

St Thomas Primary School



Spring Term 2024

It certainly been a very cold start to the new term, with heavy snowfall and also gale force winds. Despite this we managed to remain open (with a few late starts to help with travel to school). Whilst travel disruption in these situations is inevitable, please ensure that you keep the school fully informed if your child is not attending school when the school remains open.

Last term seems like a long time ago, however the nativity was a huge success and there was a lovely feature about the Nativity in the Northern Scot. Our first performance was an afternoon performance to residents from Westonview and Glenisla Care homes and then an evening performance was presented to parents and the community. Following the evening performance, refreshments were enjoyed in the church hall. Our Enterprise Group pupils also sold crafts/bakes as part of their enterprise project. They raised an overall total of £138.17 with the "Merry Bakers" making the most profit. Pupils will decide how they want to spend their enterprise funds. Thank you to Mrs Dawson (Volunteer Musical Director) for her dedication to supporting the pupils with the nativity, staff for their help and support, Parent Council for providing the refreshments, to the pupils for all their hard work and enthusiasm and to all who came and supported the event (it means a lot!).

Photos courtesy of D Forsyth,
hnmedia.co.uk



The information meeting for P7 parents at Keith Grammar School on Tuesday 16th January was cancelled due to the weather. For flexibility to parents, two new sessions have been planned for Thursday 15th February at 4-5pm or 5.45-6.45pm. There are numerous transitional activities planned to help P7 pupils with their transition to Keith Grammar School. These include Loft Friday evening sessions (organised by The Loft), sport/fun activities (organised by Keith Grammar School) and of course the transition days at Keith Grammar School, which will be held in the next term (look out for information regarding this).

Activities planned for this session include STEM sessions sponsored by Siemens Energy for the whole school, Active Schools Rugby Sessions for P5-7 pupils and Jammin Fitness workshops for the whole school (Olympics, Relaxation, Memory and Dance). Please check out the diary dates (included in the newsletter), or on the school website and on the Groupcall App. Pupils also enjoy weekly baking, P4-7 on a Tuesday afternoon where they are developing their

skills for learning life and work. They have enjoyed eating and tasting such things as, French toast, shortbread and truffles. P1-4 have the opportunity to bake on a Friday morning and have baked a variety of things including, carrot cake and melting moments.

Our P6 and P7 pupils have been busy preparing for the annual Scottish Opera workshop and performance on Thursday 15th February at Keith Primary School. An email has been sent to P6/P7 parents regarding this. Within the email there is a link to indicate how many parents/carers will be attending the performance.

We will be starting our Breakfast Club on Monday 6th February. Permission forms have been sent out. Please note that permission forms must be completed and returned for your child to participate in the Breakfast Club.

Parents were invited to register for the August intake of school during the weeks of 15th January until 26th January. This was completed by online form. Registration is still welcome out with that period and if you know of anyone who is looking for to register their child, please give us a recommendation.

Our new shed to store our new outdoor play equipment has been erected and we are in the process of organising our new outdoor play equipment. We hope to be able to start using our new outdoor play equipment soon. The Young Leaders of Learning held a meeting on Wednesday 13th December. Thank you to all that contributed. Discussed was ideas to enhance the playground and suggestions included, sensory area, seating area and an orchard.

Parents' Evenings are planned for Tuesday 13th March and Wednesday 14th March. Look out for the email regarding this.

Class News

P1-4

With Mrs Field, we have been finding out about the winter season including the weather and the different types of birds around our school. Next we will look the season of spring and the animals in our environment.

We are developing our number skills through multiplication and division activities. We have made a time machine so we can travel back in time. Our first stop was to find out about dinosaurs. We made fact cards about herbivores, carnivores and omnivores including answers to our question that we made. Our next stop will be in the Vikings.

Mrs Byrne has told us stories about Noah and the ark, and David and Goliath. We have been learning how to cook and taste different foods, fitness circuits in PE and how to tell the time.

Mrs Field

P4-7

We have had a busy start to the term and our chosen IDL topic is transportation and vehicles. An update of the termly homework has been sent home, reading books will now be changed on Fridays.

Literacy – In writing we are creating stories based on folklore around the Northern lights. We will also be exploring non-fiction texts through our IDL topic. We are building our listening and talking skills through Circle time activities as well as groupwork in class. In reading we will be learning about the purpose of different texts as well as exploring different types of question we can ask and answer about texts.

Numeracy and Maths – This term we continue our learning on the four operations addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. I am checking that children know the important basic facts which will help them with maths and further details have been sent home in the homework pocket. We are also learning about measurement, fractions, decimals, and percentages.

Health and wellbeing - We are continuing our compassionate and connected classroom sessions, thinking about how we think, feel and behave and ways to manage our emotions and behaviours. Our SHANARI focus for January has been healthy and we will be looking at being included as our focus in February.

P.E. is on Monday and Wednesday, please make sure your child has P.E. kit and suitable footwear.

Throughout the week we may undertake outdoor learning so please make sure your child has suitable warm clothing, waterproofs will be provided by the school.

Mrs Byrne

Please be reminded of the following health and safety reminders, in particular the highlighted ones:

- **Children should not come to school too early but should aim to arrive as close to the bell as possible.** Children will be met in the playground by a member of staff and shown where to line up.
- In the morning if you wish to speak to a teacher or Mrs Byrne please call to make an appointment or you can pass on a message via the office.
- If your child is unable to attend school you should contact the school advising them of the reason for absence on each and every day your child is absent from school. Please note that if your child has been vomiting or has had diarrhoea they should not attend school and should remain absent for 48 hours since their last bout of vomiting/diarrhoea.
- **For safety reasons, it is really important that the yellow zig zag lines on the road outside the school are kept clear. PLEASE DO NOT DROP OFF YOUR CHILD/PARK ON THESE LINES. ALSO NO TURNING AT THE SCHOOL ENTRANCE. PLEASE ADHERE TO THE NEW NO TURNING/PARKING SIGNS AT THE ENTRANCE.**

Cost of the School Day

Talking about money can be challenging. When struggling with costs, you may feel unable to talk about money, however, it could mean that you are missing out on help available and it may also be affecting how young people feel at school. At St Thomas', we want every family to know that support is available to reduce the cost of the school day and we are here to help families maximise income.

We are an inclusive school, where everyone belongs and can take part in everything we offer, without any barriers. We believe we offer high-quality experiences for all children and we then offer additional experiences or materials for those that require them, ensuring equity of opportunity. There are lots of ways we break down the barriers associated with poverty and here are just a few:

- Building a culture of dignity and respect, where we all care for each other and give support when it is needed.
- Having a thoughtful approach to how donations are given, eg. 'chuck it in a bucket' with no obligation to donate.
- Carefully considering how to take part in special days such as World Book Day with minimal costs to families.
- Providing recycled school clothing free of charge to anyone that requires it.
- Never charging for materials or experiences that take place during the school day.
- Having a 'No Child Left Behind Approach' for residential trips, funded (partly or in full, depending on circumstances) by our enterprise projects, local grants and support from the Parent Council.
- Working with the Parent Council to provide low-cost or free social events.
- Asking for donations from the Parent Council. They have previously funded a whole-school set of class novels, buses for school trips and play equipment and so on.

See Useful links overleaf:

Useful links:

[Talking about the cost of the school day](#)

[Child Poverty Action Group](#)

[Moray Council Website- Need Help with Money](#)

[Benefits Services](#)

[Help with Council Tax](#)

[Benefits Services- Help with Rent](#)

[Citizens Advice Scotland](#)

[Moray Food Bank Plus](#)

[MFR Cash for Kids](#)

[Scottish Child Payment](#)

School Website

Please check out our website, see the link below. Our twitter feeds into our website so even if you don't have twitter you can keep up to date with what's going on in school

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/my/stthomaspskeith/>

School Uniform Suppliers

Our online uniform suppliers are www.myclothing.com

School Clothes Bank

To support the Cost of the School Day, the school has a bank of recycled sweatshirts/cardigans/jackets. These are free to anyone and you can email the school requesting items admin.stthomasp@moray-eduent.gov.uk Parents are also welcome to come into school to view the items.

All donations of good condition school uniform items are gratefully received. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Parent Council

The Parent Council have applied to Tesco tokens for a buddy bench. Please support this by donating your tokens the next time you are in Tesco, Keith. Thank you.

The next meeting of the Parent Council will be on Monday 5th February at 6.30pm. All welcome to attend.

Canteen

Canteen menu can be accessed here from the school website under parent information:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/my/public/stthomaspskeith/uploads/sites/5613/2023/05/29102058/234079-Primary-Menu-2023-updated-May-2023.pdf>

The Catering Department have a number of vacancies for Relief Catering Assistants. Please visit:

https://www.myjobscotland.gov.uk/councils/moray-council/jobs?parent_cat=2090



Dates for your Diary

You can also find all the relevant diary dates on the Parent Portal which we would encourage all parents to sign up for <https://online.moray.gov.uk/site/wss/request/ParentsPortalLink>

Friday 2 nd February Friday 22 nd March (except Friday 9 th February)	Loft Rural Transition Sessions for P7 pupils	5.30pm	Email sent with consent form (forms to be returned to The Loft)
Monday 5 th February	Parent Council Meeting in School Hall	6.30pm	
Wednesday 7 th February	Jammin Workshops for whole school	Half day Olympics, Relaxation, Memory and Dance	
Thursday 15 th February	Scottish Opera Workshop and Performance at Keith Primary for P6 and P7 pupils	Packed lunches required or order hot lunch as usual (see email) PE kit required Workshop starts 10am to 12pm Performance Starts 2pm-	Email sent
Monday 4 th March	Rotary Quiz	PM TBC	
Tuesday 12 th & Wednesday 13 th March	Parents Evenings	3.30pm-5.30pm	Look out for email
Wednesday 13 th March	STEM Sessions from Siemens Energy	Whole School	
Thursday 14 th March	Keith Active Schools Rugby Sessions for P5-7	1.30pm-2.30pm	
Thursday 21 st March	Keith Active Schools Rugby Sessions for P5-7	1.30pm-2.30pm	
Friday 22 nd March	Potential Rugby Sessions ASG festival A.M. time slot TBC Keith Astro TBC	TBC	
Wednesday 27 th March	P & P7 Dental Inspections		Email sent – reply only required if not consenting
Friday 29 th March – Friday 12 th April (inclusive)	Easter Holidays	School Closed	
Monday 15 th April	Summer Term Starts	School Open	