



## Parent Information Sheet Friday 26<sup>th</sup> February

### Hello!

I would like to start my first Friday Note Home, by saying Hello and I hope this message reaches you well and in good health. I would also like to thank you for all your kind messages welcoming me to Glencraig. Any transition during these times is particularly difficult, but I have been made to feel exceptionally welcome by staff, pupils and parents. I am incredibly excited to be starting this position and getting to know all the fantastic pupils at Glencraig Integrated Primary. Obviously, this will be more of a challenge in the current circumstances, but in time I hope to establish a meaningful relationship with you as parents, and to ensure that together we secure the best future for our children.

I have been very fortunate to succeed Mrs McKirgan as Principal and to benefit from all her exceptional work during the past 14 years. This will be an incredibly hard act to follow, but I know with the support of you, as parents alongside our staff, it will be more than achievable. The excellent work of Ms Finlay over the past six weeks during turbulent times in education has also made my task so much easier, and I extend my sincere thanks to her too.

Initially we will have to work together virtually and, after just a few days of 'investigating' Class Dojo and Google Classroom, I have been amazed by the fantastic work of the pupils during this period of remote learning. From Nursery through to Primary 7, the children are rising to the challenges set each day. On behalf of the staff, I would just like to say thank you for the support you are providing at home on a daily basis. On my own behalf, I would really appreciate it if you could ensure that your child participates in the assembly activity published yesterday on Class Dojo. The responses so far have been excellent and I thoroughly look forward to getting to know everyone.

### Return to schools:

Moving on to the resumption of in-school teaching, the phased return of certain year groups was confirmed by the Department of Education on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February as follows:

Pupils in Nursery to Primary 3: return to full-time face-to-face teaching for the week beginning **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March** for two weeks. Then, on the week beginning **Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March**, remote learning will resume for Nursery to Primary 3 pupils for one week until the break for the Easter Holidays (**Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March**).

Pupils in Primary 4-7: these year groups will continue remote learning until at least the Easter break on **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March**.

Provisions for Key Workers/Vulnerable Children will continue as before.

Next week, we will be providing you with more guidance regarding specific information on the return.

### Easter Holiday dates:

Our Easter Holidays begin start from Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March (half day) with learning to restart on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> April. At this current time, there has been no decision on what the re-opening of schools will look like, however, we will keep you updated.



### **Dates for Post Primary Schools Admissions:**

The Post-Primary application process will take place online for the first time this year. The application will be open from 12 noon on **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March** and will remain open until 4pm on **Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March**. If you have any further questions, please contact Ms Finlay on Class Dojo.

### **School Phone Line:**

Unfortunately, our main school phone line is still down (has the engaged tone). For all urgent queries, please email the school: at: [Info@glencraigps.holywood.ni.sch.uk](mailto:Info@glencraigps.holywood.ni.sch.uk) and we will return the call as soon as possible. Apologies once again for the disruption.

### **ICT Update: Digital Safety update- Omegle:**

As you may have seen in the media over recent weeks, concerns have been raised about Omegle, an App which pairs adults for live chat and messaging. The website was set up in 2009 with the slogan 'Talk to strangers!' There is an option for adult (18+) content and a section for people aged 13+ with parental permission. Anyone can use the site. Users simply go to Omegle.com and then choose 'Text' or 'Video' chat and the page states how many users are currently online. Depending on the time of day this can be hundreds of thousands. Omegle markets itself as a great way to meet new friends, however incidents have been recorded when inappropriate content has arisen within chats, so it is important parents are aware of the risks associated with the site.

<https://www.glencraigps.co.uk/pupils/digital-safety-hub>

Visit the Digital Safety Hub on our website for more information from the National Online Safety.

If I can help in anyway, please do not hesitate to get in touch at [info@glencraigps.holywood.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@glencraigps.holywood.ni.sch.uk)

Thank you once again for all your help and support,

Have a great weekend,

John Mawhinney