



EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Dear Parent

Mid Term Update

Term 2 is always a busy one in the run up to Christmas and we have had plenty of activity across the school. Some examples are contained within the first section of this letter. At the bottom of the letter, you will also find the usual array of information and updates.

Term 2 Activities

- All P4-7 classes enjoyed visits from Euan Morrison (from the council's LearnTeach Team) to learn about Micro Bits. As a result, we have been lucky to secure an additional 30 Micro Bits to add to our school resources to enhance the learners' experiences with technology.
- This week, our P3s are undertaking Level 1 Bikeability. Thank you to Outfit Moray and the parent helpers who volunteered to assist.
- A couple of weeks ago, NSPCC Assemblies took place to help learners recognise signs of harm and abuse. All classes have spent time sharing the key messages and we now have lots of lovely follow up work being shared around the school.
- Last Friday, the whole school and nursery enjoyed watching Beauty and the Beast by M&M Productions. The children listened superbly and a fun time was had by all.
- All P1-P3 pupils received their Read, Write, Count bags as part of Book Week Scotland. They also took part in a range of exciting activities in class.
- All the classes are beavering away in the background preparing beautiful items and crafts for the festive fayre. The prefects have been taking on their special role of getting things ready for the stalls and refreshments. We look forward to welcoming you all on the day.

In terms of school improvement, the In-Service days offered staff the opportunity to engage in self-evaluation exercises relating to Learning, Teaching and Assessment. We took time to introduce a new tool for tracking attainment and time was spent discussing some amendments to our relationships / behaviour policy. One of the changes we will look to make is the introduction of a fortnightly focus. This will involve the whole school looking at one particular

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behaviour and then the class which best demonstrates positive choices over the fortnight with regard to this behaviour will have a choice of a reward.

Max the Dog

For a number of years, Max the dog has been a regular and welcome visitor to Keith Primary School. At the recent Frog Squad meeting, some parents, understandably, queried why Max was no longer visiting. This decision is, sadly, outwith our control as Moray Council require dogs to be registered as Therapets to be able to visit schools. We are trying to resolve this for Max but it may not be a quick fix.

Adverse Weather Arrangements – School Closure

Winter is fast approaching so there may be times that school closure processes are initiated.

School does not open - In the event of the school being closed due to adverse weather information will be available to parents, pupils and staff via the following sources between 7am and 8am on the day of the closure:

- <https://secure.moray.gov.uk/mcalerts/portal/servicestatus.aspx> (scroll down to Schools)
- Moray Firth Radio
- Frog Squad Facebook Page
- School Xpressions app

School closes early – If weather deteriorates during the school day, a decision may be taken to send some, or all, of the pupils home early. In these circumstances non transport pupils must be collected from school. The school will advertise the early closure as above.

Please can you ensure that we are notified of any update to your contact details or that of your emergency contacts as this will help the smooth running should a closure be needed?

Late Opening - Last session, we opted to open late on a few occasions. This was largely experimental last year and there were certainly lessons we learned from that. We will only now use that option to allow more time to fully assess the situation and where it is a positive alternative to a whole day closure. For example road conditions may be bad around 8am or 8.30am but are forecast to improve at a later point in the morning.

If we have teaching staff who are finding the commute difficult but the conditions locally are good, we will open at the normal time and make alternative arrangements for those pupils who are waiting for their teacher to arrive.

Communication

The most reliable way to receive communication from the school is via the Xpressions App. Most parents have signed up but we've still quite a number yet to do so.

In recent weeks, we have had parents comment that they have not received messages such as bump to the head texts. We no longer use SMS messaging due to cost and Moray Council guidelines. These notifications are sent via Xpressions.

Attendance

You may have read in the press that school attendance across the UK has dipped since COVID. We, at Keith Primary, are no exception. Over the next few weeks, we will be sending out letters to some parents.

The first type of letter is to alert you to the fact that your child's attendance is over 80% but has fallen below 90%.

The second type of letter is where attendance has fallen below 80% and that your child's attendance will now be more closely monitored.

There are also a small number of pupils whose attendance has fallen below 70%. In these cases, we will invite you into the school to discuss supports.

If there is a clear reason for low attendance (e.g. like a serious on-going health issue that we are aware of) we can opt not to send letters.

There are many reasons for high absence rates. In some circumstances, there are supports we can offer to improve attendance so please let us know if we can help in any way.

Car Parking

Parents of pupils with additional support needs often struggle with access to the school. We have worked with Moray Council but it is not possible to increase the number of disabled bays. Instead, there are now 4 bays designated at the side of the school (where the drop off spaces are currently). There are new signs up but road markings can't be made until the Easter holidays due to the weather. We would politely ask that, unless your child has support needs, that you don't park / wait in these 4 spaces.

Children in Need

A grand total of 290.60p was raised so thank you to everyone for all your efforts.

Forthcoming Dates

Date	Event
6th December	Festive Fayre – From 9:30 to 11:30am in the school hall.
13th December	Christmas Lunch – Please wear something festive.
14th December	P5 trip to the panto in Aberdeen
17th December (Sunday morning)	P1s (who are able to attend) to perform nativity at St Rufus. More information to follow.
22 nd December	School finished at 3pm for Christmas break
8 th January 2024	School returns following Christmas break.

Yours sincerely



Head Teacher