



Loretto RC Primary



August 2017

Dear Parents,

A warm welcome back to everyone and a special word of welcome to our new Primary 1 pupils, and to all new pupils and staff in school. We have families from all around the world here in Loretto and really celebrate being part of God's one big family.

New staff

A lovely Loretto family welcome goes to Miss MacPherson in P2 and Mrs McCue in nursery. Ms Pietrzak returns as Additional Support Needs Auxiliary and will work additional hours this year in school.

Thank you all for the super support with school uniform. The children are all back looking so smart - ready to work and learn. Our changeable weather means children must have coats with hoods or hats with them, as we go out for breaks in all weathers. We have to live with rain in Scotland!

In classes the children chose a new short topic as a context for their new learning and we are very excited to learn about Under the Sea, The Jungle, Pets and Fidgets, Ice Age, Vikings, Wonders of the World, Computing and Architecture. The teachers will share a little of this with you on our Welcome and Curriculum Evening on Monday 12th September at 7pm.

Parents' Coffee morning - Friday 25th August 10.45am-12 noon. Come along to the dining hall for an informal cuppa, and meet other parents and the Loretto Parent Partnership.

Class Newsletters and Parent Communications

Each teacher will send you a short class newsletter each term for your child's class with information for that class. Of course, we also have our school blog and Twitter, and would love for parents to add their encouraging and supportive comments here too. It really does make a difference to the family feeling and enthusiasm for learning.

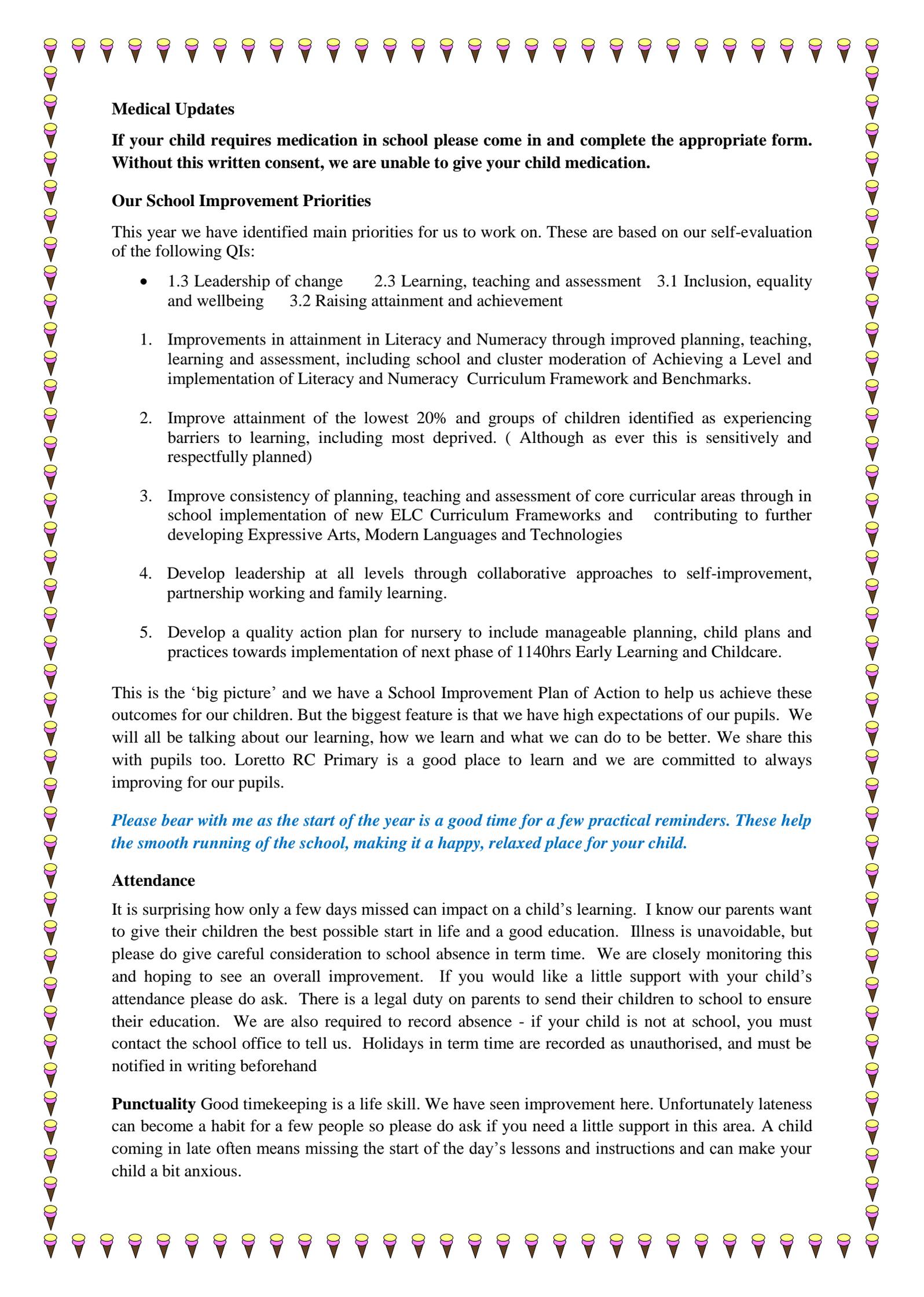
Check us out at <http://www.edubuzz.org/lorettoprimary/>. Here you can also find a copy of the School Handbook with lots of important information.

Texts and E Mails

We currently make very good use of email to communicate with parents. Our Groupcall Messenger system allows us to continue to use email with no costs to the school. If you haven't already provided us with your email address, please do so. It saves the school a lot of money and admin time when compared to sending out information on paper – not to mention being more environmentally friendly! We can also use Groupcall to text parents, but we prefer to email if possible as there is a cost implication for every text we send. Unless we hear from you, we will issue emails/texts to ONE parent only. Of course, where a second parent has requested school information, we will continue to send this separately.

Parental Contacts and Updates

You will shortly receive a request for any changes to your contact details etc. Please ensure that you keep us up to date with phone number and email changes. We do spend a considerable amount of time trying to contact parents.



Medical Updates

If your child requires medication in school please come in and complete the appropriate form. Without this written consent, we are unable to give your child medication.

Our School Improvement Priorities

This year we have identified main priorities for us to work on. These are based on our self-evaluation of the following QIs:

- 1.3 Leadership of change 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment 3.1 Inclusion, equality and wellbeing 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement
1. Improvements in attainment in Literacy and Numeracy through improved planning, teaching, learning and assessment, including school and cluster moderation of Achieving a Level and implementation of Literacy and Numeracy Curriculum Framework and Benchmarks.
 2. Improve attainment of the lowest 20% and groups of children identified as experiencing barriers to learning, including most deprived. (Although as ever this is sensitively and respectfully planned)
 3. Improve consistency of planning, teaching and assessment of core curricular areas through in school implementation of new ELC Curriculum Frameworks and contributing to further developing Expressive Arts, Modern Languages and Technologies
 4. Develop leadership at all levels through collaborative approaches to self-improvement, partnership working and family learning.
 5. Develop a quality action plan for nursery to include manageable planning, child plans and practices towards implementation of next phase of 1140hrs Early Learning and Childcare.

This is the 'big picture' and we have a School Improvement Plan of Action to help us achieve these outcomes for our children. But the biggest feature is that we have high expectations of our pupils. We will all be talking about our learning, how we learn and what we can do to be better. We share this with pupils too. Loretto RC Primary is a good place to learn and we are committed to always improving for our pupils.

Please bear with me as the start of the year is a good time for a few practical reminders. These help the smooth running of the school, making it a happy, relaxed place for your child.

Attendance

It is surprising how only a few days missed can impact on a child's learning. I know our parents want to give their children the best possible start in life and a good education. Illness is unavoidable, but please do give careful consideration to school absence in term time. We are closely monitoring this and hoping to see an overall improvement. If you would like a little support with your child's attendance please do ask. There is a legal duty on parents to send their children to school to ensure their education. We are also required to record absence - if your child is not at school, you must contact the school office to tell us. Holidays in term time are recorded as unauthorised, and must be notified in writing beforehand

Punctuality Good timekeeping is a life skill. We have seen improvement here. Unfortunately lateness can become a habit for a few people so please do ask if you need a little support in this area. A child coming in late often means missing the start of the day's lessons and instructions and can make your child a bit anxious.

Money to school

If possible please pay money to school by using our online service. You can pay for most things online at www.eastlothian.gov.uk/payforit. Try it - it's so easy!

If it is not possible for you to pay online, you can pay by cheque made payable to East Lothian Council. Any cash should be exact money, in a sealed envelope with your child's name, class and reason for payment clearly marked on the front. Your child should give envelopes to their class teacher at the start of the day. We collect this money each morning. Also please ensure that the correct amount of cash is enclosed as we do not hold change. Unfortunately we cannot accept cash at the end of the day as Mrs Donohoe finishes work at 3pm.

School Lunches

P1-P3 children are all entitled to free school lunches. For P4-P7 school lunch money must be paid daily or in advance. Unfortunately this cannot yet be paid online. No child would ever be left hungry but chasing unpaid lunch money is taking a considerable part of our admin time. We may now telephone/text parents and ask them to bring lunch money along if it is forgotten. Please ask at the office if you would like a Free School Meals form - you may be entitled to this, depending on your circumstances. You can check this on East Lothian Council website or ask at the office.



Water Bottles . We know the benefits to our overall health of being properly hydrated and we welcome water bottles in school. Please provide a clean fresh bottle of water (no juice or flavoured waters) each day for your child. Unfortunately, we do not have time or facilities to wash these and keep them in school but do allow a child to fill up his/her bottle if needed.

Car Parking and Traffic Safety

Walking to school is a safe and healthy option for you and for our town. Please do not risk the safety of your child or another child by stopping outside the school. **This is not a drop off zone**. Please be considerate and safe whilst driving and parking around the school.

We continue to have worries and complaints about parking around the school. The school crossing patrol has been instructed to report all incidences of dangerous and inconsiderate parking and driving. Staff members and visitors leaving school for meetings and at the end of the day are regularly blocked in by parents double parking, or parking on double yellow lines. Stopping at the school gates on the zig zags or at the emergency gate entrance is strictly prohibited. PLEASE HELP US KEEP OUR CHILDREN SAFE.

Playground Safety

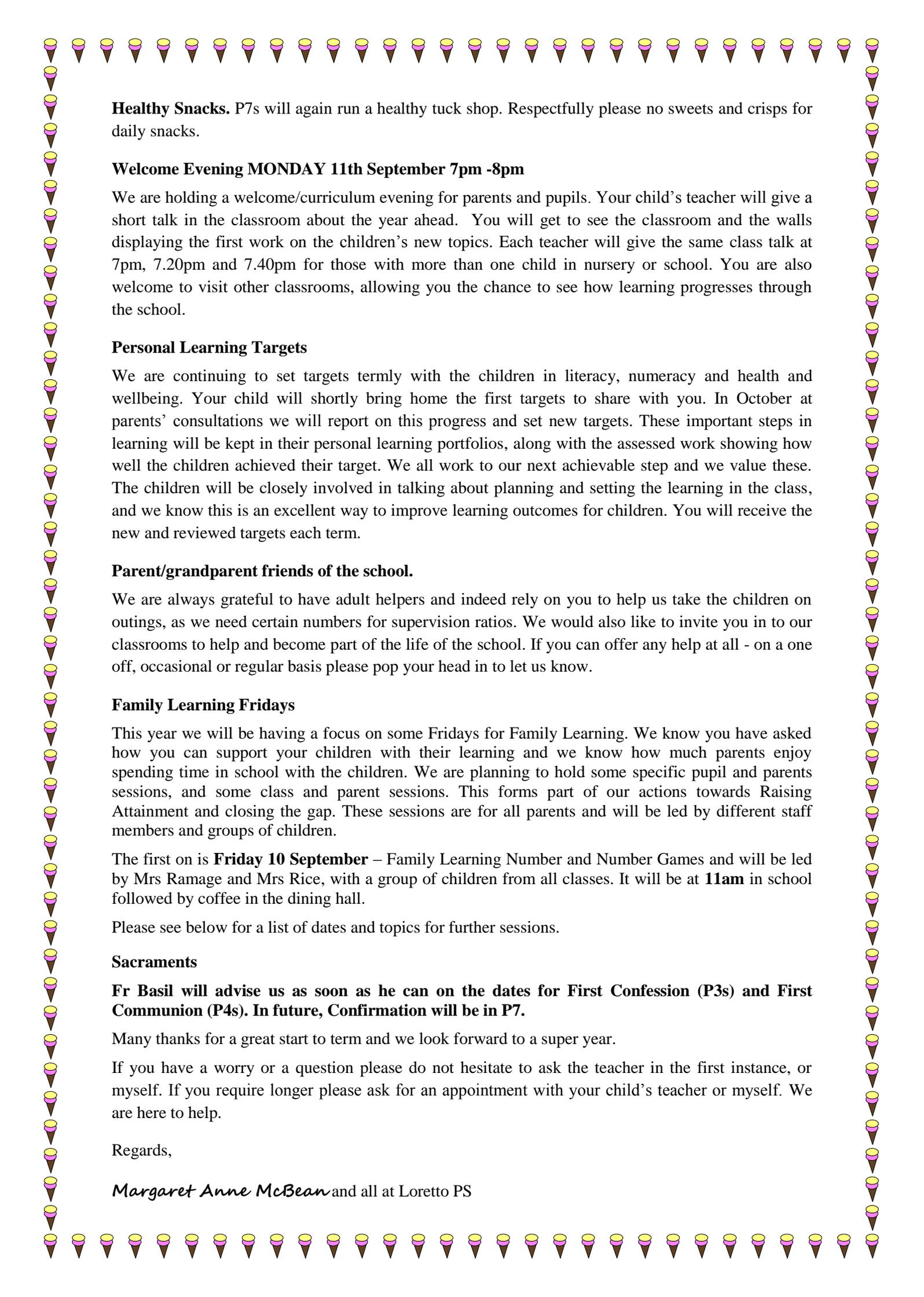


Please keep a careful watch on your little ones - they are so quick. Everyone please ensure they close the gate after them even if you think the next person is just coming.

Bikes and Scooters. The playground is a pedestrian zone. Please do not cycle or scoot in the busy playground. Again we would respectfully ask that pupils cycling to school wear helmets.

Before and after school children are not permitted around the back of the school. **P1 and P2 parents are especially reminded of this at the end of the day.**

Pupil Lines. In the morning it is increasingly difficult in the confined space for children to line up easily. Could we please ask parents to put their child in the lines and then stand well back away from the line or the line of the next class. This will help us see that everybody is ready to go and start the day briskly and safely.



Healthy Snacks. P7s will again run a healthy tuck shop. Respectfully please no sweets and crisps for daily snacks.

Welcome Evening MONDAY 11th September 7pm -8pm

We are holding a welcome/curriculum evening for parents and pupils. Your child's teacher will give a short talk in the classroom about the year ahead. You will get to see the classroom and the walls displaying the first work on the children's new topics. Each teacher will give the same class talk at 7pm, 7.20pm and 7.40pm for those with more than one child in nursery or school. You are also welcome to visit other classrooms, allowing you the chance to see how learning progresses through the school.

Personal Learning Targets

We are continuing to set targets termly with the children in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Your child will shortly bring home the first targets to share with you. In October at parents' consultations we will report on this progress and set new targets. These important steps in learning will be kept in their personal learning portfolios, along with the assessed work showing how well the children achieved their target. We all work to our next achievable step and we value these. The children will be closely involved in talking about planning and setting the learning in the class, and we know this is an excellent way to improve learning outcomes for children. You will receive the new and reviewed targets each term.

Parent/grandparent friends of the school.

We are always grateful to have adult helpers and indeed rely on you to help us take the children on outings, as we need certain numbers for supervision ratios. We would also like to invite you in to our classrooms to help and become part of the life of the school. If you can offer any help at all - on a one off, occasional or regular basis please pop your head in to let us know.

Family Learning Fridays

This year we will be having a focus on some Fridays for Family Learning. We know you have asked how you can support your children with their learning and we know how much parents enjoy spending time in school with the children. We are planning to hold some specific pupil and parents sessions, and some class and parent sessions. This forms part of our actions towards Raising Attainment and closing the gap. These sessions are for all parents and will be led by different staff members and groups of children.

The first one is **Friday 10 September** – Family Learning Number and Number Games and will be led by Mrs Ramage and Mrs Rice, with a group of children from all classes. It will be at **11am** in school followed by coffee in the dining hall.

Please see below for a list of dates and topics for further sessions.

Sacraments

Fr Basil will advise us as soon as he can on the dates for First Confession (P3s) and First Communion (P4s). In future, Confirmation will be in P7.

Many thanks for a great start to term and we look forward to a super year.

If you have a worry or a question please do not hesitate to ask the teacher in the first instance, or myself. If you require longer please ask for an appointment with your child's teacher or myself. We are here to help.

Regards,

Margaret Anne McBean and all at Loretto PS

Diary dates so far...

Mon 21 Aug	P6 and P7 Book Festival Outing
Tues 22 Aug	SSPCA workshops in classes
Mon 28 August	P6 Watersports. Parent helpers please. No charge
Tues 29 Aug	P5R & P5F Watersports. Parent helpers please. No charge
Wed 30 Aug	P7 Watersports. Parent helpers please. No charge
Mon 11 Sep	7-8pm Welcome and Curriculum Evening Parents and Pupils. Bring your family along to show them your class, boys and girls!
Maths Week Activities	
Fri 15 Sep/Mon 18 Sep	September weekend holiday
Wed 4 Oct	5-8pm Parent Consultations
Fri 6 Oct	1-4pm Parent Consultations
Mon 16 Oct	School holiday
Tues 24 Oct	Pupils resume
Thurs 30 Nov	School Outing to Pantomime 10-12 noon
<i>Thurs 14 Dec</i>	<i>Christmas Nativity provisional date tbc</i>
<i>Fri 15 Dec</i>	<i>Christmas Fair provisional date tbc</i>
Friday 22 Dec	Break for Christmas holidays
Jan 8 2018	All resume
Fri 9 Feb	Catholic Education Week begins
Mon 12 Feb	February holidays
Tues 20 Feb	Pupils resume
Tues 6 Mar	World Book Day. Launch Reading Month Focus
WED 21 Mar	5-8pm Parent Consultations
FRI 23 Mar	1-4pm Parent Consultations
Fri 30 Mar	Good Friday HOLIDAY
Mon 16 Apr	All resume
Mon 7 May	HOLIDAY
Tues 8 May	HOLIDAY for children IS Day for staff
Wed 9 May	Pupils return
Mon 14 May	P7 School camp
Mon 21 May	MAY HOLIDAY
w/c Mon 4 June	P5-P7 Drama Club Show - date/time tbc (ticket only event)
Fri 15 June	Sports Day (weather permitting)
Tues 26 June	P7 Assembly and School Prizegiving
Fri 29 June	End of Year Leavers Mass and SS Peter and Paul

Family Learning Fab Fridays....so far! We will evaluate as we go along and are open to suggestions for the rest of the year.

Different staff will lead these sessions. Some sessions will be with a group of children from across the classes to help parents see how they might support children of different ages. Other sessions will be held in your child's class.

The session will be quite informal, lasting about 40 mins and there will be 'help yourself' tea and coffee in the dining hall so parents are welcome to stay and have a chat until pick-up time.

Topic/Title	Date	Pupils
Number and Number Games	8 Sep 11am	Group from across classes
Reading With Your Child	22 Sep 11am	Group from across classes
Early Reading and Phonics	29 Sep 11am	Group from nursery to P3
Developing Reading with Older Children	6 Oct 11am	
Talk Time and Chatterbox	13 Oct 11am	Nursery and P1
Dads and Boys	3 Nov 11am	Group from across classes
Nature Detective Walk	10 Nov 11am	All classes
ICT and Learning at Home	24 Nov 11am	Group from across classes
Christmas Crafting with your Child	8 Dec 11am	All classes
Helping Your Child to Write 'Thank You' Cards and Letters	12 Jan 11am	All classes
Music Fun. Learn to Play a Tune on the Ukelele or Percussion	26 Jan 11am	Group from across classes
ART EXHIBITION	2 Feb	All classes

You don't have to sign up, or return any paperwork. We just thought you would like to see in advance what we have planned. We will try and put reminders out but we won't do letters for each one so please take a note.