



January 2025



Dear Families,

Once again the festive period has passed in a flash. I hope you all enjoyed some bucket filling family time together. We wish you all a very Happy New Year and sincere best wishes for 2025. It's great to see the temperatures rise and with this we welcome a more 'routine' week, with all services back to normal.

Life and Work of the school as a Community- Christmas Celebrations

Let's start with a look back to Christmas 2024 and our wonderful Nativity at St Rufus Church. St Rufus Church is a magical Christmas venue and the children went over and above to give us a Christmas Service to remember. They demonstrated a fabulous 'Have a Go Jo Mindset' with each and every pupil determined to give us all a 'four in the pit' performance! A huge thank you to all staff for their hard work preparing for the show and to Mr Watt for his work with a group of children to make the props. Here's what the children had to say...

"We have been learning to sing songs as part of a group, use drama skills when in role, use a script to read words, act out on stage and work as part of a team. The



wiggly worm I was using was Expressive Arts. At first I was zero in the pit because I knew none of the songs or lines. The Ninja Skills I was using was 'Have a Go Jo' and the skill 'get involved'." Ailsa, P5

"I enjoyed saying my lines. I was Mary in the Christmas Nativity. I sang beautifully and my family thought I was very good in it. I was a confident individual walking around the church with Joseph." Rosie, P3

"I enjoyed helping to get the props on stage at the right time. I have to be organised and remember when different props had to go on and off stage." Oscar, P5

Our children then performed confidently at St Thomas Chapel on the final day of term. As ever, it was a lovely Christmas bucket filler in another magical setting to set the scene for Christmas. We must say a big thank you to Reverend Weikus and Deacon Graeme for the warm welcome at both venues.



Opportunities for Personal Achievement- Competition Winner

Well done to Molly Scott whose design made the front of Douglas Ross's Christmas Card. We had a special visit from Douglas Ross to present her prize. Molly won first place. Her second competition win this year. Her artistic talents are certainly being recognised.



Molly Scott



Life and Work of the School- Transitions

P7 children transitioning to KGS have two events this week. Families have the opportunity to visit KGS on Wednesday 15th January from 4.30-6pm for an Information Session and School Tour. There is then an opportunity to visit 'The Loft' on Friday afternoon. Transition sessions at the Loft will begin the following Friday (24th January) from 5.30-6.30pm. I will be visiting Newmill Playgroup during January to meet the new recruits and kick start the transition process for them. Transition timelines will be issued to parents by the end of this term, with a range of transition activities on offer throughout Term 4.



Opportunities for Personal

Achievement- Reading Schools

The Reading Leaders will be setting a January Reading Challenge for our school community. All pupils will be setting their own personal Reading goal for January and we look to recognise and celebrate success with this in February. We also have plans for a joint Reading Schools themed event at Newmill on our journey to Gold accreditation. We have an 'Empathy' Day planned after exploring the Scottish Book Trust contemporary literature guide. Each staff member will share their chosen story and some activities to help develop an understanding of what 'empathy' means.

Mrs Wright and I have plans to visit Rothiemay Primary to inspire their Reading Journey with a staff development session in February.



Reading School- Novel Study

Learners across the school embark on the exciting journey of opening a brand new class novel this term. Teachers are working hard to make best use of the wonderful gift of a class set of books to maximise learning. In P3/4/5/6 they have set themselves the challenge of reading 'The Twits' alongside the Scots version 'The Eeejits'.

"I enjoyed listening to the story. I like listening to it and holding the book at the same time. I like the Scots version because I speak Scots although some of the words were really tricky. Mrs Wright has bought a Scots Dictionary for us to use next time to help clarify some of the vocabulary." Sadie, P4



"It is really nice of Parent Council to buy us a book each year. We have read two chapters so far of 'The Letter with the Golden Stamp'. However, we are intrigued. We haven't read a book with such an interesting beginning. This books starts at the end of the story when the main character is at the police station." Millie H, P7

Interdisciplinary Learning – The Cultural Classroom

Across the school classes are combining wiggly worms to explore the big idea of 'identity'. A range of curricular wiggly worms will be used to explore the following big questions throughout the term. We are going to be building on previous experience of Gaelic, Scots and French as our contexts.

Big Questions:

1. What is a culture?
2. How would I define my own culture?
3. How can we all be part of a multicultural society?
4. How can we show our appreciation for other cultures?



Life and Work of the School as a Community – Rights Leaders- Fun 31

The Rights Leaders are going to be offering two lunch time clubs in a bid to make sure all learners access a range of play experiences. Coding Club started today for P5/6/7. K'nex and Lego Club will begin next Monday for anyone on P1-4 interested in attending.

Life and Work of the School as a Community

With Christmas and all it entails behind us, we approach school improvement priorities with a renewed enthusiasm at the start of a new year. Our focus within January is moderating 'cold' and 'hot' assessments in writing (introduced this session). We are creating a document to support greater clarity around standards we aim to achieve as a result of our refreshed writing curriculum. We aim to measure the impact of the 'Explicitly Teaching Writing' approach we have been developing and identify next steps as we embed our refreshed approach.



Health and Wellbeing- As a final note, I would encourage all families to make sure to thoroughly check for head lice as we have been made aware of some cases in school.

Rachael Smith,

Head Learner

DIARY DATES

- **Friday 17th January** – P7 trip to 'The Loft' in Keith for the first transition session 2-3pm. Parents Welcome to attend.
- **Thursday 13th February**– School Closed for In-Service
- **Friday 14th and Monday 17th** – School closed for February long weekend
- **Wednesday 13th March**– Rotary Quiz at Keith Primary School at 1.30pm
- **Friday 28 March 2025**– Last day of Term 3 –Easter Holidays begin
- **Monday 14 April 2025**– Summer Term begins
- **Monday 26th May 2025**– Scottish Opera at Keith Primary School for P6 and P7 pupils

