

January 2024

Dear Families,

We wish you all a very Happy New Year and sincere best wishes for 2024. January is passing very quickly indeed and the Christmas holidays now feel like a distant memory.



Let's start with a look back to the end of last term. We must say a huge thank you to everyone for supporting our school nativity. Once again, it was a wonderful turnout and great to see so many extended family and community members, keen to be part of our Christmas Celebrations. It was another bucket filling performance. Here's what our learners had to say....

"On Monday we had our Nativity. It was called "It's a Baby!" We acted, we danced, we sang and put in 100% effort. We learned how to work together to put on a performance. We met the success criteria. We all enjoyed it! It was awesome! Even though we were nervous. Our favourite part was singing "Wise Men Three". Our next step is to try and do a longer play next year. We were 'Confident Individuals' and 'Persevering Pete' because we had to manage our emotions and go for it!"

Carol Concert at St Thomas Chapel

Thanks to family members who joined us at St Thomas Chapel on the last day of term. It was wonderful to hear the children from Botriphnie, Newmill and St Thomas share some songs with each other. Our learners looked really smart and performed well. They all enjoyed the chance to visit St Thomas Chapel. It's such a lovely building and we were so lucky to have the best view of the wonderful nativity



scene from our seats. Thank you to Mrs Byrne for organising for us to be part of the service. It was a very special way to end a great term.

Outdoor Learning Resources

Mrs Chalmers was delighted to receive our order of Outdoor Learning resources just before the holidays. Resources included: denbuilding kit, hammocks, lopper and pruner, saw horse, iron pan, steele kettle amongst other items. This will support delivery of lesson plans set out within 'Wild Passport' resource Mrs Chalmers uses to progress forest school skills. Thank you to Parent Council for their contribution of £539.90 to cover this purchase.



Responsible Citizens- Shoebox appeal

Nicola was delighted with the sales from the Shoebox Fundraiser. The children suggested all the words for the 'Shoebox Themed' wordsearch, based on their experience creating them. A total of £174 was raised and this was enough to cover the cost of this year's items and most of next year's too. We have two winners: Daisy McIntosh (Keith) and Jean Smart (Dufftown). Thank you to Nicola for organising.

Reporting to Parents

A written report, detailing progress within term one and two was issued via reflection jotters. If you have any questions, feel free to request a call via an email or note in reflection jotters. Mrs Chalmers and I have scheduled an opportunity to meet with parents to discuss their child's progress on **Tuesday 7th May**. Mrs Stewart will be in touch nearer the time to arrange appointment times.



Magic Show

We must say a huge thank you to Mrs Stewart who arranged a special surprise for us all on the very first week back. On Friday 12th January, we welcomed Dean and Victoria for a fantastic afternoon of entertainment. The children were a great audience and thoroughly enjoyed it. Great news...Dean and



Victoria enjoyed it so much, they've offered to come back again another time. We will look forward to that.

We were delighted to welcome Charlie Stewart and Ruari Johnson to join us for the afternoon. Their arrival caused great excitement across the school, with everyone going above and beyond to make sure they felt welcome and included...it was a lovely event to kick start our P1 transition programme.



Playground Fun

Mrs McWilliam keeps me up to date with all the latest Botriphnie news when I'm at Newmill. The 'Deer Saving Club' was a real bucket filler. The girls were sure they spotted a deer footprint in the playground which sparked a whole week of playground work, setting up an area with food and water in the hope it would return.

We finished reading 'The Snowman' by Michael Murpurgo last Friday ...the perfect day for it as the children set about making a giant snowman, inspired by the story. Mrs McWilliam was impressed with the teamwork and 'Persevering Pete' attitudes on display....well done to everyone.

We are very much looking forward to taking part in 'Big Garden Birdwatch' on Friday. It is the world's largest garden wildlife survey. Every year, hundreds of thousands of nature lovers take part, helping to build a picture of how garden birds are faring. Mrs McWilliam has looked out the binoculars from the shed in anticipation and we have some information to read through on Friday. I'm always impressed with their general knowledge and enthusiasm for the natural world.



Our IDL this term is based around the big idea of 'Using Evidence' as we explore the following key questions:

- What defines a key event in a country's history?
- How do we find out about the past?
- Are all sources of equal value, or are some more important than others?
- Why do we conduct research?
- How can we present our research?
- Why do human rights need to be protected?
- What are the qualities of a responsible citizen?

We have been using the context of ' Vikings' to explore the above as our P5/6/7 prepare for a Vikings themed Scottish Opera in February. P4 has also been enjoying learning the songs. We will provide an update in our next newsletter.

Our 'Reading Stars' are working with Mrs Chalmers to plan a 'World Book Day Event' for the whole school to enjoy. We will let you all know as soon as we have a final plan.

Warm regards,



Rachael Smith, Head teacher



DIARY DATES

- Friday 19th of January 5.30 - 6.30pm every week up until Easter Holidays- P7 transition sessions at 'The Loft'
- Friday 9th February and Monday 12th February -School Closed -long weekend
- Thursday 15th February-Scottish Opera at Keith Primary School P5,6,7 -pm performance
- Thursday 22nd and 29th February-Whole school, rugby session 9.15-10.15-PE clothes required
- Thursday 7th March- World Book Day Celebrations-more information to follow
- Tuesday 12th March- Dentist visiting P1 and P7
- Thursday 28th March- End of Term
- Monday 15th April-Start of Summer Term

