

Newtonhill School
Newsletter
Term 1 2022-2023



Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to Term 1 and I hope all our pupils have had a good first week back in school.

The pupils have coped very well with the changes in the layout of the school and I am very grateful to the teachers for spending so much of their own time moving and preparing for this week.

Teachers are busy getting to know pupils and a class newsletter will be issued in due course. It will detail days for PE, outdoor learning etc. Pupils should continue to come to school on PE days in PE clothes but we kindly request that the school jumper is worn on those days too, and not alternative sweatshirts or hoodies.

We had our first P4-7 assembly this week and it was lovely to have pupils in the hall. We look forward to re-introducing class assemblies and having parents back in school.

Parents' Evenings/School Open Evening

We have provisionally pencilled in dates for parents' evenings for the last week of term and a school open evening on Thursday 10th of November. The parents' evenings will remain online this term. More details about both events will be issued nearer the time but we do look forward to seeing families in school in November.

iBike/Bikeability

This year, Newtonhill School will be working with the Aberdeenshire iBike team. iBike work through Sustrans to give children the skills and confidence to walk, cycle and scoot to school and beyond, primarily focusing on the school run so that traffic congestion is also eased.

We will continue with our Bikeability programme for our P6s, and the iBike team will work with different year groups throughout the school at different points in the year. September will see them working with our Primary 7s to develop the Bikeability skills learned last year through bike maintenance lessons and planning and participating in a led bike ride. We are very grateful for the parental help and support we have to enable all these activities to run.

School Vision and Values

This session we will be renewing our School Vision and Values. The children will be involved, and we would very much appreciate your input to create vision and values that are meaningful and important to our school community.

As part of Vision and Values we will be discussing how our pupils behave towards one another, both in class and outside. In most behaviour incidents, we will start by using restorative approaches. Occasionally due to the nature of the incident it may need a more direct intervention. Not all behaviour incidents will be reported back to parents. As you can imagine with over 320 pupils in school there are many disagreements and occasionally this can involve hitting or kicking. There is not a set rule, criteria or condition where we will contact parents but generally this will happen if a child is very upset, if the incident has been quite serious, or if it is ongoing. We appreciate that sometimes your child will come home and say they were hurt but please trust that we never ignore incidents and that we deal with them as appropriately as possible. This also applies to inappropriate language - the use of offensive and sexual language is unacceptable in class and in the playground.

We will be encouraging the children to look after our 'forest area' and wildflower meadow. Due to the trees being stripped and branches being broken we have requested that they do not build dens etc at playtime or lunchtime. Den building did unfortunately result in 'turf war' and we are hoping to have positive playtimes instead of disagreements.

Literacy

This year, as part of our ongoing literacy development, we will be looking to improve and develop reading across the school. We want to promote a positive and exciting reading culture, and staff will be developing resources and programmes of learning and teaching to ensure pupils have a positive learning experience.

General Issues

Can I remind parents of the general issues that come up every session.

- Please be respectful to school neighbours when dropping off pupils and do not park cars across driveways. If at all possible, encourage pupils to walk, cycle or scoot to school.
- Please do not park in the school playground. We have over 40 staff as well as visiting staff and we do not have enough spaces for all. Some staff members such as Pupil Support Assistants start at 9am and they are unable to park at this time as parents have parked to drop off.
- Please ensure pupils have appropriate outdoor clothing every day, especially a coat or jacket, as we will be outside in all weathers. All clothing should be named.
- Please inform the office of any absences or appointments.
- If you wish to speak to a teacher, please email the school or call as they will be unable to speak to you when you are bringing pupils in first thing in the morning.
- We have several children with severe food allergies in school. We kindly request that no peanuts or peanut butter is used in any packed lunch. We cannot issue birthday sweets etc in school, and these should not be brought in for children to distribute themselves.

We are delighted that the school and learning environment is becoming more open and accessible again and look forward to working with families throughout the year.

Lesley Tullock

Head Teacher