

NEWSLETTER NO 6 – LITIR 6

SCHOOL SUCCESSES

Young Leaders Scheme

Sarah Ross, the Active School's Co-ordinator has been working with a group of pupils from P5, P6 and P7 to train them so they are able to offer break and lunchtime activities to infant pupils. The pupils involved have all responded fantastically, and are doing a great job working with the younger children.

SSFA Soccer Sevens North of Scotland Qualifying Heat- Tain

The school had a team entered in this event and they did tremendously well to win the tournament which featured schools from across the Highlands and Islands. The school will now take part in the next heat of this national competition, in Dundee on 20th March. Thanks are extended to Angus Beaton and Mark MacDonald who coach the pupils and who escorted them on the trip to Tain.

Christmas Service Collection

£162.00 was collected at last term's Christmas Service and this has been donated to "The Friends of Portree Hospital".

Glenmore Fun Run

A number of school pupils took part in this recent event and Joe Jones of P5 was the winner of the primary race. Well done to all who took part.

BEHAVIOUR OF PUPILS ON SCHOOL TRANSPORT – ESPECIALLY MATHESON PLACE RUN

The bus company have again been in touch about the behaviour of some pupils on school transport, especially those travelling to and from Matheson Place. This run is not a formal school contract and it may be that in discussions with the authority and the school, the bus company decide this run will cease because of health and safety concerns.

The bus company have also asked that the school notifies parents about pupils who are badly behaved on all school transport and as such a standard letter will be drawn up and sent home to parents if any complaints are received by the school. The bus company in discussions with the school, and the bus-escort we have on one bus which leaves from the school at the end of the day, will also at times allocate certain pupils to specific buses.

A summary of a communication received from the bus company can be found below –

"As discussed the behaviour of primary pupils on school transport is of concern and this is particularly so on the school bus that runs between the Primary School – Matheson Place – High School in the evening. In fact it is becoming unacceptable. One night recently I had to stop the bus twice because pupils were out of their seats, moving around the bus while it was moving, shouting at the top of their voices and almost all were not wearing seat belts. This of course poses a health and safety risk and is also very distracting for the driver. It is also worth noting that this run is done at the discretion of Stagecoach, and forms no part of the Highland Council Contracts, so we do not have to do this run.

We take our responsibility to all pupils very seriously and would not willingly want to remove this service but drivers are feeling extremely stressed by this so we looking to the school and parents to try and help resolve things, so we can continue with the run.

I think a reporting system where parents are informed of their child's bad behaviour and failure to take health and safety seriously, would be a starting point. Initially we could ban individual pupils from the run if their bad behaviour merited it, and if things did not improve, we would have to look seriously at the viability of doing this run."

Stagecoach Skye,
Park Road, Portree, IV51 9EP

BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS AT EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

For many years now we have run a wide range of extra-curricular activities which are supported by volunteer coaches and parents. In all that time we have had relatively few incidents of unacceptable behaviour, pupils displaying a lack of respect for coaches or issues that could not be sorted quickly.

Unfortunately, over the last two terms an increasing number of pupils have continued to behave inappropriately at some activities and not listen to the advice and instructions given by coaches. As extra-curricular activities are organised in the first instance by the school, the behaviour displayed by pupils should be consistent with the behaviour expected by school staff during the school day. To this end, all coaches are asked to report to the school any serious or persistent, bad, disrespectful or inappropriate behaviour. When this happens, parents will be informed and pupils will be asked not to attend activities for a prescribed length of time.

ENROLMENT WEEK FOR PUPILS STARTING IN P1 IN AUGUST 2014

Enrolment will take place during the week beginning 27 January 2014 at Portree Primary School office between 3.00pm – 4.00pm. Parents should bring their child's birth certificate when they enrol. The next schools session starts on the 19 August 2014 and children who will be five on or before **28 February 2015** are eligible to be enrolled for Primary 1.

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING + FOOTWEAR DURING WINTER + ADDITIONAL REMINDERS

At this time of year when the weather is so changeable and wintry it is important that pupils come to school wearing appropriate clothing and footwear. While children will not be expected to be outside at break times or lunch times when the weather is really inclement, they will be outside when there may only be light drizzle or wind. It is important to get children outside whenever possible to enjoy fresh air and engage in energetic play.

PPS Beanie Hats which are very warm can also be purchased from the school office at a cost of £5.00.

Other Reminders:

- Pupils are expected to have their names on their reflective waistcoats and any pupils who lose their waistcoats will be expected to pay for a replacement.
- Pupils' names should be clearly marked on all items of clothing.
- All pupils are required to bring shorts and t-shirts and gym shoes for PE lessons. Very short skimpy beach type tops are not appropriate. Football tops are not permitted.
- Pupils should remember their swimming kit on the appropriate day.
- Pupils will only be excused from taking part in PE or swimming if they have a letter from parents.
- All pupils are expected to wear school uniform and pupils who do not will lose House Points.

SCHOOL MESSAGING SERVICE & SCHOOL CLOSURES IN BAD WEATHER

All information regarding school closures or information relating to adverse weather conditions will be placed on the school's telephone messaging service. The school closure web-site will also be updated.

Council number – 0870 054 6999
School Pin Number – 042810
Website – www.schoolclosures.highlandschools.org.uk

If the school closes during the course of the school day it is important that all parents, particularly parents whose children travel on school transport are contactable so arrangements can be made if children need to be sent home early. In the case of Portree village children it will be assumed, unless parents indicate otherwise, or unless weather conditions are very extreme, that once a message has been put on the telephone messaging service, indicating an early closure for all pupils, children in P4-P7 will be able to make their way home as they would normally do at the end of the school day. The parents of P1-P3 children will be contacted should the school close early to ascertain their plans. In some instances when there is

disruption to the school day it will only affect pupils on school transport. In all situations the school telephone messaging service will be updated.

PARENTS CONTACT DETAILS AND CONTACTING PARENTS – VERY IMPORTANT

Can I ask all parents to notify the school of any changes to contact and emergency details as soon as any changes happen? It is very important that at this time of year when there may be early closures due to bad weather, the school has up to date contact details. Could parents also ensure that mobile phones are switched on if a mobile phone number has been given as an emergency contact number?

CONTACTING THE SCHOOL WHEN PUPILS ARE ABSENT

Parents are reminded that they should contact the school on the days when their child is absent for whatever reason. If a child is not in attendance and no notification is received the school will, after a day, try to contact parents to ask why their child is not in school. If no contact can be made the school is obliged to pass on this information to other agencies.

SENDING PUPILS TO SCHOOL WHEN THEY ARE UNWELL

At this time of year it is important that pupils who are unwell are kept at home until they feel better and are not sent to school. Advice from health professionals recommends that pupils with severe colds and flu like symptoms, rashes etc. stay off school and visit their GP before returning to school. As there are a number of pupils who have low immune system illnesses, it is important to make sure that they avoid infections. Pupils who have contacted **Conjunctivitis** are expected to remain at home until it has cleared up as conjunctivitis is a very infectious disease.

P7 TRIP PAYMENTS SPRING TERM

4th payment of £70.00 is due no later than **Friday 31 January**.

5th payment of £60.00 is due no later than **Thursday 27 February**.

Parents are asked to make sure they observe these deadlines and **parents who have still not completed payments 1,2,3 are asked to ensure this is done along with the 4th payment on 31 January**.

USE OF FACEBOOK TO DISCUSS SCHOOL MATTERS

As indicated previously, parents are asked not to discuss school issues on social media sites and instead are asked to contact class teachers or the Head Teacher if they have any comments, concerns or issues they want addressed. A number of staff members and Parent Council members have expressed concern about the comments that sometimes appear in relation to school issues on Facebook, which are often made without the full facts of a situation being known.

Information about e-safety and cyber-bullying from Highland Council, has also been recently placed on the school website.

STAFFING UPDATES

At the long weekend Mrs M A MacKinnon, the P6 job share teacher, will start her latest maternity leave and her job is currently advertised on a variety of teaching websites.

On 7 March, Mrs K MacLeod who is covering Mrs L Finlayson's maternity leave will herself start a maternity leave and it is hoped that the authority will advertise this job very soon.

Given the huge shortage of supply teachers and particularly GM supply teachers, there is no guarantee that the vacancies at the school will be filled immediately. However, the school in consultation with the local authority will do all it can to put contingency plans in place and parents will be kept informed of what is decided.

From the w/b 3rd February Mrs. Morag Murray, the P1 class teacher will only work Monday to Thursday and on a Friday, the class will be taken by Miss Gail Tennant.

PARENT COUNCIL UPDATES

In the future, most newsletters will include an update from the Parent Council.

"The Parent Council have had their first meeting of 2014 and are looking at fundraising for the year ahead primarily to assist with the provision of ICT equipment in the classrooms. As ever, your support at any of the fundraiser events is greatly appreciated. If you have any ideas for other events or would like to help, please let us know. All contact details are on the school website.

We have a new notice board which is located in the school reception area by the gym hall door. Look out for notices here on forthcoming events. There is also a larger noticeboard with details about our fundraising and the Parent Council in general in the main school corridor.

In support of the school and all our children in particular, we would ask people to bear in mind that insensitive comments on Social networking sites can adversely affect pupils, parents, the school and the wider community."

Parents, who have comments to make to the Parent Council, or have agenda items for meetings, should contact members of the Council or the Chairperson, Ingrid Bruce.

KNOWN IMPORTANT DATES THIS TERM

Friday 24 January	Burns School Lunch
W/B 27/1/14	P1 enrolment week
Wednesday 29 January	Junior Sevens Tournament – Inverness
Friday 31 January	P7 Trip Money Payment – 4 th instalment + any backdated money
Friday 7 February	Portree Panto Trip – P5 Pupils
Saturday 8 February	Skye First Shinty Tournament – P1-P3 + P7 and Under
Wednesday 12 February	Skye First Shinty Tournament – P4/5
Monday 18 & Tuesday 18 Feb	Mid-Term Holiday
Wed 19, Thu 20 & Fri 21 Feb	INSET Closures – Staff Attend School
Wednesday 26 February	Skye First Shinty Tournament – Girls
Thursday 27 February	School Cross Country Championships
Saturday 1 March	National First Shinty Finals – P7 & Under + P4/5-Fort William
Thursday 6 March	World Book Day
Friday 7 March	Parent Council – Family Quiz
Saturday 8 March	National First Shinty Final – Girls – Portree
Tuesday 11 March	Parent Council Meeting
Friday 21 March	Sport Relief Day – P7 to organise
Saturday 22 March	North of Scotland Cross Country Championships
Tuesday 25 March	Dental Inspections – P1 + P7
Friday 28 March	Parent Council Disco
Friday 4 April	Easter Service + Close for Easter Holidays

