



Newsletter

Priorsford Primary School

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'Supporting each other to grow and learn together'

March 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

The warmer, sunnier weather of the past week has lifted everyone's spirits and we have all enjoyed getting outside for much needed fresh air, exercise and outdoor play.

The past month has been a challenge for us as we have tried to manage the impact of Covid. We have had many staff absences, as well as rising numbers of pupil absences across the school. Our teaching, supply and support staff have dealt admirably with last-minute changes to timetables; helped one another plan learning and have taken on additional duties as we tried to cover classes. Once again, I am very grateful to all our staff who have worked so hard and shown great commitment to the school and children, helping us all get through this term with minimum disruption to the children's learning.

On a positive note, we hope that the latest Scottish Government Covid guidance for schools, which comes into effect on 18th April, will allow us to finally welcome families back into school and hold some of our usual summertime events. Please see below for some initial changes and I will update you of further changes as soon as we return back in April.

Important Covid Update

The latest Scottish Government guidance for schools which will come into effect on 18th April means that we will now no longer need to stagger start and finish times and we can all enjoy a single break and lunchtime together. Therefore, from Monday 18th April, we will revert back to the following school day timings:

Monday to Thursday

8.45am - 10.25am

10.40am - 12.20pm

1.15pm - **3.25pm**

Friday

8.45am - 10.25am

10.40am - 11.40am

12.30pm - **12.50pm**

We also hope to organise open mornings next term, inviting parents to come into school to see the children learning in their classrooms, as well as visit the rest of the school. To avoid large numbers of adults coming into school at the same time, we will hold more than one - please check for more details in next month's update.

It would be super to see the children returning after Easter, wearing their Priorsford school uniform again - please let the office know if you need spare uniform as we have plenty available.

Parent Consultation Phone Calls- 28th-30th March

Your child will have received their written report last Friday from their class teacher. Our parent consultations take place this week and you will be able to discuss your child's learning and their report with their teacher. Following this discussion, if you have any concerns that you would like to follow up in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact the school to arrange a further meeting.

What's been happening this month...?

World Book Day

Mrs Palmer and our P6 librarians organised a wonderful celebration of reading for World Book Day at the start of this month. As well as all the different reading activities in class, the children enjoyed book quizzes; learned a Book Day rap; our P2 children went on a 'Where's Wally?' tour around the school and our P1 children went on a Bear Hunt.

Many thanks must go to Mrs Palmer for her continued enthusiasm, hard work and commitment to make our library such a motivating and appealing reading environment, as well as to our P6 librarians for their enthusiastic support in planning activities for our younger children.

I hope you will be able to visit our library at our open mornings next term to see what a wonderful resource we have in school.

Red Nose Day

We had a very colourful school on Friday 18th March to celebrate Red Nose Day, with lots of red noses, socks, hairbands, tops and even some red hair! We raised **£566.72** in donations - a tremendous amount that we will send to Comic Relief. Thank you to everyone who supported us and donated to the charity.

Queen's Green Canopy

To mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June, we planted a cherry tree in front of the main entrance to the school. The Lord Lieutenant of Tweeddale, Sir Hew Strachan, as well as his Deputy, Mr Adrian Lucas, came to the school to present the tree, as well as a commemorative plaque. Helping them plant the tree were Jimmy, Mrs Davidson and two of our P3 pupils, Holly and Matthew.

You can see a photo of the planting of the tree, as well as read more about this national project to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, on the Queen's Green Canopy website: www.queensgreencanopy.org

Pupil Council

We value our children's involvement in all aspects of their education and the Pupil Council provides one of many opportunities for our pupil voice to be heard. We started our Pupil

Council meetings again this month, with two representatives, initially from P4-P7, meeting every fortnight to discuss school issues raised by the children, as well as plan improvements and new projects.

Our first consultation has been to discuss how we can improve the outdoor play environment, now that we will all be back together again for breaks and lunchtimes. This may be a daunting prospect for some of our children who have never experienced all 410 children outside together!

With financial support from the PTA, we have organised lots of numeracy-based activities, resources and games to be painted on the playground over the Easter holidays. We have ordered new seating and planters to create a quiet area, with books and drawing materials available for a calmer space, away from the more active games area.

We will also be replenishing the playground equipment for more open-ended and creative loose-parts play in the infant playground. If you have any **planks of wood, logs, sturdy crates, cable drums, waterproof material or plastic guttering** that you could donate, we would be very grateful if you could drop them off at the school.

Dance Festival

We were delighted to stage our Priorsford Dance Festival once again, which we held outdoors last Friday to take advantage of the warmer weather. It was wonderful to have the whole school together after such a long time and for the children to see siblings and friends in other classes perform their dances.

Every child from P1-P7 presented dances that they had created at PE with Mr Edge, performing with great enthusiasm, rhythm and energy, as well as lots of smiles. It was a fantastic event in the sunshine and such a great way to welcome our Priorsford family back together again. Please check out our social media sites for photos of the classes performing their dances.

Primary 7 Show

Primary 7 have been working very hard on their wartime production 'Archibald's War,' a show full of great songs and stories, which brings together all the children's learning about life during the Second World War. Despite not being able to perform to their families, the P7 children are performing to the rest of the school this week.

We will be recording the show after Easter (once our many absentee P7 children return) and we will send the link to families. I hope you enjoy the show as much as the rest of the school has done.

Well done to all our P7 children who worked so hard to put on such a fantastic performance, full of energy, enthusiasm and laughs. Many thanks must go to Miss Adamson and Mrs Elder for once again encouraging and motivating the children to perform to such a high standard.

Easter Assembly

Our P4 children have been working hard to prepare our end of term Easter Assembly, which we will be holding virtually this Friday. This is a lovely way to end our term and reminds us all of the importance of our celebrations at this time of year. We will share the link to the assembly with all parents.

Looking ahead to next term...

Parent Questionnaire - April 2022

Over the past few years, we have asked you to give us your views on different aspects of our work at Priorsford and what you feel are our strengths, as well as where we can improve with your child's education. Because of the disruption caused by Covid and subsequent lockdowns, we have not done our questionnaire for a couple of years, so we will be planning to survey your views after Easter. I appreciate that many of you have not been closely involved with the school over the past two years, but it would be useful to hear your views and ideas on how we can involve you once again in the life of the school and in your child's learning.

We use your feedback to inform the priorities for our Improvement Plan for the year ahead. It is extremely important that we get feedback from as many parents as possible, so that we can continually improve and provide the highest standards of educational experiences for your child. All feedback will be discussed at our Parent Council meeting.

We will be sending out the link to the on-line questionnaire after the holidays. Please spend a few minutes completing this very valuable feedback information.

Primary 7 Residential - Staffing

Our P7 classes will be going to Dalguise for their residential from 25th to 29th April. With 64 Primary 7s going, we need to have 6 members of staff accompanying the children, who are: Mrs Elder, Miss Adamson, Mr Edge, Mr McDonald, Mrs Fraser and Mrs Sutherland.

I would like to express my very grateful thanks to all these members of staff for giving up their own precious family time to take the children on this extremely valuable and enjoyable experience - without your commitment to the school and to the children, we could not offer this wonderful experience.

This staffing commitment will have implications for the rest of the school, as follows:

- Mr Edge's PE classes will be taken by **Mr Gilfillan** and **Mrs Murphy**. On the days that Mr Gilfillan is taking PE, Mrs Murphy will take P4G.
- **Mrs Murphy** will not be in P5A (Wed) or P4/5C (Thurs) that week.
- **Mrs Fraser** will not be in P3V on Thursday that week and Miss Vinyard will be taking her own class that day.

We wish all children and staff going to Dalguise a wonderful week, filled with sunshine, fun and many happy memories.

Three Bridges Races

We were very pleased to hear that the Three Bridges Races will be taking place this year on **Sunday 8th May** - watch out for more details coming out after Easter.

Achievements

The school is very proud to hear of the activities that our children take part in, both within and outside school and it is very important that we recognise and celebrate their achievements. Please email photos of any achievements outside school that your child would like us to share and we can celebrate them through our social media sites and at assemblies.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any issues or concerns about your child's education.

Wishing you all a safe, happy and sunny Easter holiday and we look forward to finally welcoming you back in to Priorsford next term.

Sandra Macgregor
Headteacher

Summer Term Dates

Summer Term

Start	Monday 18 April 2022	
Holiday	Monday 2 May 2022	(May Bank Holiday)
In service day	Tuesday 3 May 2022	School closed to pupils
Pupils start	Wednesday 4 May 2022	
Election Closure	Thursday 5 May 2022	School closed to pupils
Holiday	Friday 3 June 2022	(Queen's Platinum Jubilee)
Last day of term	Thursday 30 June 2022	