



Brunstane Primary School

106 Magdalene Drive
EDINBURGH
EH15 3BE

Chris McMillan, Head Teacher

Thursday 6th January 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

On behalf of the school, I would like to wish a very Happy New Year to all our Brunstane families. I hope that you all had a happy, healthy and relaxing break and those celebrating had a very merry Christmas.

We are delighted to welcome our pupils back today and are looking forward to another exciting term of learning as we kick off 2022.

Unfortunately, we are once again starting the new term with the unavoidable reality of the ongoing Covid-19 situation restricting what we can and cannot do. There has been a huge amount of coverage of this in the media and it can be a very confusing picture to try to keep up to date with. Whilst it is likely that the rules will continue to change over the coming weeks, I would like to start this newsletter with an update of what the current guidance means for Brunstane right now.

Covid-19 Procedures

Bubbles

As you may have seen in the news, the government has re-introduced bubble groupings for schools starting today. This means that there will be very limited mixing between classes whilst this rule is in place. Pupils will remain with their class group throughout the day and will have staggered break times and a specified area of the playground in which to play. We had temporarily re-introduced these measures at Brunstane for the last week of term, so this will not be a big change for pupils to adapt to on return today.

Testing

The government announced changes to the testing rules yesterday. One of the changes means that people who test positive on a Lateral Flow test no longer need to seek a PCR test to confirm that they are positive. It has also been suggested that parents of primary school age children may wish to test their pupils regularly to help stop the spread of the virus.

Clothing

As more has been learned about the way the virus spreads over the last two years, the importance of good ventilation has become increasingly clear. Unfortunately, our return to school today coincides with both extremely high case numbers and also a sudden drop in temperature. Please make sure that you send your children to school in warm clothing as classroom windows will be open no matter the weather to keep everyone safe. Please also send your child to school with waterproofs if you have them, as it is very likely we will be out in all weathers at break times due to Covid related staff shortages. The school has a supply of wellies and waterproofs for those who do not have them.

Staffing

The government and local authority have advised schools to expect significant disruption to their workforce supply over the coming period. We therefore want to give advanced warning to families that the staffing in any of our classes may temporarily change without notice this term. We would not take this step lightly as we are acutely aware of the important bond between our pupils and their key adults. We know that this is especially true for our pupils with additional support needs. However, the extreme likelihood of significant staff shortages means that families should expect to see a variety of staff working in each class to best ensure that classes stay open over the current period.

Other Health & Safety Protocols

If your child is unwell, please do not send them to school. If your child has any COVID symptoms (a new persistent cough, and/or high temperature, and/or a loss or change of taste or smell) please use a lateral flow test (or book a PCR test if you do not have access to Lateral Flows) and advise us of the result.

It is also the time of year when we see an increase in sickness and diarrhoea bugs. Your child should stay away from school until 48 hours after diarrhoea and vomiting has stopped and they are eating and drinking normally.

Please continue to remind your child of the importance of hand washing.

Spring Oscar's After School Club

Unfortunately, Spring Oscar's have informed us that they are experiencing staff shortages that mean the club cannot resume this week. They have informed all parents currently using the service. We will let you know once we have been informed the service can resume.

Pupil Parliament

Despite all of these covid related disruptions, we are delighted to announce that our school Pupil Parliament will be starting again this month. Pupil Parliament lasts for 10 weeks and allows our pupils to have a direct involvement in our school improvement process. Previously, our Pupil Parliament groups have led fantastic projects such as designing our new school library and our improved infants playground. Please keep an eye on Twitter to see what they will be working on this year.

Scottish chamber Orchestra

Another exciting offer that will be kicking off in January is the continuation of our partnership with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. After working incredibly successfully with our nursery children, we are delighted to welcome SCO back to work with our Primary 5 and 5/6 classes over the coming term. We cannot wait to share the results of our collaboration!

IntoUniversity

We will also be continuing our partnership with IntoUniversity this term. After working incredibly successfully with our Primary 6 class, we are delighted to have them back working in P5/6.

Infrastructure Update

After the launches of our Sensory Room and new Library before the holidays, we are delighted to be nearing completion on our fantastic new sensory playground. Work on this is very nearly complete and we are excited to be able to share it with pupils very soon.

Once again, we are incredibly grateful to our friends at Wooden Spoon Foundation for their incredibly generous backing, allowing us to make this project a reality. We look forward to sharing pictures with you soon.

Sports Clubs

Whilst the coming period sees a return to many mitigations we had hoped to see the back of, I am very happy to let you know that our after school sports clubs are allowed to continue (along with music and PE lessons in school).

Please see Paddy's letter that has also come out today for details of how to book for the coming term.

Leadership Update

Finally, I would like to let families know that I will be away from school on paternity leave from the 10th to the 21st of January. I am happy to say that I will be leaving the school in the extremely capable hands of Miss Mechie and the rest of the school management team during this time. Families can contact the school in the usual way over this period by calling the school office or emailing admin@brunstane.edin.sch.uk .

I will look forward to seeing you all when I return.

Yours sincerely



Chris McMillan
Head Teacher