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Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this latest Early Years and Primary newsletter reaches you well. Life continues to be different and some days are better than others - working from home with a toddler has made me realise that this is OK! I hope you are keeping well. Everyone in our community is doing an amazing job and you all have different circumstances to deal with. Please be kind to yourselves.

The announcement from the Scottish Government yesterday set out the way forward from lockdown. Local authorities and schools are currently working on recovery plans and more information will be coming your way.

I would like to update you on a few things happening across the Early Years and Primary within our campus.

HOME ACTIVITIES

Staff continue to do a fabulous job sending out home activities during closure. Feedback from parents has been overwhelmingly positive. It has been lovely to see our children continue to achieve during this time. I want to continue to stress however that all activities remain suggestions. We appreciate many parents are working from home and have many other pressures at this time, so children will not be penalised for not completing activities.

During this time, communication between our children and teachers is key, as we still have a duty of care to make sure everyone is safe during the school closure. Therefore, we encourage children to check-in when they can with their teachers through email. If we have not heard from anyone in a while, the school will attempt to contact the family, just to make sure everything is OK and to see if we can help in anyway.

Miss Veitch is planning on gathering PE clips from the children to make a Virtual Sports Day on 5th June. As always, this remains optional for the children. Good luck to those who wish to take part!

TRANSITIONS

Lots of work has been happening to make transitions from home to our Early Years, Early Years to Primary 1 and Primary 7 to S1 as smooth as possible for children and families.

New children starting our Early Years, and children returning for their pre-school year next session, should have received an EY newsletter through the post. EY staff can be contacted through email if there are any questions.

Our new P1 children and families should have received (or will be receiving soon) their welcome packs. More information about P1 will be posted on our school website next week. Mrs Ross-Hays and I are busy working on the P1 presentations for parents and carers.

Information about S1 from Ms House has been uploaded on our school website and more will follow soon. The order for P7 leavers' hoodies has also been placed. Our P7 children should receive their hoodies before the end of June.

May I thank all staff for going above and beyond in making transitions as smooth as possible in the current situation. If any parents have questions about transitions at whatever stage across our campus, please contact us.

LIBRARY LOCKDOWN CHALLENGE

I have attached North Ayrshire's Library Lockdown Challenge if any children want to have a go at it. There are prizes to be won so good luck if you decide to have a go!

CLASS STRUCTURE 2020/21

We are currently working on what our classes will look like next session. This usually takes a bit of time, and will take a little longer to complete this year due to the current circumstances. We will let you know as soon as we can when we have confirmed classes and teachers for next session.

THANK YOU

I want to finish this letter by saying a huge thank you to children, parents and staff across our community. Who would have thought a few months ago we would find ourselves in this situation? I am so proud of everyone in our community with the way they have responded to this challenging situation. This ranges from the support shown by parents, to the way our children have responded to working online. Things have been difficult at times, but you can only do your best.

The staff have worked exceptionally hard over the last 9 weeks to try and keep education going. This is not easy, as they have their own families too, but the staff have done brilliantly. From attending weekly virtual meetings, supporting children and families remotely, going into the community and delivering resources to local shops and houses, the list is endless and I thank you all.

As I wrote at the start of this letter, please be kind to yourselves. There is no rule book for times like these and you are doing great. Hopefully a move towards something slightly more 'normal' will begin to happen soon. We will keep you updated as always. In the meantime, we are here to help so continue to contact your child's key worker or teacher, the Garnock e-mail address or my mobile.

Your sincerely,

Scot McMillan
Depute Head Teacher