

# Holytown

Primary School and Nursery Class

December 2016



## Head Teacher's Message

Welcome to the December issue of our newsletter. We hope you find the information contained within it useful. As previously intimated, this is an information Newsletter, with event photographs being posted on twitter @HolytownPS or on our blog/website [www.holytown.n-lanark.sch.uk](http://www.holytown.n-lanark.sch.uk).

## Communication with Parents

As mentioned in the last newsletter (October) we are providing as much of our written communications as possible electronically. Thank you to everyone who updated and returned their contact details. So ... fingers crossed this newsletter has reached you electronically, if you have given us your email address. As an Eco school, we are always looking at ways to reduce our photocopying etc. In addition with ever shrinking budgets this allows us to use a large proportion of our photocopying budget for the benefit for all children in other ways.

From January, we will be limited the number of texts and replacing as many as we can with emails, the main reason for this is texts cost us 4p each and emails are free!

If you do not wish to be contacted this way, hard copies will always be available by personally collecting them from the school office.

Thank you to all parents who have been working with their children on their in class targets, many children have met these targets and are in the process of setting new ones in consultation with their class teacher. As part of our Parental Engagement, we want all parents to know where their children are in their learning and how to help them improve. We will be doing more work on this after Christmas.

Please remember we have a new email address for parents to use. This is checked once a day, [enquiries@holytown.n-lanark.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@holytown.n-lanark.sch.uk) and we would ask that all parents use this when emailing the school in order to ensure your enquiry is directed to the most appropriate member of staff.

We are hopeful that these new ways of working will improve efficiency and ensure parents feel more informed.

## Staffing Update

Mrs Smith is retiring at Christmas, after working in the school for 26 years, first of all as an ASN Assistant and latterly in the office and running the Breakfast Club, she has decided it is time to retire and relax. Mrs Smith has been an integral part of the team and will be missed by us all. She has attended Kilbowie with P7 for the past 14 years. I am sure you will all join us in wishing Mrs Smith all the best and I am sure she will still pop in, between her new found hobbies! Thank you and good luck!

Following recent interviews, Mrs Barnstaple is our Acting Principal Teacher. She will continue to teach Room 5 on a Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and will be in school on a Friday. I am delighted to welcome Mrs Barnstaple and her extensive skills as part of the Senior Leadership Team.

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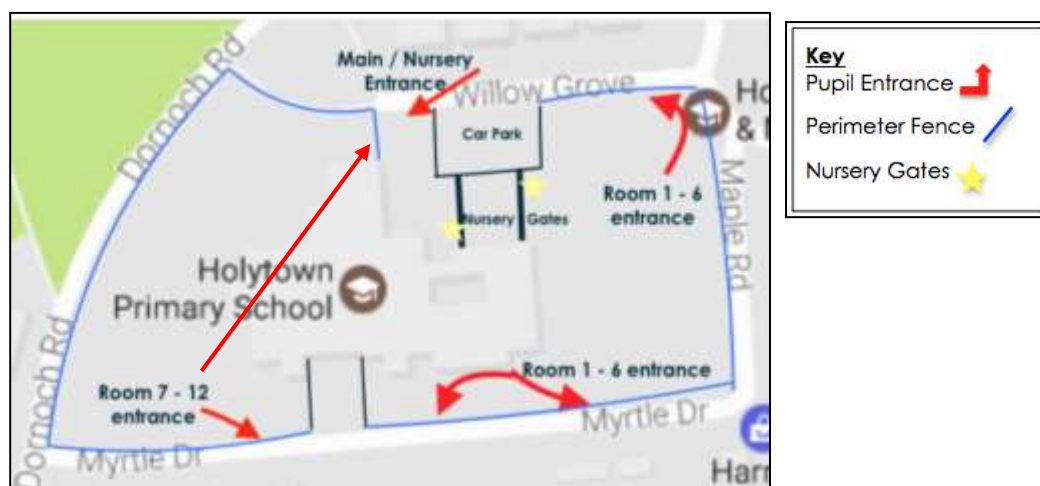
### Pupil Drop Off and Pick Up Arrangements.

As I am sure you have noticed, new gates have been installed in the playground. The purpose of these gates is to ensure pupil safety. As a result with **immediate effect** the following pupil drop off and collection arrangements have been put in place.

With the exception of the main gate, **all** external gates will be locked at approximately 9.15am and opened at approximately 2.45pm. Internal gates will also be closed during these times, with the exception of the large gate from the car park/main entrance to the Nursery (however this may be closed by nursery staff when the children are outside playing, to ensure pupil safety).

Rooms 1 - 6 pupils should enter the playground using the top gates on Willow Grove and Myrtle Drive. Pupils in Rooms 7 – 12 should enter the Senior playground using the bottom gate on Myrtle Drive or via the main entrance. If you are unable to use any of the designated entrances, please let us know and we will sort something out.

I have tried to show this on the map below.



Could all parents and carers remember they should leave their children in the line at 9am when the bell rings and wait outside the gates. When bringing in the lines, teachers are not able to speak to parents regarding their children as even a 'quick minutes' could result in children being unsupervised within their class, which is not permitted. Please help us with this, all staff are happy to discuss your child's progress but this needs to be done at a mutually convenient time. Appointments can always be arranged by speaking to office staff who will sort out this request for you. Thank you very much to those parents who are waiting outside the school gates in the morning, this is a huge help to teachers and school staff, however a gentle reminder that teachers cannot 'have a wee word' with you when they are bringing in their class, please make an appointment via the office.

### Parent Council

Thank you to all parents who came to our second Parent Council Meeting last Monday, a copy of the first meeting minutes (October 2016) will be uploaded onto the Parent Area (Parent

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Council) of the school website before the end of term. It is great to have the support of these parents in helping to make Holytown the best we can. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 6<sup>th</sup> February in the school, more details to follow.

## Pupil Voice

Since the last newsletter the children have been working hard in their house groups to identify what makes an excellent teacher. We are in the process of creating a Wordle of the important characteristics of an excellent teacher. We will send this home when we've finished! Next term, our Eco Committee will be working with Mrs O'Donnell to collect evidence to help us regain our Eco Flag. We will be working with the Pupil Council and all the children through assemblies on **Bully-Proofing our School** and conflict resolution – watch this space.

## Uniform, Gym Shoes & PE Kit

As a school we have very high standards and expect all pupils to come to school prepared for the day ahead.

Recently we have become increasingly concerned with the number of children who are not wearing their school uniform. Our uniform consists of; grey trousers/skirt, white polo shirt/shirt & tie and navy blue jumper. Tracksuits/jeans/coloured t-shirts are not part of our uniform and are not acceptable to be worn.

There are also a large number of children who do not have gym shoes (or are not wearing them in class). **ALL** children must have a pair of gym shoes to wear in school. This is to stop the spread of mud and dirt through the school, to wear for gym/drama sessions but also in case your child's feet get wet, there is nothing worse than sitting all day with wet feet. As a school we are unable to have spare shoes for pupils.

Please ensure your child has a **full** PE kit on gym days, it is also beginning to get cold and **ALL** classes have an outdoor PE Block each week, therefore all children should have suitable outdoor PE kit. Please remember all long hair **MUST** be tied back and all jewellery removed. Appropriate PE kit is a North Lanarkshire and a Health & Safety requirement. Not having kit is not an excuse for not participating in PE, pupils should have a note from their parents, or in extreme cases of non-participation, their doctor.

If you are unable to provide your child with a uniform, gym shoes or PE kit, please contact the school and we can support you as best we can.

## Pupil Behaviour

We have had a number of pupil, parental and community complaints about the behaviour in the playground. This year, I have had to speak to far too many pupils regarding their behaviour in the playground. All pupils are aware of the school rules and are responsible for their own behaviour. Too many children are resorting to physical actions to resolve playground disputes, which are sometimes condoned by a small number of parents who are telling their children to hit back. This is not acceptable, in line with both North Lanarkshire Council and School Policy. We have a number of supports in place to help children resolve conflict and violence is never the answer. Pupils involved in physical conflict will be asked to complete a reflection activity

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during playtimes and lunchtimes for an agreed period of time and parents will be informed.

We have also had reports of children using foul and abusive language towards each other, this is not how we want our school to be portrayed and I am sure all parents will support us in our quest to stamp this out, there is no excuse for children to be swearing at each other and whilst this may only be a small number of children it is having a massive impact on the whole school as children should not be exposed to this, especially within the school. Again any children using such language will be asked to complete a reflection activity at home or in school and parents/carers will be informed.

Whilst the majority of our children are excellently behaved at all times, we would ask all parents to support us in helping children to improve their behaviour and if there is a reason you feel you cannot support us in removing physical violence or swearing, please contact the school to discuss this with Mrs Brennan. If you are concerned about playground behaviour, and would like to discuss this, please make an appointment with Mrs Brennan/Miss Carson/Mrs Murie or Mrs Barnstaple via the office.

## Christmas Show

All performances evening are now SOLD OUT, we still have some tickets remaining for the performances on Tuesday morning and Tuesday afternoon. Admittance will strictly be by ticket so please ensure that you bring your ticket(s) with you. There will be **no** opportunity to pay at the door. Please remember we cannot permit any under school age pupils to any performance. For Health & Safety reasons, the doors will not open until 15 minutes before the show starts, please do not press the buzzer before this time, as office staff have been asked not to open the doors before the following times. This is to ensure staff and children have preparation time.

Tuesday morning	Doors open	9.15pm
Tuesday afternoon	Doors open	1.15pm
Tuesday evening	Doors open	5.45pm
Wednesday evening	Doors open	5.45pm

This year, we will be selling raffle tickets at each performance but will be having one main draw during the Wednesday evening performance.

Each teacher will let pupils know what they need in terms of costumes. All costumes provided parents are required to be in school for **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December** and should have your child's name on them. Thank you in advance.

We would like to see as many pupils as possible at the evening performances, both of which should be finished by 7.40pm. Pupils should arrive as follows via their class door unless otherwise stated. Pupils can be collected as soon as their class has finished unless you are watching the performance from their class door. **NO** pupils will be allowed to walk home on their own. All children will be marked here as they come in and will only be allowed home with a parent/carer, if someone else is collecting your child, please inform the school in advance, so we can ensure the Health & Safety of your children.

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Rooms 1 – 4	Arrive 5.40pm	Collect	6.30pm ***
Choir	Arrive 5.50pm (Via Room 7)	Collect	See Class Times
Brass Players	Arrive 5.50pm (via Room 7)	Collect	See Class Times
Rooms 5 & 6	Arrive 6.00pm	Collect	6.45pm ***
Rooms 7, 8 & 11	Arrive 6.15 pm	Collect	7.00pm ***
Rooms 9 & 11	Arrive 6.20pm	Collect	7.40pm ***

\*\*\*Please note all collection times are approximate \*\*\*

Children should not bring in toys, we will provide Christmas themed activities for children whilst their parents/carers are watching the show.

## Christmas Lunch

This year, Christmas Lunch will be on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December. Children can wear their Christmas Jumpers on this day, if they have one. All orders must be sent into school by **Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December** to allow ingredients to be ordered. This is in place of the ordinary menu, which will not be available on this day.

## Nursery Christmas Arrangements

The Nursery Christmas Show, 'Snowy Chums', will take place on **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December** at 9.30am for children who attend the morning session and 1.30pm for those who attend nursery in the afternoons. Please note the doors will not be opened until 15 minutes before the performances start and we do not have any place for parents to wait except outside.

All children will be visiting Gouldings Garden Centre on **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December**, buses will be leaving sharp at the times detailed below, and unfortunately we will not be able to wait for late comers in order to make sure all children enjoy the full experience.

Morning children	leave 8.45am	return 12 noon approximately
Afternoon children	leave 12.45pm	return 4pm approximately

The Christmas Party will be held on **Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December** during your child's normal session. Due to the Gouldings Visit, Santa will not be visiting.

We have a change of session times on **Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December** morning children should attend from 8.40 am – 11.20am and afternoon children from 11.50 – 2.20pm.

## Christmas Parties

All Christmas Parties will take place in the school on the following dates. They will all start at 1.30pm and finish at 3pm. There will be no early lunches on this day, children who are going home, should be collected from the main office entrance and not the class door at 12.30pm. Parents/Carers are asked to wait outside for their children, as the entrance hall is not big enough to accommodate all waiting parents. For supervision reasons, pupils who have gone home at lunchtime cannot return into the school building until the bell rings at 1.15pm. Children who are getting changed at school will have their lunch as normal and staff will be on hand to help children get changed at 1.15pm at the end of lunch. Children will attend their year group

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party. **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup>** – P4/5, **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup>** – P6/7, **Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup>** – P1 and P2/3.

## Christmas Fair

Thank you to everyone who supported our Christmas Fair, we are still awaiting the final total but believe this will be in excess of £1500, which is amazing. Thank you once again to our PFA for all of their hard work in organising this, and to our parents, families and friends for supporting this event. Without your support, our children could not be offered the range of activities that they are. The TV raffle, Christmas Tree Square Game (Pick a square for £1 for the chance of winning £25) and the Champagne/Vodka pick a square game will be running during each of the Christmas Concert performances. We will let you know the winner via twitter and email.

## Norovirus (Winter Vomiting Bug)

As part of this year's NHS norovirus seasonal awareness campaign, NHS Health Scotland has developed a matt laminated poster and supporting public information leaflet. The key message of this campaign is to advise the public to stay at home for 48 hours after their symptoms have stopped. The leaflet contains general information on:

- What is norovirus
- How to avoid catching norovirus
- What to do if you catch norovirus

If you would like one of these leaflets, please inform our school office or access the information on <http://www.healthscotland.com/norovirus>.

Please note to avoid spreading this virus amongst our school and nursery community, all pupils with sickness and diarrhoea should stay home for 48 hours after symptoms end.

**When children complain of being unwell in school we will use our professional opinion when deciding on the best course of action, however we are not health care professionals and if we are in any doubt will call parents/carers or emergency contacts for children to be collected and apologise if this causes any inconvenience. We will always act in what we believe is your child's best interest.**

## Internet Safety Advice for Parents

As you consider which IT gadgets to purchase for your child this Christmas, please follow the link below to keep you up to date with all that is current in online safety. Help your child enjoy the good bits of the Internet without letting the bad bits spoil their fun! <http://parentinfo.org/>

This website can also be accessed directly from the Parent Area (Home School links) of our school website.

As always, if you have any concerns or queries regarding your child, please do not hesitate to contact me so that we can work in partnership to ensure your child achieves their full potential.

## Parental Engagement

As a school we are always looking for ways in which we can engage and involve parents in the life of the school in order to help us improve. We are specifically looking for parents to be involved with our Eco Committee and in the creation of our school vision, aims and values. I would like to invite any interested parents/carers grandparents to a meeting in the school on

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**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December at 9.30am.** If you would like to be involved but are unable to attend, please contact the school and I will let you know details of the next meetings. We also plan to use Survey Monkey to get the views of as many parents/carers as possible after the holidays.

## Parent Helpers

We greatly appreciate our parent helpers and are always looking for more! If you would like to become a parent helper at Holytown Primary, please contact Mrs Brennan who will arrange for North Lanarkshire Council to send PVG application form. This form is required before anyone can work within school or accompany children in trips etc. North Lanarkshire Council will meet all costs of obtaining a PVG.

Please remember we have your children's best interests at heart and are all interested in the health and wellbeing of our children, so if you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school so we can work in partnership to ensure your child achieves their full potential. Together we can help each child be the best they can be!

Thank you for your continued support and can we take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, enjoy the break and we look forward to welcoming all the children back rested and ready to learn on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at the usual times.

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### Dates for your Diary

This is always a very busy and exciting time of the year. We have lots going on, here is what we know so far ... (please remember as a large primary school, dates are subject to change, sometimes at very short notice)

#### December

12 <sup>th</sup>	Pensioners Christmas Treat
13 <sup>th</sup>	School Show (am, pm & evening)
14 <sup>th</sup>	School Show (pm)
15 <sup>th</sup>	School Christmas Lunch
16 <sup>th</sup>	Nursery Nativity
19 <sup>th</sup>	Nursery Party (am & pm)
20 <sup>th</sup>	P4/5 Party
21 <sup>st</sup>	P6/7 Party
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Hopscotch Theatre Company w/b 25 <sup>th</sup>
22 <sup>nd</sup>	P1 Party & P2/3 Party
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Non-Uniform Day
23 <sup>rd</sup>	2.30pm finish

#### January

9 <sup>th</sup>	School & Nursery reopen
w/b 16 <sup>th</sup>	Termly Letters due to distributed
20 <sup>th</sup>	Room 8 Class Assembly
27 <sup>th</sup>	Non-Uniform Day

#### February

10 <sup>th</sup>	Room 6 Class Assembly
13 <sup>th</sup> & 14 <sup>th</sup>	HOLIDAY
15 <sup>th</sup>	In-Service Day 4
From 16 <sup>th</sup>	Exp Arts Focus Week
w/b 20 <sup>th</sup>	Rookie Rockstars (details to follow)
24 <sup>th</sup>	Rag Bag uplift
24 <sup>th</sup>	Non-Uniform Day

#### March

3 <sup>rd</sup>	Room 5 Class Assembly
From 13 <sup>th</sup>	Health Focus Week
27 <sup>th</sup>	Room 4 Class Assembly
31 <sup>st</sup>	Reports to Parents
31 <sup>st</sup>	Non-Uniform Day
31 <sup>st</sup>	2.30pm Close

#### April

3 <sup>rd</sup> to 17 <sup>th</sup>	HOLIDAY
w/b 25 <sup>th</sup>	Termly Letters due to be distributed
28 <sup>th</sup>	Non-Uniform Day

#### May

1 <sup>st</sup>	HOLIDAY
From 1 <sup>st</sup>	Eco Focus Week
3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> May	North Lanarkshire Learning Festival
4 <sup>th</sup>	In-Service Day 5
5 <sup>th</sup>	Room 7 Class Assembly
12 <sup>th</sup>	Jotter Bags
18 <sup>th</sup>	Parental Consultations
19 <sup>th</sup>	Room 9 Class Assembly
25 <sup>th</sup>	Non-Uniform Day
26 <sup>th</sup> & 29 <sup>th</sup>	HOLIDAY
From 29 <sup>th</sup>	Big Maths Focus Week

#### June

2 <sup>nd</sup> June	Room 1 Class Assembly
23	Celebrating Success
28 <sup>th</sup>	Non-Uniform Day
28 <sup>th</sup>	1pm Close

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