The children have discussed other areas of knowledge they would like to explore, and we ended up with quite a varied list! World War Two came out a popular choice and given the time of year, we felt it would be a suitable option for our next IDL. If you have any photographs or stories etc. related to WW2 that would you like to share please let me know, by email, to the school office.

I have started to add reminders/home learning tasks to Google Classroom, please check if you are unsure of anything. P.E days are Tuesdays and Wednesdays of week one, and Thursday of week two.

Despite COVID 19 making it difficult to hold our usual P7 events, the class are not going to be put off and have been talking about solutions and ways of doing things so that they can still have an enjoyable P7 year. Thank you for your support. Please do contact me if there is anything concerning you.

Miss Collins



## DATES FOR THE DIARY



### **OCTOBER**

- Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup>: Photographs for PTA calendar.
- Friday 9<sup>th</sup>: Flu immunisation.
- Monday 12<sup>th</sup>: Progress summaries come home.
- Monday 19<sup>th</sup> to Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> - HOLIDAY
- Monday 26<sup>th</sup>: In-service day. School closed to pupils.
- Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup>: School re-opens for pupils at the usual time.

### **NOVEMBER**

- Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup>: 19:00 Parent Partnership Google Meet. (Link to join will be posted on the school website.)

### **DECEMBER**

We would hope to hold some form of Christmas party for the children at the times shown below; however, this may be subject to change.

- Monday 21<sup>st</sup>: AM - P7 party  
PM - P6 and P5/6 party
- Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup>: AM - P4 and P4/5 party  
PM - P2/3 and P3 party  
Nursery party
- Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup>: AM - Nursery party  
P1 and P1/2 party

**School closes at the usual time**