



Date : 1st November 2017
Ref : KJM NEWSLETTER 003

TO ALL PARENTS AND CARERS

Dear Parents and Carers,

WELCOME BACK!

We would like to warmly welcome back all our pupils as we begin our second term of this session at Tolsta School. I hope that those of you who were away enjoyed quality time spent with family over the holiday period.

BLYTHSWOOD SHOEBOX APPEAL

We were very pleased to have Rhona Matheson of Blythwood come and speak to the children of Back and Tolsta Schools about the difference the Shoebox Appeal makes to the lives of those who receive shoeboxes each year. A number of shoeboxes have been sent into school already and we thank you all for your generosity to this worthy cause. We have been given an extension to the last day for submission of shoeboxes for this year's Blythwood Shoebox Appeal, so those of you have not yet done this still have some time should you wish to donate. All shoeboxes must be in school no later than Friday 3rd November 2017.

MASTERCLASS

It was wonderful to bring the children of Tolsta and Sgoil a Bhac together for the Masterclass programme. This year one of the areas for improvement within our School Improvement Plan has been to improve Learning and Teaching in the Technologies. Staff in both schools have been working on developing the experiences and outcomes, which were updated for this curricular area in November 2016.

The Masterclass programme afforded us with the opportunity to provide our pupils with a wide menu from which they chose which skills they would like to develop. Following the first of our Masterclasses in Term 1 which was held during the last week of school, I am now in a position to be able to inform parents of the dates for Masterclass this term and also for Term 3. Children will on these occasions follow a different choice and programme for the days that they come together.

Term 2 Masterclass will take place on Tuesday 28th, Wednesday 29th and Thursday 30th November 2017.

Term 3 Masterclass is planned to take place on Tuesday 6th, Wednesday 7th and Thursday 8th March 2018.

We will follow the same arrangements as we did for Term 1. Pupils will work in Tolsta for the first part of the morning and will be transported to Sgoil a' Bhac to start the Masterclass programme after the morning break there at 10:40am. Pupils will then return to Tolsta in time for the end of the school day.

Initial feedback from the pupils and staff has been very positive. It has also been pleasing to speak to a number of parents over the last few days, most of whom have spoken very positively about the children's enjoyment of the programme. I am hopeful that this is something we can build on across the rest of the session.





SCHOOL VALUES

Many thanks to parents who engaged with the initial exercise on developing shared values for the school. I have been working on collating the results from pupils, staff and parents and will shortly be asking parents to undertake this values choice exercise again with the shortlist of values that was drawn up from the first round.

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE

As has been the practice in previous years the school will be represented at the local Remembrance Day service in Tolsta on Saturday 11th November 2017. The service will begin at 11am and will be held at the War Memorial. Any parents who wish to attend with their children are warmly encouraged to do so.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING CURRICULUM EVENING

Last session Health and Wellbeing was one of the main focuses for the school improvement plan. As part of that a lot of work was undertaken in relation to Internet Safety, Anti-Bullying following the 360 Audit. In order to update parents on these very important issues it is intended to have an information and update evening for parents on Wednesday 15th November 2017 at 7:30pm. Further details will follow in due course.

FLU VACCINATIONS

Following the distribution of consent forms last term, the school nurse team will be visiting Tolsta School on Tuesday 21st November 2017 to administer nasal flu vaccinations to P1-7 pupils as part of the national vaccination programme. Vaccinations for nursery-age children are organised through your own GP.

CROSS COUNTRY SERIES OF RACES

Tolsta School has always enjoyed good success at the Winter series of Cross Country races. The first meet of the season for Cross Country will take place on the morning of Saturday 11th November. We would encourage as many of our pupils as possible to participate in this event and add to their wider achievement in this way.

OPENING TIMES – TOLSTA SCHOOL

I would just like to bring to parents attention that over the last number of weeks a number of children have been arriving at school as early as 8:20am. Though a member of staff is on site from 8am, she is there to carry out administrative duties associated with her post. I would remind parents that children should not arrive in school before 8:40am which is when the bus arrives as there is no member of staff on site until that time whose role it is to supervise children.

PRIMARY 6-7 RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL TRIP

Following a consultation with all parents on the subject of residential school trips it was decided to keep the cycle of school trips to every two years but to change the target group to Primary 6-7.

At the end of last term, I undertook a further brief consultation with parents of pupils in Primary 6-7 to ask whether they would be willing for their children to go on a joint residential school trip with pupils from Sgoil a' Bhac to Alltnacriche Outdoor Centre in June 2018 or whether they would wish school staff to explore an alternative option.





The overwhelming majority of parents (8 families out of the 10 surveyed) expressed the view that they would be willing for children to undertake a joint trip with Sgoil a' Bhac, this session for the reasons outlined in the letter to them. School staff will now actively work with the relevant school staff in Sgoil a' Bhac to organise this for June 2018.

PARENT COUNCIL

The next Parent Council meeting will be held on Monday 13th November 2017 at 7.30pm. All are welcome to attend.

CHILDREN IN NEED DAY

Children in Need Day will take place on Friday 17th November 2017. In order to help raise money for this worthwhile cause we would like to have a Bring 'n' Buy Sale. 'Clearing Out Your Cupboards for Christmas' is the theme and we would be grateful if children are able to donate unwanted toys/games etc that they can take to school for the sale. Further details will follow in due course.

DATES FOR TERM 2

Please find below a calendar of dates for Term 2. We hope that you will find advance warning of these events useful.

- Monday 6th November 2017- Parents Evening
- Saturday 11th November 2017 – Remembrance Day Service
- Saturday 11th November 2017 – Cross Country Series – Race 1
- Wednesday 15th November 2017 – Health and Wellbeing Evening
- Friday 17th November 2017– Children in Need Day
- Friday 24th November 2017 – School Closed (Local Holiday)
- Monday 27th November – School Closed (Local Holiday)
- Tuesday 28th – Thursday 30th November 2017 – Masterclass in Technologies
- Friday 1st December 2017 – Dress Down Day (due to the Local Holiday the previous week)
- Friday 15th December 2017 – Canteen Christmas Lunch
- Friday 15th December 2017 – Christmas Jumper Day (Supporting Save The Children)
- Tuesday 19th December 2017 – School Christmas Concert at 7.00pm
- Wednesday 20th December – Whole School Christmas Party 1.35pm-3.30pm
- Thursday 21st December – School closes for Christmas Holidays

Leis gach durachd

Kirsteen J. Maclean
Head Teacher



