



RESPECT INCLUSION TEAMWORK EFFORT

8 October 2021

#### DIARY DATES

**Monday 18 October to Tuesday 26 October (Monday 25 October Inservice day for staff)  
Tuesday 2 November and Thursday 4 November Parent Consultations 4-7pm**

Dear Families

With two cases in one class this week, we are optimistic the downward trend in positive cases will continue and we thank you for your support. NHS Lothian works closely with City of Edinburgh Council in monitoring and reviewing cases across the city which feeds into national advice. Scottish Government (SG) Guidance was updated on 30 September and the main message is 'as you were', until at least the October break. Based on suggestions from our own parents, for some time now we have been promoting the use Lateral Flow Device (LFD) testing. The updated SG guidance now also advises that schools should strengthen the message to encourage use LFDs. Below is a section of the updated guidance relating mostly to LFD testing in secondary schools but may be of interest to our own community:

*"Some potential barriers to testing identified by survey evidence were the discomfort of tests and the time it takes to do them and record results. To address this, once schools have used up their current stocks of Innova test kits they will be provided with a new type of LFD test kit. While very similar to the current tests, the new LFD device involves a nasal-only swab. This is in response to feedback that throat swabbing can be uncomfortable for some school participants. The new types of test kit also take only c.15-20 minutes for results to be returned, reducing the amount of time involved in testing. The UK Government have also updated their online reporting portal so that household accounts can be created. This will allow parents to record results for more than one child without having to re-enter data multiple times."*

*At an appropriate point in time, once all staff have had the opportunity to be fully vaccinated, and subject to evidence around implementation of the updated self-isolation policy for children and young people, the asymptomatic testing programme will be reviewed. Options may include implementing the programme only in geographical areas where so*

*indicated by community prevalence and based on the advice of the local Director of Public Health/IMT. Decisions on this will be taken on the basis of evidence nearer the time and in line with the wider testing strategy.”*

Deputising for Andrew in his absence was formalised on Monday by temporarily taking on the Acting Headteacher role. We continue to work very closely as a Senior Leadership team, keeping Andrew apprised and seeking his approval where necessary, though aiming not to overtax him. Those of you who work in education in City of Edinburgh Council will know that it is a close knit and hugely supportive community of not just colleagues, but friends. We have really appreciated the warmth and generosity extended to us and to Andrew. He is really missing the children, especially, and remains grateful for your support and kind wishes

While it has been wonderful to see so many Active Schools clubs resume, these are taking place outdoors and unfortunately we are not yet able to resume our normal programme of indoor clubs. However, with the re-introduction of curricular Swimming we will be in a position to restart Swimming clubs after the October break. Our PE Specialist, Mrs Cynthia Berry, has already put together a comprehensive Risk Assessment in preparation and will soon circulate details of how to join in.

We are also very excited about the forthcoming P6 residential excursion to Benmore Education centre in February. We were delighted to see so many P6 families tune in to our online Information Session on Thursday evening. It is important to us that our children, as well as our families, have access to information about the visit so have created a bespoke website. This can be accessed from the P6 Class Page <https://2016sciennes.wordpress.com> by clicking on the Benmore icon on the right hand side. We will add updates before departure and also during our visit. <https://sciennesbenmore2022.wordpress.com> Thank you to our Principal Teacher, Ms Jenni McGrouther, for helping to lead the session.

Initial disappointment that the P7 excursion to Lagganlia Outdoor Education Centre could not take place as planned next week was replaced with relief when we were offered a place in May. Although we will not be able to reap the usual rewards of attending camp early in the year, we are absolutely delighted that our Primary Sevens will be able to have a residential experience. We will provide more details after the October holiday.

Online meetings continue for the foreseeable future, including all Parent Consultations taking place across the city. A reminder that appointment bookings for Sciennes Parent Consultations will close on **Friday 15 October at 17:00**.  
<https://www.parents-booking.co.uk/sciennes>

Wow! What an overwhelming response to the P3 Foodbank Appeal! The bike shed was absolutely full this morning with all of your generous donations. The Primary Three team has done a tremendous job, taking on various roles within the project. A great example of Developing the Young Workforce! The Foodbank Team were extremely sorry their collection van was delayed and were appreciative and impressed by everyone's goodwill and support. Thank you to P6 and P7 pupils who exited at the Sick Kids side to ease congestion and to all the P3 and P7 children and families who waited behind in the rain to help load the van. P3 Communication Team pupils have prepared their own thank you message:

*"Thank you very much for your donations, we have had a flood of food! We have been very busy sorting everything. We know it will help lots of people that use the foodbank. Thank you again for your kind donations!"* From the Communications Team in P3!

Jigme Tarap, father of Nyigyal Tarap in P2C works at Nairns Oatcakes and arranged for 30 boxes of oatcakes to be delivered to the school by courier for the Food Bank. Many thanks.

Support for Learning Teachers Paula Gilhooly and Rhona Kennedy are leading a Neurodiversity, Belonging and Inclusion project in school and would welcome participation and input from families and pupils. Here they explain how to contribute:

*"We know that the school environment really suits some learners and that other learners find the school environment more challenging. This can be linked to how learners process information. In school we are talking with all the children to find out **what things about the school day might be hard for them to manage and what things might make the school day easier for them to manage.***

*We invite parents and carers to contribute their views on this subject too using this [survey link](#).*

*We are happy to receive your views in an alternative form that suits you, or your child e.g. picture, video or audio message. Please contact [paula.gilhooly@sciennes.edin.sch.uk](mailto:paula.gilhooly@sciennes.edin.sch.uk) or [Rhona.kennedy@sciennes.edin.sch.uk](mailto:Rhona.kennedy@sciennes.edin.sch.uk) with responses.*

*The closing date for responses is Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October."*

Great to see all the fantastic examples of P1-P7 Learner Participation in producing such creative and innovative designs for the planned painting of Sciennes Road play space. Many thanks to Parent Council members Gidona Henderson, Kirstin Unger and Slim Gueddana who are working to advance this on our behalf.

A plea to complete the short City of Edinburgh Council Consultation survey which closes on **Monday 11 October**. Many thanks to parents, pupils and staff who have already lent their support to the school on this matter.

*We are actively seeking your views on the current Sciennes Road closure. We hope you will lend your support to extending the duration of its closure. This is very important for the school as a COVID mitigation, to reduce congregating, but it is also particularly important to*

*maximise already limited play space for our pupils. We need the road space at least until the end of the new build at the rear of the school and your support in completing this City of Edinburgh Council Consultation survey will help us achieve that.*

**THE SPACES FOR PEOPLE SURVEY CLOSES ON 11<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER.**

*Families, pupils, Parent Council and staff are all warmly encouraged to make submissions. We are extremely grateful for Parent Council support as well as expert advice and offers of funding from City of Edinburgh Council to create an obvious play space in the area but for that to happen, we first need to secure a community desire for the 'Spaces for People' road closure to continue.*

**Will you lend your support to the school by completing this survey?**

The survey can be found at: <https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/sfc/6bc84117/>

Well done P5C for constructing persuasive arguments and submitting these to the Sciennes Spaces for People consultation. Strong, assertive and convincing points of view were put forward by the children, underlining just how much the road closure affects and benefits them. Thank you, Mr Hutchison!

Congratulations to all pupils who are taking on Leadership Roles in school – P7 House and Sports Captains, Equalities Advisers, Digital Leaders, P6 Junior Road Safety Officers and ECO Reps. We regret that there has not been much time recently to meet with the groups but aim to rectify that in the new term. Next week we will invite our P4-7 Equalities Advisers to help prepare for 'The Big Anti-Bullying Assembly' on Friday. Some classes have a focus on Black History month in October, though we aim to recognise and celebrate diversity throughout the year. We plan to work with the pupils to examine how well we are managing to achieve that in school and what actions we could take to improve.

P5C pupil Morag Ascroft has bagged an amazing 31 Munros, only one less than her P7C brother, Murray. Morag climbed her first Munro in September 2017 and has kept a record of all subsequent climbs. Well done to you both! Terrific achievement.

We know that many of our families will be really looking forward to taking advantage of the easing of restrictions to reunite with family and friends after long periods apart. We also understand that the safety of others – older or more vulnerable family members particularly – is an ongoing concern for many, so we thank you for continuing with all mitigations in the lead up to the October break to ensure everyone has a safe and happy holiday.

*Lucy, Carolyn, John, Steve and Jenni*



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