



Thornhill, Dumfries,shire DG3 5D5

Main School Office Telephone: 01848 332120

Primary Office Telephone: 01848 332140

Fax: 01848 332564

Academy e-mail: gw08officewallace@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

Primary and ELC email:

gw08officewallacehal@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

website: wallacehall.co.uk twitter: <https://twitter.com/WallaceHallSch>

Wallace Hall Academy, Primary and ELC
"Together we grow, learn and achieve"

Head Teacher: Barry Graham

10th November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that you and your family enjoyed the October holidays and that everyone is ready for the new term. We are still living in uncertain times due to COVID-19 (Coronavirus) but I will continue to keep you updated on how national and local authority regulations impact on Wallace Hall via our weekly email update.

Can I remind you that our generic information is no longer included in our termly letters home and can now be found in our annual Primary Information Booklet which you will find in the Primary School Bag on the main page of our school website: www.wallacehall.co.uk. We also sent you an electronic copy of this booklet via Groupcall in September.

P7 Open Evening

Our annual P7 Open Evening will not be able to take place as it normally would this year. We are exploring virtual options so that pupils and parents/carers can find out about the school. We will communicate our plans via the school's Social Media and Website.

The 2-18 Parent Council

Our 2-18 Parent Council Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on Thursday 29th October via Microsoft Teams. Mrs Louise Cochran was re-elected as Chairperson, along with Mrs Caroline O'Hara as Vice-Chair. Thank you to all parents who joined us for this meeting.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, our 2-18 Parent Council meetings will continue to take place virtually for the foreseeable future. All parents/carers are welcome to participate in the meetings and details on how to join are available on our school website and social media pages.

The next meeting of the 2-18 Parent Council is planned for Monday 7th December 2020. The meeting will start at 7pm. More information including previous minutes and Agendas can be found on the school website: www.wallacehall.co.uk.

The Parent Council has three sub-committees; Learning and Teaching, Primary Fundraising and Events and Secondary Fundraising and Events. If any parent/carer is interested in being on one of these very important and invaluable sub-committees, please get in touch at the email address below. Note: you do not have to be a Parent Council Member to be on a Sub-Committee.

If you would like more information on any aspect of the 2-18 Parent Council or would like to get involved, please contact our Parent Council Chairperson via email at: wallacehallparentcouncil@gmail.com.



Winner of
The Scottish Education Awards – Enterprise & Employability 2011
D & G LEADER Smarter Scotland Award 2010



Poppy Scotland

Poppies will be on sale during the lead up to Armistice Day. Poppies will be brought to Primary classes to give pupils and staff a chance to donate. Pupils can bring in money and will be asked to wash their hands after handling money or alternatively it can be sent in a sealed envelope. We would encourage everyone to support this appeal.

We will be making a window display of poppies in the Primary School to commemorate remembrance and we hope that the school community will enjoy seeing the children's art work

Staffing

Ms Morag Raphael has now started in her post as an Additional Support for Learning Teacher and she will work alongside Mrs Fiona Campbell. She will usually be in school once a fortnight on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Miss Lara Kormylo, a teacher from the Inclusion Team, will be working with us on Mondays this term. She will be working across Primary 4 to Primary 7 and will be delivering programmes to support health and wellbeing across areas such as resilience, communication and managing conflict.

Anti-Bullying Policy and Positive Behaviour Policy Review

We are currently working in partnership with pupils, staff and the Parent Council to review our anti-bullying and positive behaviour policies. We are also using a range of curricular projects to support this including Education Scotland's 'Compassionate and Connected Classrooms' resource in Primary 6 and 7. Our Primary 6 class are leading our work towards Rights Respecting Schools status which will support our whole school use of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We are keen to establish a focus group with parents to work on our anti-bullying and positive behaviour approaches. This focus group will take place on Teams. If you would be interested in taking part, please contact the school office by Monday 9th November and Mrs Mackenzie or Mrs Meredith will get in touch with you directly to make arrangements.

Mobile Phones

We would be grateful if you could remind your child that mobile phones must be handed into the Class Teacher on arrival in school. In the Primary School, children's use of mobile phones is not permitted on school grounds and should only be brought to school if there is a safety need, e.g. for walking home. A 2-18 ICT policy is currently under review and will be shared soon.

We are working on curricular projects about how to stay safe online and to promote safe and appropriate use of mobile phones. This includes a focus on preventing online bullying through instant messaging, voice chats and social media platforms.

Physical Education (PE)

PE can now take place indoors subject to safety guidance. At present, pupils should continue to come to school in their PE kit on PE days. A school uniform jumper should be brought to school to wear when they are not at PE. We are not currently using the changing rooms. Julie Tyson will be in this term to deliver further sessions with some of our classes.

8 Cs (8 Capacities)

Over the year, we encourage children to learn about our school's 8 Capacities which we often refer to as the 8 Cs. This term our focus in the Primary School is compassion and communication. We talk about these areas in assembly and encourage links with the 8Cs across the life and ethos of our school. More information about our 8 Cs can be found in our vision, values and aims document which is available at: <https://www.wallacehall.co.uk/important-documents-1>.

Warm Clothing and School Uniform

As the temperatures start to get colder, it is important that children bring warm clothes to wear if they need this in addition to their school uniform. It is preferable that hooded tops are not worn in school. We would like to remind all pupils that jewellery should be limited (sleeper studs and watches only), make up should not be worn by pupils at school and long hair should be tied up to prevent the spread of head lice. Information about the school uniform policy can be found at: <https://www.wallacehall.co.uk/uniform>. We appreciate your continued support with this.

We try to use the outdoors as much as possible and we only have breaks indoors if it is very wet or in the event of extreme weather conditions. Pupils should come to school with the appropriate warm clothing, waterproof/warm jackets and footwear for the weather conditions.

Children in Need Week: Monday 9th-Friday 13th November

The Early Learning Centre (ELC) and Primary School are taking part in the Children in Need national school's campaign "5 to Thrive- 5 Ways to Wellbeing." The aim of the Children in Need campaign is to help children feel healthier, stronger and happier. The Pupil Council will organise a colouring competition related to the wellbeing theme and there will be prizes to be won across ELC to Primary 7! The Pupil Council will organise a Joe Wickes PE finale in the hall for the ELC and Primary class bubbles on Friday 13th November. Pupils should come to school in their PE kits. Donations of £1 or £2 (in a sealed envelope marked Children in Need) can be made on Friday for taking part in a Joe Wickes workout to raise money for Children in Need.

Dr Bike for ELC and Primary

As part of the Sustrans iBike programme, we have been offered a Dr Bike session for pupils. The date is still to be confirmed. Pupils can bring their bikes into school on this day for a free bike check. A separate letter about this event from Sustrans will be emailed to all parents and carers. Bikes will be disinfected prior to and after the safety check by staff.

Flu vaccinations

On Friday 20th November, the Health Team will come into school to offer all P1-P7 pupils the flu vaccine which is in the form of a nasal spray. We would recommend that all children take up this offer. Further information can be found on the NHS website at www.immunisationscotland.org.uk/childflu.

Permission slips were sent home in Term 1. ***If these have not been returned, they should be completed, signed and returned to school as soon as possible please.***

Pupil Voice and Leadership of Learning

The House Captains are leading projects and contribute to our assemblies every week. Our Pupil Council has now been elected and they are already busy working on projects to plan events and improve our school. All the Pupil Action Groups have started to work towards their improvement projects. All Primary 7 pupils are taking forward areas of responsibility this year and their jobs include: Bullying Ambassadors, ECO Leaders (Environmental Group) and Junior Road Safety Officers, Maths Magicians, Library Leaders, Web Wizards and 8Cs Champions. Look out for good news about these projects in our weekly Sway.

Online Homework

We greatly appreciate your help in supporting children to complete their homework. Please get in touch with class teachers if you would like further information about a homework task. Opportunities are made for pupils to complete their homework at school if they have not been able to complete it at home. P4-P7 are now issuing their homework using Microsoft (MS) Teams. This is to support safe approaches to homework by reducing the need for handling paper. It is also beneficial to pupils' ICT skills as this helps pupils to start to develop the use of MS Teams that will likely continue in secondary school. We appreciate that not all pupils have access to a computer and paper copies have continued to be made available to pupils. Please get in touch with the school or your child's Class Teacher if your child is unable to access MS Teams at home to enable us to plan opportunities for them to upload their homework at school to the class Team.

Online Learning Resources

All classes are using Microsoft Teams to develop their ICT skills. Mrs Mackenzie and Ms. McDonald are working with Miss Park from the Academy to develop opportunities across the Primary School to develop skills in using Microsoft tools. This will help children to meet the curriculum expectations in Technologies and will support a smooth transition into secondary school.

We are grateful to the Parent Council who have paid half of the cost of a new programme, Purple Mash (from 2Simple), which provides great online resources for the pupils to work on their technology and ICT skills. It will also support younger pupils to develop the skills that they will later use in MS Teams. We have also recently purchased Numbots and Times Tables Rockstars which enables pupils to work progressively on improving their basic number skills. We are compiling a one-page guide to all the online resources and logins that pupils can use at home and at school. We will be printing a paper copy for each pupil to keep at home to enable ease of access to the wide range of learning resources available through the school. This will be issued in the next few weeks.

Learning Conversations and Targets

Learning Conversations will take place a little differently this year due to the circumstances. We look forward to a return to the usual learning conversation process when this is deemed safe. Over the next few weeks, your child and their Class Teacher will talk about your child's achievements and targets together, and then a Learning Conversation Record will be sent home on Friday 20th November.

It would have been normal practice for us to have a parents' evening this term, where you would have the opportunity to talk directly to your child's teacher with your child about their learning conversation, their progress and the areas they need to continue to work on. The global Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in us being unable to hold the usual face-to-face parent consultations that we all value. Instead, we can offer parents the opportunity to ask for further information or clarity about their child's progress by phone but we recognise that this cannot be a direct replacement for a traditional parents' evening/learning conversation.

If you would like to make an appointment to talk to your child's teacher, a 10-minute telephone appointment can be arranged. Staff will need to move onto other scheduled appointments; therefore, we appreciate your understanding in staff needing to keep to the 10-minute time limit. These appointments will be scheduled during a three-week period from Monday 23rd November.

If you would like the opportunity to speak to your child's Class Teacher, please contact the office to arrange an appointment. ***We would like to politely request that parents contact the office and do not use Class Dojo to arrange these appointments to make this process as smooth as possible.***

We are looking forward to talking with you about your child's learning and progress.

ELC Learning Information

Staff are formulating plans for opportunities to share children's learning, progress and next steps with parents and carers. Further information will be sent by the ELC team to parents.

Parental Engagement

We would like to emphasise that we would encourage parents and carers to get in touch at any time throughout the year if they have queries about their child's learning and progress; staff will be happy to get back in touch with you when they can.

At present, staff are receiving and making a high volume of telephone calls and Class Dojo messages due to the nature of the situation. We may not always be able to get back to you straight away when you call or message us, but we will always endeavour to get back to you as soon as we can. We greatly appreciate your support with these arrangements.

Over the term, we will continue to support engagement of families with their children's learning through sharing homework activities, providing updates about what the classes are working on through the weekly Sway, sharing class learning on Class Dojo and providing learning conversation reports. We are continuing to look at our approaches to promoting opportunities for family learning in the current Covid-19 situation and we always welcome feedback and ideas. If you would like to discuss our approaches to parental engagement or provide suggestions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with Mrs Mackenzie or Mrs Meredith.

Wallace Hall Parent Council Fundraising Christmas Activities

We are planning lots of fun activities on a Christmas Theme including class crafts, jolly jam jars and Christmas word searches. Further information will be sent home over the coming weeks.

Christmas Lunch

The menu and the date for our annual Wallace Hall Primary Christmas lunch are both still to be confirmed. The meal is free for Nursery 1140 hours' children and pupils in P1-P3. The cost for P4-P7 pupils will be £1.90 and all free school meal children will get their lunch free of charge. Further information will be sent by the ELC team to parents.

ELC Christmas Activities

The ELC are planning their arrangements for Christmas activities and celebrations. The ELC team will send out further information to parents and carers.

Primary Christmas Activities/Remote Christmas All Over the World Performance

During this festive period, we are keen that children still enjoy experiencing seasonal activities and performance opportunities. We are grateful to the Parent Council for the financial support that they have given us towards Christmas parties, music and performance resources and crafty materials to enable us to provide these exciting experiences.

We will be working across the Primary school on our theme: "Christmas All Over the World". The classes will be learning some sign language through their Christmas songs and will be sharing what they have learned. The children will learn about Christmas traditions across the globe and will be putting together art and other creative work. We are looking forward to the children sharing their festive project with parents and carers. Further information will follow nearer the end of term.

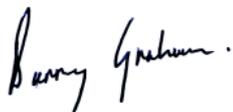
Christmas Parties

Our Christmas parties will be held in the final week of term. Dates and further information to follow.

Dates for your Diary

A 'Dates for your Diary' sheet listing key events for Term 2 and Term 3 of this academic year is attached – see Appendix A. You will also find an up to date version of this on the school website (wallacehall.co.uk).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barry Graham". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

B Graham
Head Teacher

Appendix A

	Date	Event
Term 2	26/10/20	First Day of Term
	29/10/20	School photographer – ELC, Primary and Families
	w.c. 09/11/20	Children in Need Week: “Five to Thrive- Five Ways to Wellbeing” campaign
	13/11/20	Children in Need PE Workout Event- Primary and ELC
	17/11/20	Dr Bike session – ELC and Primary
	20/11/20	Flu Immunisations- Primary
	20/11/20	Learning Conversations Record sent home- Primary
	w.c. 23/11/20	Primary Learning Conversations telephone appointments
	w.c. 30/11/20	Primary Learning Conversations telephone appointments
	w.c. 7/12/20	Primary Learning Conversations telephone appointments
	7/12/20	Parent Council meeting – 7pm. Meeting will be via MS Teams
	w.c. 14/12/20	Remote Christmas Project – primary only
	18/12/20	Last Day of Term

	Date	Event
Term 3	05/01/21	INSET Day – Teaching and Support Staff only
	06/01/21	First Day of Term
	15/02/21	Mid-term holiday
	16/02/21	Mid-term holiday
	17/02/21	Mid-term holiday
	18/02/21	INSET Day – Teaching and Support Staff only
	19/02/21	INSET Day – Teaching and Support Staff only
	01/03/21	Blood Donations 12-30pm 8.30pm
	26/03/21	Last Day of Term

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, we have been unable to organise many of the events we would normally have entered in our calendar until we receive further guidance from Scottish Government and Education Scotland.

Please keep an eye on our school website and social media pages for any updates.

Dates are also subject to change and notification of any such amendments will be issued in due course