

BOTRIPHONIE BLETHER

February 2026

Dear families,

Welcome to our February newsletter. It may be a short month, but it's already been a busy and productive time in school. Our pupils have been full of enthusiasm and are working hard across all areas of their learning.

Thank you for your continued support — we hope you enjoy reading about what we've been up to this month.

Average Monthly Attendance data: 91.5

Staffing Update

Rachael Smith has been asked by Moray Council to extend her contract as QIO.

As a result, I will continue in my role as Acting Head Teacher for the 2026-2027 school session.

I am truly delighted to be staying on and feel very privileged to continue leading the school. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here so far and have felt incredibly welcomed and supported by our pupils, staff, families and the wider community. I look forward to building on the positive work already underway and to another successful year together.

Charity Tokens

We are excited to introduce a new initiative in school where pupils can earn Charity Tokens for consistently following our school routines and demonstrating our school values.

When children show kindness, responsibility, respect and a positive attitude to learning, they will be rewarded with tokens that go towards a charity of their choice. This encourages our pupils not only to strive for excellence in school, but also to think about the wider community and the impact they can have beyond the classroom.

The charities chosen by the pupils are:

- Cancer Research UK
- RSPCA
- Save the Children



At the end of the school year, a donation will be made to the chosen charities. We are incredibly proud of the thoughtful choices our pupils have made and look forward to seeing the positive difference they will make together.

Ethos and life of the school as a community

Pancake Day Celebrations



Our school was filled with smiles (and the delicious smell of pancakes!) as pupils celebrated Pancake Day in the best way possible – by making and enjoying their very own pancakes. The children had great

fun preparing the batter themselves, carefully mixing the ingredients and learning new skills along the way.



It was wonderful to welcome parents, carers and members of our wider school community to join us for this special occasion.

A very special thank you goes to Mrs Lawrence for helping to organise the event and for expertly making the pancakes for everyone to enjoy. We are also incredibly grateful to Erin and her family for kindly donating the eggs – your generosity was very much appreciated.

Curriculum



Reading Schools Week

From 2nd-6th February, we celebrated Reading Schools Week with a range of exciting



activities to promote reading for enjoyment across the school. Pupils took part in extended DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) sessions, giving everyone dedicated time to get lost in a good book.

We were also delighted to join a virtual live author event with Alastair Chisholm, which inspired our young readers and writers. Throughout the week, pupils shared books with one another and enjoyed giving and receiving book recommendations, helping to spread their enthusiasm for reading.



Mr Leitch - KGS School Librarian Visit



Mr Leitch visited the school on Tuesday 24th February and spent time working with the pupils to explore a range of different book genres. He explained the key features of each genre and shared examples to help deepen their understanding. The pupils were fully engaged throughout the session and particularly enjoyed choosing their favourite book from each genre and discussing their reasons with one another.

He also introduced the class to *Impossible Creatures* by Katherine Rundell, speaking enthusiastically about the story and its themes. The children were captivated as they listened to the opening chapters being read aloud and many expressed an interest in continuing the book independently. The visit was both enjoyable and inspiring, helping to further develop the pupils' enthusiasm for reading.

Digital Learning



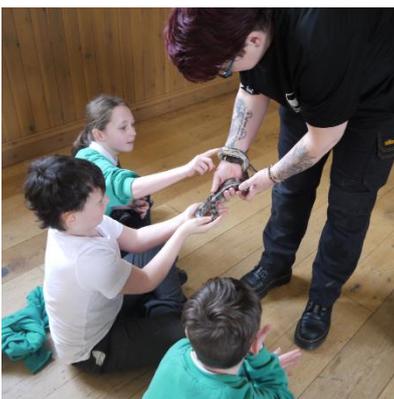
Pupils have been taking part in an exciting new digital project with Mr Morrison – and they were proud to tell me that they are one of the first schools in the world to use this innovative technology.

Using AI and micro:bits, pupils recorded different movements which will now be used to train the system to recognise and identify similar movements. This hands-on project, linked to work taking place in Laos, has given our learners a fantastic opportunity to explore emerging technology in a real and meaningful way.

We are excited to see how the project develops and to continue building our pupils' digital and coding skills through this unique experience.

IDL

Zoolab - Climate Crusaders Workshop



As part of our Climate Action IDL, pupils enjoyed an exciting visit from the Zoolab team on Tuesday 24th February. The interactive workshop explored important topics such as habitat destruction, sustaining ecosystems, global warming and the effects of pollution. The Zoolab team also highlighted the importance of biodiversity and insects, showing how every creature plays a role in our environment. Pupils



learned about recycling and sustainability through practical, hands-on examples from the natural world, making the session both engaging and educational.

It was a fantastic way to connect classroom learning with real-world environmental issues.

Opportunities for personal achievement

Playmakers

Well done to our Primary 5-7 pupils who successfully completed Playmakers training with Amanda, our Active Schools Coordinator. Through the training, pupils developed valuable skills such as leadership, teamwork, communication and organisation. They are now putting these skills into practice by running weekly Playmaker sessions at lunchtime, providing fun and active opportunities for other pupils to enjoy.



Adventure Room



Matthew demonstrated an independent, imaginative Isla Botriphnie Mindset by creating this hotel he made for his dog, Peggy. He told me that he made it cosy for her to sleep in there too. Matthew also enjoyed a fun moment in Peggy's hotel watching TV from inside his creation.



He's also been busy in Joinery Club, where he crafted a fantastic wooden Minion, putting his woodworking skills to great use. It's wonderful to see our pupils combining imagination, care and practical skills in such fun and creative ways!



Personal Achievements

Luna showed a fantastic Persevering Pete Mindset by carefully following 198 steps of instructions over two days to build an incredible Lego panda. Her determination and focus are a brilliant example of how patience and perseverance can lead to amazing results!



Head Lice Reminder

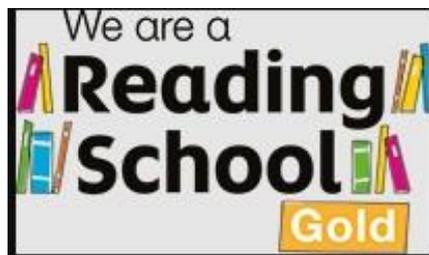
Within most schools at any one time, there will be a small number of children infected with head lice. Infection levels remain fairly constant, but if you could inspect your child's hair at least once a week throughout the school year, not only would we be very grateful, but also the spread of infection would be minimised. If you suspect your child has head lice, please report any incidences to the school. Detection and effective treatment of any head lice outbreaks is key to reducing the problem. Treating head lice is not difficult. For further advice, consult your pharmacist or doctor or local health visitor. You can obtain more information from <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/skin-hair-and-nails/head-lice-and-nits>.

Warm regards,

S. Chalmers.

Stacey Chalmers

Acting HT



Diary Dates

- **Tuesday 3rd March** - Circus Workshops
- **Wednesday 4th March** - SH after school dance starts (4 weeks)
- **Thursday 5th March** - World Book Day - pupils are welcome to dress up
- **Wednesday 11th March** - Scottish Opera for P6/7 pupils
- **Tuesday 17th March** - Jack Farge, Climate Ready School Project
- **Saturday 21st March** - Moray Primary Cross Country in Fochabers
- **Monday 23rd March** - Outfit Moray biking
- **Tuesday 24th March** - African Drumming session (am) and Maths Family Learning Event - 2.15 pm All welcome
- **Thursday 26th March** - Service with Rev Wiekus Van Straaten at 9.20 at Botriphie Church by kind permission of the Gordon-Duff family. All welcome
- **Friday 27th March** - Term 3 ends