



New Term Update
Friday 8th January 2021



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to the new term. Although a very different festive period, we hope that you had an enjoyable Christmas and that you and your loved ones are safe and well. It is with a heavy heart that we have to enter lockdown once more. We would like to reassure you that the St Andrew's team are committed to keeping your children safe and, although disappointed to not be seeing them in person, are working hard to stay in touch with families and provide high quality learning experiences for all of our learners.

In addition to the earlier letter from our executive director, Fiona Robertson, I hope that you find the following information useful in the days ahead.

Joanne Hunter 😊
Acting Leader of Learning

Remote Learning Arrangements:

Remote learning will commence on **Monday 11th January**. Following current Scottish Government guidance, most of our pupils will complete this learning at home. Please note that should your child be one of the small number attending school, in person, they will complete the **same remote learning tasks** as if they were learning at home. For this reason, if they have borrowed a class Chrome Book, this should be brought on the days that they attend school.

Google Classroom is the main platform used to deliver remote learning to our P1-7 pupils. Your child will require their GLOW password to access their Google Classroom. All passwords were emailed home prior to the Christmas break. Please email our school office if you have trouble accessing this, and they will pass your enquiry on to the appropriate member of staff. The Athena Homepage has some helpful tutorials for using GLOW and Google Classroom. These can be accessed by clicking on the purple Parent Information box at the top of the Athena main page. Class specific arrangements for accessing learning tasks are as follows:

Primary 1: Tasks will be prepared by Miss Stewart and posted as a Learning Grid on Twitter, the school website and the P1 Google Classroom. They will be supported by short video/tutorial clips and on-line links, which can be accessed on the Google Classroom. We are aware that P1 parents may not have had experience of remote learning before, so hope that posting on a variety of platforms will make learning more accessible and manageable for all. Mrs Kristoffersen will support Miss Stewart with providing differentiated Phonics and Reading tasks for pupils and Mr Paterson will provide some music activities.

Primary 2: Tasks will be posted on the P2 Google Classroom. These will be managed by Mrs Green, Monday – Wednesday, with support from Mrs Kristoffersen in Phonics and Reading. Miss Prior is part of our Core Team, in school, so the P2 Google Classroom will also be supported by Miss Stewart, Thursday – Friday.

Primary 3: Tasks will be posted on the P3 Google Classroom. These will be managed by Miss Allum, with support from Mrs Kristoffersen in Phonics and Reading.

Primary 4: Tasks will be posted on the P4 Google Classroom. These will be managed by Mrs Burgess, with support from Mrs Kristoffersen in Phonics and Reading. Mrs Burgess is part of our Core Team, in school, so the Google Classroom will also be supported by Mrs Wiseman and Mrs Valentine. Mrs Green will provide tasks for those P4 pupils who are preparing for the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Primary 5: Tasks will be posted on the P5 Google Classroom. These will be managed by Mrs Wiseman, Monday – Wednesday and Mrs Valentine Thursday – Friday. Mrs Kristoffersen will support in providing Phonics and Reading tasks for some pupils.

Primary 6 and 7: In order to allow Miss Wilkson to be part of our Core Team, in school, she and Mr Paterson have created a P6/7 Google Classroom, and will operate a team-teaching arrangement. Both teachers will liaise closely to ensure that tasks are appropriately differentiated and targeted according to the needs of individual pupils. On occasion, some tasks may be in common for both stages. Mr Paterson will take the lead on managing the Google Classroom, on a day to day basis, with input from Miss Wilkinson where appropriate. Miss Stewart will provide tasks for those P7 pupils who are preparing for the sacrament of Confirmation.

Resources and support: We are aware that remote learning can be challenging for families, as parents and carers often have to combine this with the demands of working from home themselves, as well as other responsibilities. Many of our staff are parents themselves, and all have tried to be mindful in planning tasks and activities which can be fitted around family life, and that do not require significant resources or additional materials. There is no expectation for parents and carers to print off learning materials, although you are welcome to do so, if this makes life easier. General advice is to try and have some sort of daily routine, which allows for periods of learning, along with time for breaks and other activities that your child enjoys. Some families prefer to complete home learning in the morning and give their child free time in the afternoon. Others prefer to complete a couple of tasks in the morning, have a longer break, and then complete a further couple of tasks in the afternoon. We would encourage every family to do what works best for them.

Should you and your child start to find remote learning particularly challenging, we would encourage that you make contact with school, either through the Google Classroom, or via the main school office, and we will do our very best to offer appropriate support.

Home School Practitioner:

Some parents and carers may already have had contact with our Home School Practitioner, Elaine Baur. Please be aware that Elaine is available to support **all of our families**, and is able to offer advice in a wide range of areas. This may be of a practical nature, relating to financial matters, or more generally with regard to family life and well-being. **Any parent or carer can contact Elaine**, via our main school office, or directly on 07500 125 086. She is happy to receive either calls or texts and can be emailed at: elaine.baur@midlothian.gov.uk

Please note that Elaine's working hours are 8am-4pm Monday – Thursday, during term time.

New Members of Staff:

We are delighted to welcome Mrs Sarah Ferrier and Mrs Gillian Bleck to the St Andrew's staff team. Mrs Ferrier is looking forward to supporting in our nursery, when we return, and has already become a valuable member of the team as they prepare high-quality learning experiences for your children to enjoy at home. Mrs Bleck will be supporting in our Complex Needs Provision, long term, in place of Mrs Boddy, who was with us on a temporary basis. Mrs Bleck was able to meet most of our pupils, prior to the Christmas break, and will be providing some in-school support, during lock-down, Wednesday-Friday.

Sacramental Preparation:

As previously mentioned, our P4 and P7 pupils will begin their preparations for the sacraments of Holy Communion and Confirmation, respectively. This will be done via their Google Classroom. Miss Stewart is liaising with Father Allan regularly, and we will update parents and carers as soon as we have information regarding these important celebrations.

Communication:

Current guidance from Scottish Government advises that no one should attend our school building without prior arrangement. Should parents and carers require to make contact with staff, we ask that they contact the school office, in the first instance, either by phone on 0131 271 4670 or by email at: standrews.ps@midlothian.gov.uk

Please note that should it be considered necessary for you to enter the school grounds, then Midlothian policy is that a face covering should be worn at all times (unless exempt) and that a strict 2m distance from adults/children, not in your own household, is maintained.

It continues to be school policy that **only** contract taxis and vehicles with school or disabled parking permits should enter the school grounds. **All** other vehicles should park in the Visitors' Car Park, outside the school gates. Thank you.

Finally:

Thank you to all our families who sent in cards and gifts at the end of term. Although there was no expectation from staff to receive these we are very grateful for the thoughtful and kind gesture. Thanks also to those who made a donation to a local food bank or charity on our behalf. We hope your child has enjoyed their gift-wrapped book – courtesy of our Parent Council. We would like to thank them again for their generosity. 😊