

# St Thomas' Primary School



## Winter Term

Many thanks to all parents/carers for their ongoing support at this time. We continue to be very impressed with how the children continue to work and their eagerness to learn.

We recently said goodbye to Miss Tabitha Smith who resigned at the end of her maternity leave. I'm sure you will join with us to wish her and her family all the best for the future. The vacancy was being covered by Mrs Deborah Gault on relief, however we are happy to announce that following interview Mrs Deborah Gault was successful in securing the position.

We are pleased to announce the winning entry for our School Motto was won by Rowan. Her motto "Believe, Aim High and Achieve" will be included in all St Thomas PS correspondence.

The winner of the Parish Christmas card competition was won by Roman. Roman's card will be sent out to all the parishioners and friends of St. Thomas's Church and virtually to parents and carers.



## Class News

### P1-2

We have had a great term so far.

We have been learning about bonfire night and staying safe around fire. We had a bonfire celebration.

We have been looking at how to care about hedgehogs. We had the newspaper photographer visit to take photos of the children on Welly Wednesday. This is our outdoor learning that we do every Wednesday where we go to the secret garden and care for the environment through different outdoor activities. Our first challenge is to clear the rubbish from the secret garden to make it safe for us to use. When we have done this we want to create homes for the wild life that live in our garden.

We have been learning about Jesus and we are learning how to sing with our hands.

We have been listening to chapter books we really like 'All because of Jackson' by Dick King-Smith. We also like the wild book (Please ask your child about it).

We have been learning about Ness and Loch Ness. For the next few weeks we are learning about post.  
(Written by P1-2 Pupils)

**Reminder about wellington boots for Wednesday and warm clothing, gloves and hats for P1 and P2. Mrs Field**

### P3-5

In the absence of a nativity this year, we have been busy preparing for a different kind of Christmas performance. Please ask your child if they can show you/practice their performances of Little Donkey and Rudolf the Red Nosed Reindeer in sign language!

*Miss Ferguson*

### P6-7

We have had another busy term and are continuing to take advantage of some great outdoor learning. Primary 7 have been working on achieving level 2 in bikeability, which provides knowledge and experience of road safety, building on the skills they learned last term whilst giving them the opportunity to go out cycling on the roads. We are grateful to the team from Outfit Moray for the work they have done and look forward to seeing them next year as this becomes part of our annual calendar. You can find out more about outfit moray here: <https://outfitmoray.com/>

We also had another visit to Dunnyduff woods on Wednesday with Stephen and Mark - our local forest rangers. You can find out more about them and the work they do here <https://www.edfenergy.com/media-centre/news-releases/dorenell-wind-farm-officially-open>

Thank you for your continued support. *Mrs Gault*

### P7 Induction Activities:

We are looking into planning activities for Primary 7 pupils for early next year as part of the transition process to secondary school in August and activities will be planned with Covid safety guidelines in mind. Please watch out for further details.

### Nursery Extended Hours

As you will be aware the extension of the nursery hours that was planned for August was delayed due to the Pandemic. However this is now due to take place in January 2021 and existing and new pupils have already completed the necessary forms for this. Some spaces are still available for January 2021.

There have also been some changes to the nursery including the appointment of Mrs Elaine Sidney as Nursery Manager and some alterations are also planned to facilitate the provision of these extended hours. A separate phone line is also planned, however in the meantime if you wish to contact the nursery please do so through the school number (01542 882256). Access to the nursery is via the nursery entrance only and a doorbell has been installed at that entrance.

Lookout for a separate newsletter from the nursery.

## Parent Council

Thank you to everyone who contributed items to the Christmas Hamper fundraiser. Tickets for this are now on sale. To purchase tickets please send your money in an envelope to school with your name, contact number listed. Tickets cost £5 each. Envelopes should be handed into school by Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December.

## Christmas

We will be making some alterations to the usual Christmas activities in line with Covid safety guidelines. Christmas parties will be staggered and will start following lunch at 1.30pm and pick up from school will be as normal.

Details of Christmas parties planned are as follows:

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Party for P1-2

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Party for P3-5

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Party for P6-7

Pupils will have party food in their classes and will have a slot in the gym hall for games etc. The school will buy the food and we will have individual items for each child. Pupils may wear their party clothes to school or bring clothes to change in to at lunchtime. School staff will supervise the changing of clothes to ensure appropriate hygiene measures are taken.

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December – School Christmas Lunch and come to school dressed up Christmas theme\*

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December – Planned Christmas Activities and come to school again dressed up in a Christmas theme\*

\*On Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> Christmas jumpers/outfits can be worn or even just a piece of tinsel/sparkly hair band etc. If you don't have any of this, there will be something in school for your child to borrow.

**Under the current circumstances no Christmas cards/presents should not be exchanged/brought to school**

**Alternatively you may wish to consider a donation to your favourite charity**

## Reporting to parents and carers

Thank you very much for taking time to respond to your child's Health and Wellbeing report issued in October. At St Thomas' we are keen to update you on your child's learning and the next report on Literacy will be issued the week beginning 14<sup>th</sup> December. Teachers will continue to use email or Microsoft TEAMS to share learning or direct you to activities/resources. Teachers will also continue to share class learning on our Twitter page.

## Developing Skills for Learning, Life and Work

Staff are currently participating in virtual training with Education Support Officer and HMIE Advisor on how to develop the children's skills for learning, life and work. These skills will be embedded into the daily learning and teaching to develop pupil's knowledge and understanding of how their learning can impact on their future.

Pupils in primary 4-7 have participated in online events learning about different occupations from local businesses.

## School Lunches

On-line payment of school meals is encouraged and if you have not already done so please contact the school for information and your unique pupil reference number to be able to do so.

## Parent Portal

So far only a third of our parents have registered for the Parents Portal facility. In order that we can make full use of this facility it is strongly recommended that you take the time to register. Parents Portal can be used for the following:

- report your child's absence
- view the school calendar
- view your child's class timetable (for pupils in secondary school)
- view your child's attendance
- complete permission slips and consent forms
- update your own as well as your child's details at any time
- access Parent Zone, an information area
- access online school payments (iPayImpact)

We aim to use the system fully (for things such as parents' evening booking and permission slips for trips etc) once there has been a significant uptake from parents. Register at [www.moray.gov.uk/parentsportal](http://www.moray.gov.uk/parentsportal)

## Health & Safety Reminders:

Many thanks to all parents, carers for their continued support at these challenging times. Please be reminded of the following:

- Children **should not come to school too early** but should aim to arrive as close to the bell as possible.
- For ventilation purposes windows in the classrooms will be open for periods. You may wish to give your child extra layers to wear.
- Continue to observe the government's social distancing guidelines when dropping off or picking up their child from school.
- Please keep the entrances to the school clear so that children can access the school.
- No turning at the entrance to the car park.
- No stopping/parking on the yellow zig-zag lines outside the school entrance.
- Parents should be mindful that no access to school building is permitted and requests to speak to the head teacher should be made by phone call.
- If your child is unable to attend school you should contact the school advising them of a reason or absence on each and every day your child is absent from school.
- As we move in to the winter season we are also mindful that it is normal for colds and flu symptoms to be prevalent and so I remind everyone of the particular Covid-19 Symptoms as per NHS guidance which can be accessed [here](#).

**We would also like to remind parents/carers that smoking is not permitted in or around the school grounds.**

## And finally.....

As the weather turns wintry, please be reminded of the information contained in the "How to Stay Up-to-Date with School Closures" (see attached - this can also be found on the information section of the school app).

**Take care and stay safe everyone 😊**

# How to Stay Up-To-Date with School Closures

If a decision to close the school is taken by the Head Teacher, due adverse weather conditions etc, the following information points are available to you:

## Moray Council Website (Service Status)

Information on closures can be found at <https://secure.moray.gov.uk/mcalerts/portal/>

## School Information Line

Contact the school's automated information line for recorded information on school closures

*Call 0870 054 9999 and then enter school PIN 031510 (then select 1)  
(Calls to this number will be charged at 2p per minute service charge plus your call providers access charge)*

This system can also be used to report pupil absences to the school

## Radio

Announcements for all closures will be made on local and national radio (Moray Firth Radio and BBC Radio Scotland).

## Twitter

Moray Council twitter @TheMorayCouncil

## Additionally

A text message may also be sent (within school hours).

**You can also receive an email alert message if you are registered with mygovscot**  
<https://online.moray.gov.uk/site/wss/home>

