

St Thomas Primary School



Spring Term End 2024

Another busy term is drawing to a close and despite some changes our pupils have shown resilience and have enjoyed immersing themselves in the various opportunities on offer. There was a great buzz in school the day we hosted the Jammin Fitness workshops, which were funded by PEF. This was a great opportunity for our pupils to build confidence and positivity. Our P6 and P7 pupils also enjoyed taking part in the Scottish Opera workshops hosted at Keith Primary School - thank you to Mrs Dawson for helping them prepare for their performance. You will be able to hear some of these songs at our Daffodil Tea which will now go ahead on Wednesday 15th May.

Our Breakfast Club is in full swing and we've had a good number of pupils attending, who enjoy a healthy breakfast 3 mornings a week. The games and activities that were purchased for the Breakfast Club have also been a huge success too. Thank you to our parent volunteers for assisting our Breakfast Club Support Worker, Mrs McGregor. If you would like to volunteer, please contact the school office.

A small team of P6/7 pupils were entered into the annual Rotary Quiz on Monday 4th March. It was a very close competition and they did themselves and the school proud. Well done to all who took part.

On Wednesday 13th March Siemens Energy hosted a STEM workshop for the whole school. We look forward to a Generation Science workshop for P1-3 pupils on 20th March and a further workshop for P4-7 on 30th April.



P7 pupils also enjoyed a transition activity at Keith Grammar School on Wednesday 13th March. Activities for this included swimming games which was a welcome change to the school day and a great way to meet other Keith ASG P7 pupils. Transition days at Keith Grammar School are planned for next term and they are due to take place on Tuesday 11th to Thursday 13th June (further details to follow).

We have also been able to offer woodwind lessons to P7 and a small group have started weekly lessons with Ms Erin Carroll. There is also Brass tuition with Mr James Gray, recorded tuition with Mr Ed Friday and Mr Gordon Jack (choral director of Church Diocese) who visits the school weekly to do singing with the pupils. We are also very grateful to Mrs Dawson, our volunteer musical director who has been busy preparing pupils for the Daffodil Tea showcase and as mentioned previously this will now be held on Wednesday 15th May.

Our Primary 1, 2, 3 and 4 pupils have been enjoying Active School Junior Jog sessions, weekly on a Tuesday after school. The last session was on Tuesday 19th March. Thank you to our Active Schools Co-coordinator Amanda Walker for organising this and also thanks to our volunteers Hannah and Mrs Innes for running the club in their own free time.

Due to staff illness we have had to postpone our Parents' Evenings until Tuesday 16th and Wednesday 17th April. Emails have been sent asking if you wish to retain the same times requested previously.

For a list of upcoming activities, please refer to the Diary Dates section at the end of this newsletter.

Staffing

This term we said farewell to Mrs Gault who has started a new post at Seafield Primary School and have appointed, Miss Michelle Webster to the post. She will be starting with us on Monday 25th March. Also newly appointed is Miss Holly Sandison to the post of McCrone cover teacher and she will also be covering Mrs Field's class on a Friday weekly.

As you will be aware from the letter emailed out, Mrs Field is planning to retire at the end of the session in June. The letter also advised that I will be retiring in October. I would again like to thank you all for your support following my appointment to temporary shared headship with St Peter's Primary School. Mrs McCann has been appointed to the temporary post of Acting Principal Teacher and she will oversee the school on the days that I am at St Peter's Primary.

Mrs Byrne

Safety

It is disappointing to note that some parents are still stopping/turning on the zig zag yellow lines at the school gate despite our new policeman signs that say "no parking or turning here". In the interests of children's safety, please ensure that you **do not stop** on these lines to drop your child(ren) off.

Please also 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, erg. '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.stthomasps@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

There is still a token collection at Tesco in Keith, for the "Buddy Bench". Please continue to contribute to this until the end of March. The next meeting of the Parent Council will be on Monday 13th May 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-Menus-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>

Thursday 21 st March	Keith Active Schools Rugby Sessions for P5-7	
Thursday 28 th March	End of Term	Come As You Please Day
Friday 29 th March	Good Friday	Holiday
Monday 15 th April	Summer Term Starts	
Tuesday 16 th April & Wednesday 17 th April	Re-scheduled Parents' Evenings	An email has been sent asking if you wish to retain the same time
Monday 22 nd April to Friday 26 th April	Bikeability Sessions	School Playground
Tuesday 30 th April	Generation Science Workshop P4-7 Green Machine	
Wednesday 8 th May	P6 KGS Science Fair	
Monday 13 th May	Parent Council Meeting	6.30pm in school hall
Wednesday 15 th May	Daffodil Tea	Church Hall 1.30pm – 3.15pm Early lunch 12-1pm
Friday 31 st May	Sponsored Walk followed by Picnic at Cuthil Park	Details to follow
Tuesday 11 th June to Thursday 13 th June	P7 Transition Days at KGG	Details to follow
Wednesday 12 th June	Whole School Transition (including new P1s)	Details to follow
Friday 14 th June	Keith TMSA Performers	1.30pm onwards
Friday 21 st June	Sports' Day	Format to be confirmed: Potted Sports – 10am (break from 10.30am-11am) Races 1.30pm-3.15pm (Early lunch 12-1pm)
Tuesday 25 th June	Leavers' Mass in St Thomas Church	9.30am
Wednesday 26 th June	Awards Ceremony in School Hall	9.30-10.30am
Thursday 27 th June	Leavers' Ceremony in School Hall	1.30pm (early lunch 12-1pm)
Friday 28 th June	End of Term	Come As You Please Day

Further dates may be added next term.