

Dear Parent / Carer,

Firstly, I hope everyone is well. It's a challenging time for everyone and we recognise that some are struggling more than others. On our Parent Council website, you can find a very useful 'Mindfulness for Staying at Home and After' document. It's full of little ideas and links to help support wellbeing.

Check in

Thank you to everyone for checking in with us. Some of the children are really keen and checking in to the virtual classrooms at weekends too! Please share with them that the teachers aren't in at weekends 😊.

We're changing the time of check-in and asking the children to do this in their classrooms by 12 noon. This allows us time to contact parents if their child has not been in touch two days in a row. Arrangements with parents via email will remain the same. Please check your emails to ensure you are getting the messages we send.

Assembly

Thank you to everyone who sent in photographs. We'll continue to use these over the next few weeks so everyone feels connected. There will be no assembly next Friday as it is May Day.

We plan to share the login details for fischy online music so that families can access the songs at any time. Thank you again to the Balloch Fundraising Group / Parent Council for financing this.

Literacy skill

As next week is a 4-day week, we're not giving details of a literacy skill. We'll include one in next week's letter.

Home learning

The weekly grid and daily task will remain for the next fortnight. We are aware that some families do not have the capacity to support their children with this and that, as one or both parents return to work, there are other demands on families. The most important thing is that families remain healthy. We do expect our Primary 6 and Primary 7 pupils who have been issued with chrome books to take more responsibility for their work and check in daily.

We are considering offering families the opportunity for their child to be involved in a group social voice call with their teacher during the week starting 11th May. We understand that parents may have their own diaries and, if this goes ahead, we will give a choice of times for your child to be involved. Parents should be aware that whilst we expect everyone to behave responsibly, we can't guarantee they will and we have no control over who may also be hearing what your child is saying in other homes.

We are also planning to have topic weeks with grids and daily tasks based around a theme. The first of these will be during the week starting 18th May. We hope this will be supportive of families with more than one child in Balloch Primary. Next week there will be activities related to VE Day sprinkled through grids and daily tasks. The children will only catch sight of the grid for their level in their classroom. This should make it easier for them to navigate their way around their tasks. Parents will still be sent the grid with all levels. We have included links to YouTube in the grid to lessen the burden on parents. Please be aware that we have no control over adverts or comments.

Some children have been uploading photographs / videos of themselves and others to their google classroom. Whilst we understand they are keen to share what they have been doing, this conflicts with HC's Acceptable Use Policy. Children can share photographs of activities they have been involved in but there should be no photographs with people in them. If parents wish to share photographs of their children with the class teacher then please email balloch.primary@highland.gov.uk with the teacher's name in the subject.

May Day – date for the diary

Finally, a reminder that Friday, 8th May, is May Day and so there will be no check-in and no virtual school. This date was chosen to coincide with the VE Day 75th anniversary commemorations.

Every day that passes is taking us closer to the day the children can return to school.

Kind regards,

Karen Ross
Head Teacher

Emma Patience
Acting Head Teacher

Clare Petrie
Depute Head Teacher