



December 2023

Dear families,

We are flying through the month of December at an alarming rate. It's such a busy time of year for everyone with so much going on. Let's take a look....

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

I must start with a big thank you to everyone for their hard work in spreading some special Christmas bucket fillers last week. The children all worked very hard to create beautiful handmade cards to community members and we split the donation received between our two highlighted charities. £146.50 was raised in total with staff opting to swap Secret Santa Gifts this year, instead donating to our selected charities. £73.25 was given to 'Save the Children' and £73.25 to Scottish Book Trust.



Let's Spread Peace Picture News Campaign

As part of Christmas Jumper day celebration, we participated in a 'Picture News Challenge' to spread messages of 'peace'. Newmill Primary made peace chains that were 14.5 metres long. We really enjoyed this activity and the messages of peace, written by our pupils, were heart-warming. Picture News were hoping all schools could meet the target of making a chain long enough to travel from John o Groats to Lands End. We hope we can help meet the target length. They were delighted with our contribution to support reaching that target.



Fruity Friday

Our newly appointed Lead Wellbeing Ambassadors have been busy with their first project. It's fair to say 'Fruity Friday' has been a hit, with almost all children welcoming the addition of free fruit at Friday break. Based on their feedback, this is something we will continue to provide.



Please note this means children may not need a snack on Fridays.

Here's what Lucia had to say....

"Fruity Friday is quite easy to organise. Miss Smith buys the fruit but we have to set out tables, get fruit organised and oversee everyone picking fruit. It's a bit tricky when everyone wants a certain fruit so we need to work a bit more on analysing the popularity weekly to make sure we have enough for everyone to get their choice."

St Andrews Day Event



We kick started our St Andrews day with a reading project. Miss MacKay organised for the whole school to participate in a national initiative - St Andrews Day Reading Record. The children were in mixed pairs-older and younger to enjoy Scottish Books. It was an amazing start to the day, with nurturing interactions on display throughout the very peaceful school! The children most certainly enjoyed participating and read for 30 mins.

We are so proud of all our learners for providing us with a St Andrews day to remember! Once again, a huge thank you for all your support. We were delighted with how many family and community members took the time to come along and provide an audience for our learners to perform to. The children at Botriphnie thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to come along to Newmill and were able to tell me about their favourite items within the lengthy programme. It was great to be able to share

the Gaelic Films with you all. Huge thanks once again to Debbie for organising. The children demonstrated a fabulous 'Resilient Ruby' mind-set up on stage.

"On Thursday, the whole school performed our St Andrews Day Event. Most people wore tartan but Andrew wore a kilt. Everyone seemed to be very happy during the day but at lunchtime I think people began to get more nervous. I felt very confident and tried to make other people feel a bit more confident and it kind of worked. At the start of the show, I was on the ramp but realised I could only see my Dad but Mum was there I just couldn't see her from the ramp. There were a lot of people and they all looked happy. I did my bit and I thought I did pretty well talking on my own. Then we sang our song which was my favourite part. I just thought it was a really nice song. We also did a poem called 'A dug, a dug' by Billy Keys. Lots of people laughed at Michaela and Andrew's version of 'Wee Willie Winkie'. Personally, I think we were all 'Have a Go Jos'. At the end Miss Smith showed our Gaelic Film. I think the whole class with Mrs Mair, Debbie and Alistair 'set ourselves a challenge' making the movie." Amanda, P5

If I were an engineer-STEM competition

It's that time of year again....If I were an Engineer Competition Entries are nearly complete. P5-7 have been absorbed in exploring different careers in engineering to inspire their own creative designs. P3-7 have all enjoyed participating in live sessions. Interviews thus far have included a glider pilot, aerospace engineer and brain engineer. We have been lucky enough to have as many as four of our 'Curious Carly' questions answered within the live sessions. It's very exciting to hear our school mentioned, with engineers talking specifically to children at Newmill Primary School! P5-7 have now complete their designs and persuasive letters. Here's what Ezra had to say....

"My design is an extendable umbrella. This means more people can get shelter. Problem- people get wet when it rains. Solution- Extendable Umbrella."



Playmaker Leaders

Well done to our P5-7 who have completed the last session of their Play Leader course with Amanda Walker. We will be working with our Lead Wellbeing Ambassadors to make a plan to utilise these newly developed skills. The final session included an opportunity to test out their leadership skills with Mrs Watt's class. Some of them were surprised how difficult it was to maintain concentration. Here's what Bay, P7, had to say....



"On Thursday, we took part in Playmaker. We had to lead! It went really well but it was stressful because when we asked who wanted to be chosen for shark attack everyone said 'me'. It was hard to choose. I led a game of 'spider and flies' and 'shark attack'. Although it was fun, we all had to manage our emotions and take responsibility."

The children all received some feedback from Amanda Walker and a certificate to celebrate the achievement.

Christmas Lunch

A big thank you all the kitchen staff at St Thomas Primary School for providing us a wonderful Christmas Lunch this week. It was delicious and enjoyed by all. A huge thank you to Mrs Whyte, Mrs Murdoch, Amanda and Shelley for making it such a special event...the table decorations made it very special with our P7s experiencing the VIP treatment! Once again, we try our best to make it an extra special experience for our P7s as a final memory.



Celebrating Success

Huge well done to Niamh, P2, who came runner up in the Douglas Ross Design a Christmas card competition. Mr Ross came to present Niamh with her prize. We were all delighted to see her entry on the cup...it looked amazing.

We also entered the United Keith Bauble Competition...fingers crossed!

Next, we have Christmas Parties on Tuesday, P1-3 Nativity to look forward to on Wednesday, and Carol Concert on Friday at St Thomas Chapel. Family and community members are most welcome to join us.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R. Smith".

Headteacher

DIARY DATES

- **Tuesday 19th December**- Christmas Party Day for all classes
- **Wednesday 20th December**- P1/2/3 Nativity performance at Newmill Village Hall at 9.30 am. Parents and family members welcome
- **Friday 22nd December**- Christmas Concert at St Thomas Chapel -9.30am start. All parents welcome to join us. Last Day of Term.
- **Monday 8th January**- First Day of Term 3
- **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-pm performance