



Halfmerke Primary School Newsletter



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Working and Learning together to achieve

December 2016

It still feels too early to be talking about Christmas activities but time is racing on and it will be here before we know it! Christmas dates and activities for the children are at the end of this newsletter.

Engaging parents in Our Learning

Research indicates that children succeed more in their learning where parents are engaged with the learning. In order for you to be able to engage with their learning you need to be aware of the learning taking place in your child's class. Through our reporting system you are informed of this at regular intervals. (Open evening, Snap Shot Jotters, Assemblies and class news on our Web site). The back page of the interim reports is designed for children to complete at home, please try to set some time aside to discuss their learning and note an area they are proud of and an area they would like to do better in. Our regular feature 'Curriculum News' in our Newsletter will also help you to engage with your child in the learning they are currently involved in.

Curriculum News.

P1 are completing a short literacy topic on The Teddy Bear's Picnic and are about to embark on Winter Wonderland. They have also been working on the Nativity and are looking forward to performing this for you in a few weeks.

P2 are also working on Winter Wonderland and are helping their friends in P1 with the Nativity. They are also learning about hibernations - ask them how a bear manages to hibernate the whole winter. They have been trying to recall all the facts for the stories up to 13 and have been learning about internet safety. Ask them to tell you colours and days of the week in French (by Katie and Nathan)

P2/3 are finding out about different types of farms in their project 'Farm to Fork'. Ask them about the difference between Livestock and Arable farms. During this topic they have been learning about life cycles and have been excitedly watching over eggs, eagerly awaiting for them to hatch. **!!STOP PRESS!!** 10 chicks have just hatched! In maths they have been working on weight, length and area and in Literacy they have been working on phonics including 'igh'. They have been working on questioning in their reciprocal reading.

P4 are learning their times tables and working on hard addition and subtraction sums (HTU). They are improving their sentence structure by adding connectives and adjectives to basic sentences. They have been learning about Scotland - ask them about the three main parts of Scotland and the height of the tallest Scottish mountain. (Georgia and Lewis)

P4/5 have also been learning about Scotland in particular Scots Language and Robert Burns. Maybe they could recite a Scottish poem for you! In numeracy they have been working on Money calculating sums of money and change from £5, £10 and £20.

P6 have been working on Children's Rights and will share this learning at their assembly this Friday (2nd Dec).

P7 are beginning to find out about life during World War II, and I am sure they have impressed you with their home learning task on this. Their literacy work is around 'Good Night Mr Tom'. They have also been finding out about our digestive system.

Numeracy and Mathematics

An analysis of our standardised assessments in Numeracy and Mathematics at P2, P5 and P7 indicates that while most children have a good working knowledge of facts and procedures we need to develop problem solving skills and mathematical reasoning skills. You can support this at home by thinking about maths and numeracy skills in their daily life eg when starting off on a car journey talk about the time it will take and ask the children to work out what time they will arrive or get children to talk about real life money problems. It is also a great idea to ask children how they arrived at an answer (right or wrong) as this allows children opportunities to explain their thinking.

Reading challenge P4-7

All children in P4 - P7 are taking part in the First Minister's Reading Challenge and have been issued with their Reading Passport. You can support your child by reading alongside them and discussing the book they are reading. Try setting aside a 10- 15minute reading time for the whole family before bed time!

Staff News

We welcome **Mr Wilson** as our new janitor. Mr Wilson has worked in the school on previous occasions when Mr Blythe was on holiday - he liked us so much he was delighted to be given the post on a permanent basis. He is looking forward to moving us into the new building.

Miss Dowling left us to take up her new permanent post in Spittal Primary.

Mrs Dewhurst will work her final day with us on Friday. After many years with us she has decided to take a well- deserved break. We are very grateful for all her hard work she has done to support our children in Halfmerke Primary. We will all miss her but wish her well in her future.

Head Lice

A number of parents have contacted us to say that they have discovered lice in their children's hair. Please ensure that you are checking their hair regularly. If you discover lice you can seek advice and solutions from the chemist. A second application is generally needed to ensure that no eggs were missed.

Long hair should be tied back in school.

Adverse Weather Conditions

We will always endeavour to keep the school open. However as the winter sets in there may be occasions when the school cannot open or needs to be closed during the day. In really adverse weather information re school closures can be found on South Lanarkshire's web site and via local radio. We will also endeavour to put information on our web site (this however may not always be possible). If the school needs to close during the day it is vital that we have an up to date telephone contact number. Children will not be dismissed on their own. Please let us know if your child can be collected on such occasions by another adult.

Extra Curricular Activities

In the absence of Miss Dowling, Mr Ramage and Mrs Hendry will continue with the netball training.

Achievements

P3 **Corrian Roe** received a special award for reading 6 books. **Amy McElhiney** took to the stage in the Village Theatre and performed in "A Year of Dance". **Abigail Jenkins** took part in World of Dance Her dance group Rhythm Extreme got into the semi finals which were held in London.

Sophie Buchanan earned three medals and three certificates at her school of dance

P4 **Debbie McNeil** earned a trophy at football for her tackling skills and another award for her goal scoring.

Please keep children's achievements out of school coming. Drop a note in their homework diaries to let us know, Some are too shy to let us know by themselves!

School Souvenirs

We still have some school souvenirs left over from our formal pupils' night. Key rings, pens and cards will be available at the school fair on Saturday or at the school office if you can't make it along on Saturday.

New Build

Our new building is beginning to look the part and we can see changes daily in the inside as work tops and sinks are gradually being put in place. We are on target for an entry date around the 2nd February. This will involve 3 days exceptional closure prior to this. I will let you know as soon as these dates are confirmed.

As the old building will need to be demolished before work can be completed, the new building will be in use before the car park and play areas are fully completed. As usual safety of our children will be our priority and I will look at how the children enter the grounds to ensure that they can enter the school safely.

A few dates for your diary

Please note the dates of our Christmas Celebrations.

Friday 2 nd December 1:30pm	P6 Class Assembly - Rights of children. Parents of P6 pupils are invited to this assembly.
Tuesday 6 th December (PM)	P6 Bubble Gum and Fluff - Baptist Church
Wednesday 7 th December	P7 Christmas Treat - Frankie and Bennie's Pizza (AM)
	School Christmas Lunch
Thursday 8 th December	P6 Christmas Treat - Frankie and Bennie's Pizza (AM)
	Netball Festival
Monday 12 th December	P1-P3 Panto (Organised by West Mains School)
Wednesday 14 th December 1:30	P4- P7 Christmas Cheer - Come and enjoy a short Christmas concert to get us all in the festive mood. Doors open 1:30pm
Thursday 15 th December 1:30	P1 Parents Nativity A special showing of our Nativity for P1 parents and grand parents
Friday 16 th December 10:00	Christmas Service - including P1 Nativity
Thursday 22 nd December	School Closes 2:30
Monday 9 th January	School Re-opens 9:00
Beginning February	Entry into our new building
Monday 13 th , Tuesday 14 th , Wednesday 15 th February	School closed. 15 th February is an INSET day for staff
Thursday 16 th February	Parents Appointments Depending when we enter our new building we may have to change this
Friday 17 th March	P2/3 Class Assembly P2/3 parents are invited to this
Thursday 30 th March	Spring / Easter Service P4/5 are taking the lead in this assembly
Friday 31 st March	School Closes 2:30pm
Tuesday 18 th April	School reopens 9:00
Friday 28 th April 1:30	P4 Class Assembly. P4 parents are invited to this assembly
Monday 1 st May	Holiday
Thursday 4 th May	INSET day - school closed to pupils
Wednesday 10 th - Friday 12 th May	P7 Residential Robinwood
Friday 26 th and Monday 29 th May	Holidays
Friday 16 th June 1:30pm	P7 Leavers Assembly
Tuesday 20 th June	Celebration of Achievements
Tuesday 27 th June	School closes 1pm

Please remember to check updates on our website www.halfmerke-pri.s-lanark.sch.uk.

Yours sincerely,
K Douglas (Mrs)
Head Teacher

