



Parent Information Sheet
Friday 18th December 2020



Our House Points are back up and running and this week for the first time this year we have the scores on the doors...

Points for READY TO LEARN, SAFE AND RESPECTFUL for this week are...

Eagles - 519 points Hawks - 461 points Owls - 455 points Falcons - 465 points

Look out in January for the extra points scored over December plus the scores on the doors for Term 1!!!

School finishes for the Christmas Holidays on Tuesday 22nd December at 12 noon

School resumes on Tuesday 5th January 2021 at the usual times.

(Unless otherwise directed in which case we will be in contact.)

Whilst school is open and functioning next week finishing at 12 noon on Tuesday I am aware that for personal reasons some families are choosing to keep their children at home for a few days before spending time with grandparents and other, perhaps vulnerable, family members. We will respect their wish. As you would appreciate at this time of year most formal activities have ceased. Teachers will not be delivering remote learning if you choose to keep your child at home. A supply of glue and glitter will be all you need!

Dinners Next Week

There will be NO SCHOOL DINNERS on Monday. Please bring a packed lunch on Monday and school finishes at 12 noon on Tuesday so there is no lunch required.

PTA Final Fundraiser of 2020

On Tuesday it's Christmas Jumper Day. It's a nice easy one and sure to bring a festive smile to everyone's face – Christmas Jumper Day! Don't forget jumpers can be teamed up with antlers, elf ears or Santa hats. The more festive the better. Suggested minimum donation £1.00



Assembly

This week Mrs McKirgan gave her final assembly to the children. Unfortunately, there was no gathering in the hall but instead Mrs McKirgan's assembly was videoed to be watched by each of the classes in their rooms. The message was simple – "I hope you dance". Which is an expression meaning find the thing in life that brings you joy and do it. Whether it's a hobby, a pastime or a career find what makes you happy, work hard at it and don't be put off by what others may think.

Emergency Number

It is through the combined efforts of the entire school community that up to now we have so far been (fingers crossed and touch wood!!) COVID free. However, there is always the possibility that we will not go untouched by the virus and so we need to be prepared for that eventuality. Should your child develop symptoms and subsequently test positive it is vital that you contact school immediately as close contacts of that individual will have to be contacted so that they can self-isolate as advised by the PHA. This is equally and especially important once school ends on the **22nd of December up to midnight on 24th December Christmas Eve**. The close contacts of the individual within the 48 hours prior to the first symptoms will need to be contacted and therefore school will be heavily involved in the trace and tracking process. **The following number should ONLY be used if your child has developed COVID symptoms and tested POSITIVE - 07896897802.** After 24th December families should deal directly with the PHA 0300 555 0114

New Website Coming!!

Watch out for the launch of our new website next week. Mrs McChesney has been instrumental in updating our website and has done a terrific job. The new site should go live on Monday afternoon. A massive thanks also to Rainbow Communications who kindly sponsored the upgrade and upkeep of the website.

Also check out our promotional video for parents interested in applying for Nursery or P1 in 2021!!

Merry Christmas Everyone!

School resumes on Tuesday 5th January 2021 at the usual times

(Unless otherwise directed in which case we will be in contact.)





Final Farewell

When I made the decision that I would retire this Christmas it felt like a very long time away. Of course, I knew there was an end date. I knew that date was getting closer but I really didn't spend too much time dwelling on it – school has been pretty busy! And so here I am on my last Thursday night as principal of Glencraig, writing my last ever Friday note and wondering not only where did the last four months go, but where did the last 14 years as Principal go? Indeed, where did the last 33 years as a teacher go??!!

Time really does play tricks on us. You don't realise the speed with which it passes. When I see our little P1s stroll up the drive in the mornings I remember with complete clarity my own first day in P1 – despite the passage of over half a century! Ask me what I watched on telly last night and I could well struggle!

Memories of school are vivid in my mind. But then that's not surprising as I've quite literally been at school for most of my life - 52 years altogether! I've loved every school I've been associated with from my own primary school, to big school, to college, to the three schools I've taught in. I have a treasure trove of memories. Whilst not all my memories are happy, (this is real life we're talking about) I have to say most of them are. Those that aren't are probably the moments that have challenged me most, that have taught me most and ultimately have made me appreciate the many happy memories all the more.

So, what shall I remember most about being in school at Glencraig? Well strangely enough it's not the building, the people, the curriculum or the many and varied aspects of the role of Principal. No what I shall miss is the feeling of connection.

On bad days the connection doesn't happen, things don't gel, your plans for the day don't pan out and it feels like everyone's singing from a different hymn sheet. Those days happen to us all but thankfully they're odd days not every day.

On good days, which are most days in Glencraig, magic happens. It generally starts with an early morning chat with Mr Eaton when I arrive at school – unless he hasn't got out to play golf at the weekend when there may be a bit of radio silence. But after that it's just connection after connection.

Connecting with the staff in discussions that are focused on what to do to keep the children safe, or how we can make school better for the children or how we can develop as a team.

Connecting with the children in the mornings. "Hellos" that set the day off on the right foot and remind me daily why I wanted to be a teacher in the first place.

Connecting with the children in preparations for concerts or cross country; sharing with them in events like Peace Proms or football tournaments. It's sitting around a table with our Pupil Council or ECO Team and suddenly getting a glimpse of future politicians and environmentalists. It's watching the teachers deliver brilliant and engaging lessons in an observation and seeing the children learn and develop right before my eyes. Teaching and learning; teacher and pupil perfectly connected in a common purpose.

It's feeling such a connection with the children when they stand up and deliver articulate assemblies or presentations in front of their teachers and peers that it triggers almost parental pride. Or I see the P6 and P7 children buddy the younger children with such care and attention that I know someday they will make great parents themselves.

I will miss the connection I have with the staff when we get the chance to spend time developing an area of the curriculum or pedagogy and celebrate our profession. Or that lovely sense of connection and camaraderie when we get the rare chance to spend time relaxing together as a group of colleagues.

I will miss the connection I feel with parents, some of whom I have worked with over many years as well as parents whom I have only had the opportunity to form a brief relationship with.

I will miss those moments of connection when things come together perfectly for a time and you feel a real sense of joy and pride - Sports day picnics, autumn fairs, apple ducking, fancy dress days, duck races, colour runs, gala balls, summer fetes, quizzes, carol singing, concerts and leavers' assemblies. Like I said, a treasure trove of memories.

But most of all I will miss the connection that I have with the school community as a whole. A community that welcomed me as principal fourteen years ago and has encouraged, challenged and supported me through good times and bad.

It has been a privilege and pleasure to have been connected to this school community and I thank you all from the bottom of my heart. Wishing you all every happiness in the years to come.

S. McKirgan