

Our vision is to ensure all our pupils are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included, so that each individual can be fulfilled and reach their potential within a supportive and proactive community.



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19th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Further to the letter sent out today by our Director of Education, Laurence Findlay, I did not ever dream that I would find myself writing this letter, we are facing a challenge like nothing we have faced before and I am so glad our pupils live in such a resilient and supportive community. School is closed until such time as the government considers it safe for us to reopen. We don't know when this will be and would dearly hope it will be during next term, but at the moment that seems unlikely.

Primary 7:

This year's primary seven are an amazing bunch of children who have set such a high example of leadership, kindness and friendship in our school. We are so proud to know them and we are very confident they will each go on to do great things. While we have everything crossed that an end of year prize giving will still be possible we are keen to celebrate them tomorrow just in case it turns out to be their last day. For this reason p7s can bring in an old t-shirt for signing.

Next year's P1:

Again we are saddened that the many fun activities we have planned for our children moving from nursery to p1 are now unlikely to take place. Happily they are not moving too far and the faces in school are familiar to them. We have not yet settled on who is teaching which class but when we know we will be in touch with some preparation ideas.

Belongings:

Please make sure your child takes home all belongings as if it were the end of the school year as we don't know if we will be allowed to open up the school in the coming weeks.

School Work:

Every child in school can login to Purple Mash and knows how to work it – definitely. The teachers have set up To Do work on Purple Mash and will be monitoring as best they can remotely. Every child has also received a project that can be competed in depth over the coming weeks. A 30 day challenge sheet has also been issued.

Younger children need to keep working on number bonds, that's basic sums to ten or twenty. Older children should work on tables. Hit The Button online is a great resource for these skills.

Please also keep reading with and to your child. I have shared an online book resource to the Facebook page. There is a new page on the website called School Closure Work and extra tasks or copies of issued projects can be found there.

Facebook has a list of online links for educational purposes.

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If you need a hand or would like to share photos etc. please use the school email: newpitsligo.sch@aberdeenshire.gov.uk and let us know if we are allowed to share it on social media. We would love to hear from you.

Please do not directly contact teachers via messenger or personal emails as they too have families to care for and difficult challenges ahead.

School Routine:

I would urge parents to maintain a school day routine as far as is possible, with work set for the day as this will alleviate boredom (weekends and holidays will still be special) and maintain a good work ethic. Everything you need to keep going with your child's education has been made available and teaching guidance and advice will remain available throughout. The simple fact is that those who are able to invest this time in their children will be giving them very best chance for hitting the ground running when school reopens. Outdoor playtime is also an important part of the school day but remember to consider the guidelines on social distancing.

Craigower:

Sadly we have been told this must be cancelled. All payments will be repaid. We will reorganise it for the current p5/6 in spring next year if the company are able to accommodate our request. This doesn't help our lovely p7s and for that we are very sorry.

Free School Meals:

As it says in the letter the council will be working to continue providing meals to those eligible. We do not yet know how this is to be structured so more information will follow.

School Reports:

Reports will be emailed to you after Easter.

Book Club:

For the grown-ups, a code will be issued in the coming weeks that will allow you to join a book club WhatsApp page. If you are an avid reader and enjoy talking about books come and join in. We will also be looking for book recommendations.

Hardship:

We don't yet fully understand the potential impact of this situation on families so we are keen to support as best we can. I think many will see a loss of income and there will be some real worries. If you are not sure what to do, or you need a food parcel please email school and we will either direct you to the correct service or take what ever action we can ourselves. We do not yet know what we will be allowed to do but we do not want families coming under unnecessary strain. I know many of us are usually too proud to ask for help but this is different, we are in circumstances beyond our control and we need to ask for help if we need it and give help if we can give it.

To the Staff:

The incredible resilience of the full team in New Pitsligo School has completely blown me away. Every conversation has been about making sure our children are ok and time and effort at personal expense has been put in by absolutely everyone. The staff here inspire me every day but this week they have stepped up more than ever and I cannot thank them enough.

New Pitsligo Our Community Facebook Page:

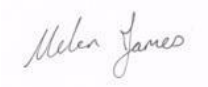
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We have created a bank of videos for sharing on the community Facebook page. Our aim is to share some joy, especially for those self-isolating.

And finally:

Take care of yourself and your families and keep in touch, we are online and ready to teach and will be so pleased to hear from you.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Helen James". The signature is written in a light blue or grey ink on a white background.

HELEN JAMES
Head Teacher