

Kirkistown Primary School Newsletter

October 2020



Thank you

Having been back to school for just over a month now, I would like to thank all our children for how they have settled back into school. School staff have been very impressed by the attitudes and flexibility shown by everyone; it is remarkable how adaptable and resilient children are. We appreciate fully that this hasn't happened by accident and, on behalf of all school staff, I would like to thank our families for the preparation work they have undertaken with their children at home to ensure a safe return for us all.

In school, through careful consideration and management, we have successfully managed to continue to serve hot meals at lunchtimes while maintaining the integrity of our class 'bubbles.' Our thanks are extended to Mrs Brown and the wider team at Glastry kitchen who have provided an excellent, uninterrupted service during this time. Families wishing to explore the school meals menu can do so via our website: <http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/school-meals-menu.html>

By utilising both the front and rear areas of the school playground simultaneously we have ensured that our children have a safe space to move around and express themselves during break times. All classes have been taking advantage of the wonderful setting of our school, making visits to Cloughey Beach as part of their curriculum. Cloughey, and the surrounding area, is a wonderful place for children to grow up. Kirkistown Primary School is a wonderful, intimate setting for a child's primary education. We are so grateful to have our children back in school again and warmly look forward to re-starting our after school clubs and music tuition when it is safe to do so.

Trailblazers Programme

Children in P4 and P5 have had their first session as part of the Trailblazers programme. Children have been looking at the art of animation and have started a block of 6 weekly lessons. We were joined by artists Ed and Gwen who demonstrated how a ball might move and how animators would represent this. Unsurprisingly, the children were very quick to pick up the skills and within minutes were incorporating their own ideas and looking to raise the level of challenge. The children have absolutely loved this first session and are looking forward to have Ed and Gwen join us throughout the months of October and November.



School Development Plan

Our School Development Plan for 2020-2021 has 6 key priorities:

1. Development of outdoor learning to enhance the curriculum
2. Consult with staff and parents regarding Vision and Values
3. To develop a 'culture of reading' which contributes to rising standards
4. To review and focus on the retention and application of number skills across all year groups
5. To improve confidence and experience in assessment of the cross curricular skills
6. To raise the profile of 'scientific learning' and health and relationships education in school.

Healthy Me Programme

Key Stage 2 have been taking part in Action Mental Health's 'Healthy Me' Programme.

We were delighted to be joined by Leah Moore who spoke to children about recognising their own feelings, coping strategies and how to get help when they were feeling overwhelmed. The sessions were informative and great fun too. We are very grateful to Leah for her time and to Action Mental Health for the great service they provide.



Outdoor Learning

It's been a busy start to the new academic year with all classes having visited Cloughey Beach and the surrounding areas to participate in Outdoor Learning. We are so very lucky to have this wonderful vista on our doorstep and it is great that all of our classes are taking advantage of it.



Update to Coronavirus Guidance for Schools

Schools have been provided with updated guidance on managing the impact of COVID-19 within schools.

In response to feedback from schools, and following clarification with the Public Health Agency, we can now advise that only when a positive case has been identified in a child or young person do schools need to consider self-isolating close contacts of that individual. This means that classes can continue until a positive case is confirmed.

In the event of one of our 'bubbles' having to self-isolate or a further lockdown, families will have access to school work set via either Seesaw (Reception – P3) or Google Classroom (P4 – P7). It is important that families continue to familiarise themselves with the use of these services in the event of any further measures announced by the N.I Executive or deemed necessary by the Public Health Agency.

LET'S ALL KEEP OUR SCHOOL SAFE

We need your help! We want everyone to be safe, healthy and enjoy school. So, make sure you follow these new rules...

IF YOU ARE SICK YOU MIGHT HAVE TO STAY AT HOME

Going to school is really important but if you have a bad cough or feel very warm, tell a grown up right away.



GIVE EACH OTHER SPACE

Keep a safe distance from your teachers and friends as much as you can. You should try to stay in your bubble.



CATCH YOUR COUGHS & SNEEZES

Cover your face with your elbow or use a tissue. (Don't forget to put used tissues in the bin!)



WASH YOUR HANDS

Wash your hands lots of times during the day. (Make sure you wash them as soon as you get to school too!)



HOLD ONTO YOUR OWN ITEMS

You shouldn't share things like pencils, food and drinks with your friends.



IT'S OK TO HAVE QUESTIONS! YOU CAN ALWAYS ASK A PARENT, CARER OR TEACHER.



Department of
Education
www.education-ni.gov.uk

EDUCATION RESTART

WE ALL MUST DO IT TO GET THROUGH IT



STAY SAFE



SAVE LIVES

Board of Governors' Annual Report

In Autumn term, our governing body publish their annual report detailing the previous academic year in school. These reports give the school community an insight into the inner workings of school. Reports can be downloaded below.

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/governors-annual-report.html>



School Photographs

Tempest Photography visited us on Friday 02 October 2020 for our annual school photographs. Due to company policy, only individual photographs were taken. Regrettably, we were unable to invite pre-school siblings into school at this time.



Parent Interviews

We are delighted to confirm that we will host face to face Parent Interviews during the week beginning 19 October 2020. As previously, school will finish at 12:45pm every day during this week. Look out for a letter regarding this in the coming week.

Reading Books

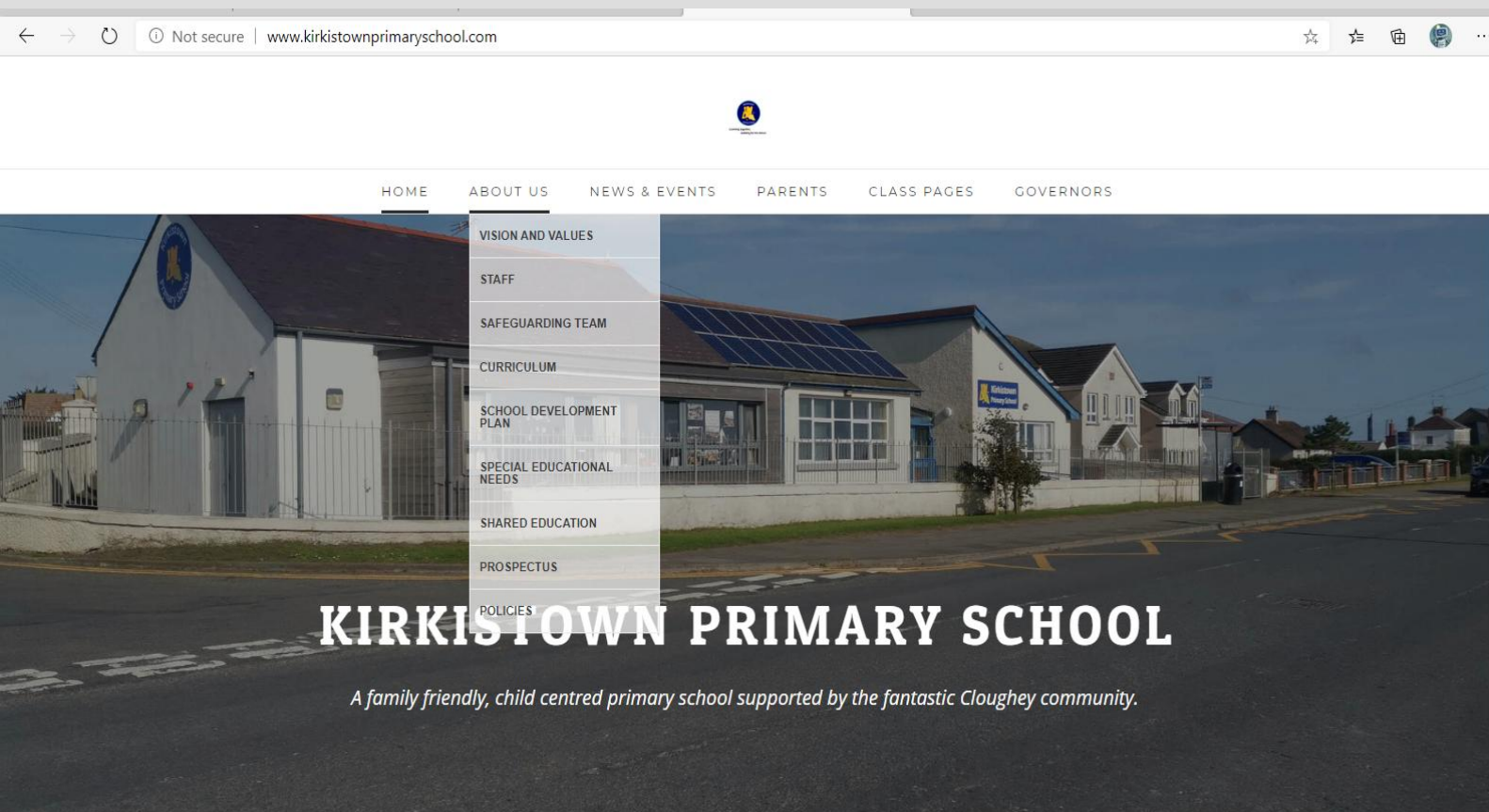
We are hopeful that we will shortly be able to begin sending home physical reading books with our children. We appreciate that while some children really enjoy online reading through Bug Club that many children prefer to physically hold a book in their hands and share it with an adult.

In order for us to facilitate this, it will be necessary for us to put systems in place. This will involve reading books being sent home on **Monday** and being returned on **Thursday**.

School Website

Further pages and updated policies have been added to our school website this month, reflecting a very busy and productive month for school.

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/>



Class Pages

A reminder that all class pages can be viewed on our website to provide insight into what your children have been up to.

Reception & Primary 1:

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/reception-class--primary-1.html>

Primary 2 & Primary 3:

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/p2--p3.html>

Primary 4 and Primary 5:

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/p4--p5.html>

Primary 6 and Primary 7:

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/p6--p7.html>

Alongside our use of Seesaw (Foundation Stage and Lower Key Stage 1), Google Classroom (Upper Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2) and our Facebook page, we believe we're doing everything we can to keep you well informed.

Looking Further Ahead...

Air Ambulance Appeal

Thank you to those families who have contributed to the air ambulance appeal. Your contributions are being forwarded on in memory of a former pupil whose life was saved thanks to this wonderful service. Donations are being accepted up until **Friday 09 October 2020**.

Harvest Donations

We would warmly welcome donations of tinned goods for the Trussell Trust Foodbank which go to help families in times of difficulty. Each year, the Trust support a nationwide network of food banks and together they provide emergency food and support to people locked in poverty, and campaign for change to end the need for food banks in the UK. Donations will be gratefully received by **Tuesday 13 October 2020**. More information is available at:

<https://www.trusselltrust.org/>



Friendship Week / Anti-Bullying Week

Our annual 'Friendship Week' will take place on the week commencing Monday 16 November 2020 with a theme of '**United against bullying**'. Children will be invited to take part in 'odd socks' day on the Monday and will take part in a number of activities across the week to reinforce the important message that we all stand together against bullying; that's okay to be yourself.



Looking Further Ahead...

School Nurse Visit

We have been advised that the School Nurse Team will visit us on **Tuesday 01 December 2020** for the annual administration of flu vaccines. Further information will follow in due course and school would encourage all parents to take advantage of this service.

PTFA Smarties Appeal

In absence of the usual opportunities to organise community events and fundraise, the PTFA are hoping to engage families in a simple, fun initiative to help fund further projects and initiatives in school. All children will receive a pack of smarties and a letter from the PTFA next week.



Book Fair

Our annual Book Fair is due to take place from Tuesday 17 – Tuesday 24 November 2020. We will update families on whether this can take place or not in the near future.



House Points Update

After 5 weeks, it's very close at the top of the leaderboard. The house with the most weekly wins by the end of this half term will receive a free non-uniform day on **Friday 23 October 2020**.

Cloughey house lead the way with 3 wins while **Ratallagh** house have wins. On several weeks, only 1 house point has separated first and second place with **Ringbuoy** house twice finishing second, only one point behind the winners. Everything is still to play for.

Diary dates

Our calendar, denoting any significant weekly events can accessed via our website:
<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/calendar.html>

Term dates

Term dates for the 2020-2021 academic year can be accessed via a document at the bottom of the following page: <http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/term-dates--holidays.html>

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<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCk2P4BsM0Ti7umhkr8Cw1pA>



**Learning together,
building for the future**