

## RESPECT INCLUSION TEAMWORK EFFORT

23 March 2020

### SCHOOL CLOSURE HOME LEARNING

Dear Sciennes Families

I hope the first day of having your children at home has gone smoothly. We hope you and the children are well and are slowly but surely managing to adjust to the recent whirlwind of unprecedented change. We know you will agree that what is most important now is that the children feel safe and reassured.

Hopefully, you should all have received a Home Learning Pack. We had a number which could not be picked up from school on Friday so we each took some and hand delivered them to homes across the city as well as posting a few. The teachers put a huge amount of work into preparing them within a very tight time frame. I know from the many emails received that you are grateful to them for their efforts. The Sciennes Home Learning Pack Information Guide is on our website. We had hoped to print a hard copy for you to include in the pack but our hard pressed printing facilities unfortunately let us down towards the end of the week.

Our strategy for the next two weeks, in line with most schools, until the Easter holiday is to provide structure, guidance and resources for learning, but not to receive learning back at this time. Our main priority is not only the children's health and wellbeing but also all those supporting them, including you. We strongly believe that families, children and staff will all benefit from some time to pause, reflect, digest and prepare. We believe that a structure to the day is advisable, but have aimed to guard against overwhelming parents and children. We are very aware that most parents will be working from home too and we wanted to provide activities that children could work on independently. We have therefore deliberately initially provided relevant home learning that the children should be able to accomplish without teaching input.

Two Home Learning Grids (one for this week and one for next week) were issued in paper form in the Learning Packs. They are also available online on the school website for P1-P7 <https://sciennesprimaryschool.com/> in **CLASSES**. Links on the grids are posted there in a Home Learning page on each Class Page for quick access to relevant websites. Schools are being flooded with suggestions for home learning and special offers from companies. We have free access to Sumdog Maths and Literacy until Easter and our Parent Council has agreed to fund this further until summer 2021. We are very grateful to them for this and once we are back at school again, we will use Sumdog for more Home Learning activities. We do not want you to feel overwhelmed by these but have posted some recommendations in case you wish to explore further: <https://sciennesprimaryschool.com/home-learning-2/>

This approach will take us up to the Easter holiday thus allowing schools and our own staff valuable time to prepare fully the best approach going forward and make sure that we communicate that approach as clearly as we can.

You will be aware that our staff have been asked to volunteer to support Key Workers and also have families of their own so we are aiming to take that into account in planning our approach for after the Easter holiday. We have also aimed to give consideration to families who have varying capacities for home learning and will also need time to make adjustments/process/prepare.

All teacher emails were issued on the paper grids and that will be the point of contact with queries at the moment. Please can I ask that email contact with teachers is made between the hours of 9.30am and 3pm.

We have provided Glow accounts to each of the children but would ask that these are only used at the moment to access learning apps on the Launchpad. There is a link to Glow on each of the Class Pages and we will give further instruction on how to use Glow later.

There are many positives in these challenging times and one of them is undoubtedly expanding our use of Technology. We are working on our strategy for after Easter and will advise families in due course.

We recommend this article from the Guardian and a quote within it from a fellow Headteacher:

### **Prioritise your child's wellbeing**

"Great learning only happens when children feel happy, safe and secure. Provide your children with reassurance and love." *Jules White, Headteacher at Tanbridge House School, Horsham*

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/mar/23/let-your-kids-get-bored-emergency-advice-from-teachers-on-schooling-at-home>

Parents should have received an email from the Council relating to the provision of education/childcare for different categories of key workers. Teachers have been asked to volunteer to help with this initiative. If your child's teacher is volunteering, another teacher at the same stage will help to support the learning of that teacher's class.

We are indebted to Emma Kirk, Parent Council Communications Convenor, who has been collating various parental suggestions and has kindly offered to support keeping our parents informed, reassured and updated. Emma is preparing to contact all families soon.

If you have a general enquiry please send it to [admin@sciennes.edin.sch.uk](mailto:admin@sciennes.edin.sch.uk)

For more urgent enquiries of a specific nature, please address them to either [andrew.hunter@sciennes.edin.sch.uk](mailto:andrew.hunter@sciennes.edin.sch.uk)

lucy.gallagher@sciennes.edin.sch.uk

carolyn.anstruther@sciennes.edin.sch.uk

The situation we are all in is rapidly changing. We will work together to support each other as best we can. Please do get in touch if you would like to chat. I am happy to phone you back and offer any support I can.

Best wishes

Andrew

### SUMMARY KEY POINTS

- Make wellbeing the priority
- Use the Learning Grids to provide structure and support learning
- We will advise you on our approach for future home learning for the new term
- Contact teachers with enquiries about learning between 9.30am and 3pm

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