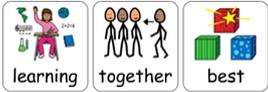




# News Briefing: December 2020



## We Are Learning

Next term is the beginning of an exciting approach to planning learning in West Mains. Teachers have worked together to look at how we structure the curriculum for our learners to make it much more relevant, deeper and meaningful. Each term teachers will be planning learning around a different aspect of our world.

Each year is divided up into four planning periods, each dedicated to a different 'World'. We have a rolling two year rotation to give lots of variety for the children.

	YEAR 1 (2020-2021)	YEAR 2 (2021-2022)
August-October	My Healthy World	My World of Relationships
October-December	My Cultural World	My Enterprising World
January - March	My Historical World	My Technological World
April - June	My Scientific World	My Geographical World

The 'World' will be the context for the Interdisciplinary Learning topic that classes will be investigating. We have grouped the teachers into 'planning partners' to allow lots of collegiate planning to enhance their ability to provide brilliantly rich learning experiences. Not only will teachers be planning lots of amazing learning activities as tools to promote and support learning intentions, we will also be transforming all or part of the classroom into that world to make learning even more exciting.

In January all pupils will be exploring **Our Historical World**.

**Rooms 1, 2 and 6 will learn about Castles**

**Rooms 3 and 4 will learn about Dinosaurs**

**Rooms 5, 7 and 8 will learn about Transport**

What was it like to live in a castle?

What did knights do?

What do we know about dinosaurs?

How do we know about Dinosaurs?

Are there any dinosaurs today?

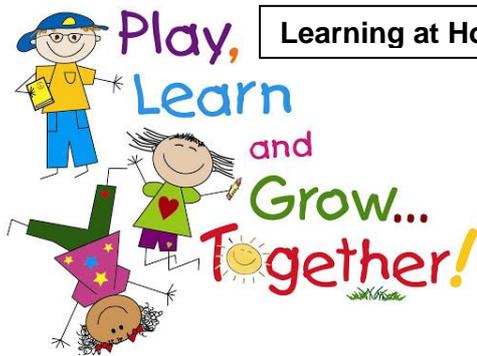
Why are there castles?

Old and new.

First and next.

Exploring with our senses.

I am sure you will agree that staff provide marvellous opportunities for pupils to explore learning in fantastically fun ways in West Mains. As I walk around the school I am always surprised and proud of the amazing learning and teaching that is supporting children to make incredible progress towards being the very best they can be.



The government state that there must be contingency plans in place in all schools to support the continuity of learning through the COVID-19 restrictions. In West Mains School, staff are continuing to plan to support learners who are asked to self-isolate and are well, including in the proposed restrictions for January. For most learners this will be through Google Classroom. To prepare for this, teachers are posting activities onto the class page that will support you to engage with your child's learning and

It is important that learners are supported to access this regularly and to participate in the fun learning activities suggested for home learning each week. These play-based activities will be opportunities for

their progress in positive way. you to engage with what your child is learning in school. Your child has been issued a username and password to access to the Google Classroom set up by their class teacher. Learners will also be supported to use Google Classroom in school, so they are familiar with when needed in January. There are some classes who continue to use email as the way to communicate learning. If you have any concerns about this, please contact me: [gw14westmainsht@glow.sch.uk](mailto:gw14westmainsht@glow.sch.uk)



### **Keeping Safe**

Keeping everyone safe in West Mains is a very high priority as we work together to combat the COVID-19 virus. The Scottish Government have issued clear guidelines for schools to ensure the safety and security for all. In West Mains these have been in place since August and we are frequently reviewing our practice to make sure it is the best it can be.

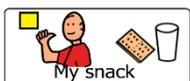
The Government have acknowledged the importance of family and being together over the Christmas holidays; albeit in a more restricted way than originally planned. The advice is also to be vigilant and careful to keep safe and secure. There is a balance between family and working together to stop the spread of the virus. We hope that over the festive period you and your family stay well and have quality time relaxing and celebrating being together

If your child or anyone in your household shows any symptoms, please contact NHS for advice and to book a test if needed. If your household are asked to self-isolate for any reason into the new term, please let us know.



**Stopping the spread starts with all of us.**

[www.NHSinform.scot/Covid-19](http://www.NHSinform.scot/Covid-19)



### **Snacks in School**

Children can bring one small snack to school to have at playtime. Along with other schools in Scotland, we are a Health Promoting School. We encourage healthy eating with children in School. Nutritional advice is that children should have breakfast before school and a healthy lunch. We are aware that many of our pupils can prefer a restricted diet, but we encourage children to make healthy choices and to try new foods and tastes. To support this we ask that children bring one item for their snack.



## Wet, and Windy Weather

The weather is very changeable, sometimes very wet, and windy, and it can be cold. We in West Mains value all opportunities to play and learn outside. This will be happening more, in line with government guidelines. It is important that children are equipped for all weathers: coat, hat, wellies and possibly gloves and scarf. A change of clothes in their school bag will mean that they can change out of wet or muddy clothes when returning to class.

If you have any good quality warm or waterproof clothing that your child has outgrown, please donate it to West Mains School so we can have spares to share with others. Any outgrown wellington boots would also be much appreciated.

COVID-19 Guidelines insist on sufficient ventilation in all indoor areas of the school. As the school is not always as warm as it has been in the past, children should wear warm layers in class.



## Parent and Family Events: Let us know

Throughout the year, we usually organise events parents and families can come to. Unfortunately, this will not be possible for the foreseeable future. We have missed the interaction and partnership with parents and are keen to re-establish ways to involve families in the life of the school in more direct ways. We are also aware that the COVID situation has brought extra stresses for families. Our next steps will be to ask for views...so look out for information in the new term



## Toys in School.

Whilst we understand that some children look for support from transition objects, bringing multiple toys into school does cause challenges for their owner and friends, who want to play. If toys are brought into school, it must be at the child's own risk and we cannot be held responsible for loss or damage. Also, COVID guidelines outline the risks of bringing toys into school, with a heightened risk of cross contamination. For these reasons we ask that children bring only 1 toy into school, and that they are supported to keep it in their school bag, whenever possible.

## Tantrum v Meltdown

Spotting the differences

**Tantrums** are about control.  
**Meltdowns** are about sensory overload.

Tantrums		Meltdowns
✓	Is the child <b>watching</b> for your reaction?	✗
✓	Is the child <b>considering</b> their own safety?	✗
✓	Is the child in <b>control</b> of their own behaviour?	✗
✓	Is the child making an effort to <b>communicate</b> their needs?	✗
✓	Is the child able to <b>calm down</b> once the situation has been resolved?	✗



Christine Shaw

**Christine Shaw**  
Head Teacher

Walk away and give no attention to **Tantrums**.  
Hold and comfort a **Meltdown**