

Dear Parent / Carer,

We are starting to hear more about the planning process in regard to the return to school. The plan is for the Senior Management Team to go into the school buildings next week for part of the day, complete risk assessments and start preparing for the teachers return the following week and the children's return in August. Please also find attached a letter from Paul Senior, Chief Officer Education and Learning. As soon as we have practical information to share, we will.

We are very aware of parent concerns and questions and we will try and address these in the most appropriate ways possible, e.g. videos of where children line up, Google Meets to share information. There will be lots of information to share in the coming weeks which will probably take up most of the weekly communication.

Apologies for the longer communication this week, we usually try to keep it to 2 sides of A4.

### **Staffing**

We now know our teacher staffing for next session. As the number of children coming into P1-7 is less than the number leaving, we will have one less class next session and so there will be a reduction in teaching staff. Usually we share this information with children and answer any questions they may have as well as sharing with parents in our newsletter. Please could parents discuss this with their children. We, sadly, say farewell to **Miss Hakim** and **Mrs Rankin**. We are very sorry to say goodbye to both ladies who have been very important members of our Team Balloch. We don't yet know which posts Miss Hakim and Mrs Rankin will be taking up within Highland Council but I am sure that, along with us, you wish them both all the best for their future careers as well as health and happiness. **Miss Shepherd** will also be leaving us as **Mrs Trotman** returns. You may have noticed Mrs Trotman's photograph in today's Assembly as she is working alongside us to prepare for the children's return in August. We will be very sorry to say goodbye to Miss Shepherd who has also been a very valuable member of our staff since joining us earlier in the session. We wish her all the best in her new post.

### **Classes next session**

We are at the early stages of configuring next session's classes and hope to issue these to parents on Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> June via email. This is to allow us to hold Google Meets the following week for the children with their new teacher/s.

### **Report cards**

There is no expectation from Highland Council that report cards are issued for this session. However, just before lockdown, as a staff, we were concerned that P1-7 parents might miss out on parent evenings and the reporting of their children's work to date. The decision was taken to write report cards then and so we will be issuing these to parents on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> June, via email as we do not have the capacity presently to send paper copies. Any parent who does not want the report/s sent via email and would rather wait for a paper copy, should email the school inbox [balloch.primary@highland.gov.uk](mailto:balloch.primary@highland.gov.uk). We will be emailing reports in order from P7 to P1 so this may take us some time. If you don't receive your child/ren's report by mid-day on Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> June, please get in touch with us. We no longer issue end of session reports to nursery parents.

### **School uniform**

The BFG are hoping to hold a sale of pre-loved uniforms, at the start of the new term, details to follow nearer the time. For now, we ask can everyone please keep their old uniforms, to donate to us after the summer holidays. Thank you, BFG.

**Google group social call**

Next week we plan to hold 2 Google Meets per class.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
P1	1 p.m.			10 a.m.	
P2/1		11 a.m.			10.00 a.m.
P3/2		12.30 p.m.		10.30 a.m.	
P4/3				12.30 p.m.	11.15 a.m.
P5/4	11 a.m.	10.00 a.m.			
P5		1 p.m.		11 a.m.	
P6		11 a.m.	11 a.m.		
P7/6	1.15 p.m.	10.30 a.m.			
P7	1.30 p.m.	.		11 a.m.	

**Literacy skill**

This week our literacy focus moves from reading to spelling. This is our final piece of family learning as our weekly communication’s main focus will be transition and the return to school.

Initially when children learn to spell, it is through the introduction of phonics and then words with common spelling patterns or ones which are regularly met in reading tasks. As children progress patterns and vocabulary become more challenging.

In order to help a child to learn how to spell, there are a number of supporting strategies which can be used. One of the strategies which we often use in schools which is:

**Look, cover, write & check**

With this strategy, children learn to .....

**Look**

Time is spent in school and at home **looking** at the printed word. Pupils are encouraged to **look** for familiar spelling patterns within the word.

**Cover & write**

When confident, pupils attempt to spell the vocabulary for themselves. The focus word is **covered** and the child **writes** it as they remember it from memory.

**Check**

After attempting to write the word, children look back at the printed word to **check** whether it has been spelled correctly.

**Repetition**

The key to this strategy is repetition. It can and should be repeated as often as is necessary until your child is able to accurately spell the word off by heart. Words should be revised regularly and not just

learned as a one off for a weekly test. The true test is when your child spells the word consistently in all pieces of writing which are produced.

### **Assembly**

Our song for assembly next week is 'Celebrate'. As always, parents can give their children access to the video before assembly so that they can practise the song, including the British Sign Language which accompanies it.

Go to <https://www.fischy.com/>

Login user name: [balloch.primary@highland.gov.uk](mailto:balloch.primary@highland.gov.uk)

Password: **Balloch2020**

Search **Celebrate**

[View song](#)

[Learn the song](#)

Thank you for continuing to send photographs. Any photographs received by 3 p.m. on the Wednesday will be used that week, with later photographs being held over for the following week's assembly. Our final assembly for sharing photographs will be Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> June.

We will be holding a very special virtual assembly for our Primary 7 pupils on the final day of term as well as a physically connected one when we are allowed to hold larger gatherings.

### **Parent Council Facebook page**

We'd like to remind parents that the Parent Council shares information via their website and Facebook page. Parents do not have to be on Facebook to access this page and it is worthwhile checking it regularly for relevant information. <https://www.facebook.com/BallochPrimary/>

### **Flag competition**

As mentioned in today's assembly, please could parents send their children's designs electronically to [balloch.primary@highland.gov.uk](mailto:balloch.primary@highland.gov.uk) by the end of Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> June. This can be uploaded as a document or a photograph. We don't know when we will be able to physically share objects with the children and don't want to keep extending the date, particularly when there is a chance we could have our new flag flying by the time we return to school.

### **Dates for the diary**

Monday 15 June	Report cards issued for P 1 – 7
Thursday 18 June	Letter issued in regards to classes for next session
Tuesday 23 June 6.30 p.m.	Google Meet for parents of pupils entering Primary 1
W/S Monday 22 June	Planned Google Meets for children with next session's class teacher/s
Friday 26 June	Final sharing of photographs at assembly
Friday 3 July	Final day of session 19 - 20

Kind regards,

Karen Ross  
Head Teacher

Emma Patience  
Acting Head Teacher

Clare Petrie  
Depute Head Teacher