



2nd July 2010

Now we are at the end of the school term we would appreciate it if you could spend a moment reading our news so far.

### Top Tots

We began the Top Tots program at the beginning of the year where we were going down to the Talla Dhonaidh Chaimbeul each Tuesday morning for an hour. The children really enjoyed the program. They had plenty opportunity for exercise within the program, jumping, bouncing around etc. helping to develop their physical skills.



We hope to start the program again soon and parents will be informed when we do this.

### The Weather and Sun Hats

As the weather is getting better, we would like to remind parents to make sure their children are provided with sun hats and sunscreen (where necessary). We do provide sunscreen which is Nivea for children at factor 50+.

### Home Link Leaflets

The children are now provided with home link leaflets to let their parents know what they have been doing during their session. We hope that parents/carers find this information helpful and if you think we have missed any information out and could improve them please let us know. Your feedback is important as it helps us to improve our service.

### Circle Time

Shonagh made up some really nice Boards to use as props for our circle time with the children. We hold short sessions with them each morning (and each afternoon for those who come in after Nursery) This helps to start our day/afternoon by talking about the weather, how the children are feeling, what they would like to do during their session, what they would like for snacks and who is going to be a helper during snack/lunch times.

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There are pictures up in the foyer for you to see the children involved in circle time. The children have been enjoying the sessions and they enjoy making their own choices.

### Garden

Our garden is getting on really well! Thanks to Jimmy Miller and Neil Hannah who built our raised beds, and also Martin from Jewsons who gave us wood and top soil for free. Thanks to Shonnie and Shonagh, the children have planted potatoes, pumpkins, peas and broccoli. We also have lots of flowers growing; some which were kindly donated to us by Dòmhnall Iain (Warden), who works at the College.

The children have been going out every day to water the plants and we hope that when they are ready they can take some vegetables home.



There are pictures in the foyer of the children working in the garden and Shonagh has put a folder together for the children to see how the plants are growing.

### Treasure Basket/Heuristic Play

We are trying to collect resources for our Treasure Baskets and Heuristic Play. If you could take a minute to look at the list of items

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in the information provided, and if you have any of them you no longer need could we please have them?

### Karate Club

The second term of our group "Karate Club na Sgoile" is now finished, and we are happy to say that everyone has been successful in our class! Most of the children have reached the next level (3<sup>rd</sup> certificate), and all of the children have made good progress!



Thanks to Bòrd na Gàidhlig, we had another opportunity to go to Inverness on the 29<sup>th</sup> March for a Kung Fu work shop and Rollerbowling. Everyone enjoyed the trip again, children and adults! I would like to thank Marion NicAoidh who spent the whole helping with the children and Heather Clyne who met

up with us in Inverness to help. We had a great day, and we hope have get the opportunity to do again.

Since Alasdair is away for most of the summer, there will not be any Karate classes until the beginning of the academic term at SMO. We hope to have another Karate work shop, with a short presentation at the end, in July or early August. This will be open for parents and carers to attend and we hope to see you all there to support your children.

Several of the nursery children have expressed an interest in joining our Karate Club when they go up to the school. We plan to offer these children the opportunity to come to a workshop during the summer and gain an idea of what the classes are like.

We would like to take this opportunity to inform parents/carers that they will be required to pay for the Karate lesson by term and in advance. Information will be forwarded in September when we know how many sessions will be offered in each term and what the costs will be.

If you would like to enrol your child/children for the next term of Karate please get in touch with a member of staff.

Le Sileas





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### After School Club

The children from the After School Club have been quite busy in general. They have been developing plans for a grassy area and have been consulted on how they would like to use the space (swings, football, etc.). Moreover, the children have been very helpful at keeping an eye on the flowers and vegetables that have been planted outside in our new raised beds, and they always make sure the plants have enough water.

Following the children's own ideas, we have been moving around the furniture in the 5-12yrs play room, and after trying out several ideas we have finally found a way that everyone seems to enjoy.



We would like to organise a film night for the

After School Club children during the summer. At the moment we are working on a list of films to choose from, and the children would also like to prepare a snack menu. The plan is to meet at Fàs Mòr one afternoon, prepare the snacks together, and then watch a film together! We will let you know when we have organised a date.

Leo Marsh has suggested that we raise some money so the After School Club children can go on an outing with 'White Wave' (outdoor activities for children).



It has been suggested the money could be raised at another Strùpag Cafe, or that a challenge is organised where the children are sponsored. We would like to organise something in the coming months so if

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parents/carers have any suggestions and would like to get involved please come and talk to us.

Le Sìleas is Leo

### Questionnaires

We would like to thank those parents who filled in our questionnaires last year. From the 10 that were returned we are pleased to say that all parents either agreed or strongly agreed that they were overall happy with the quality of care their child was receiving. Further to this:

7/10 would like staff to work with them to develop an individual education and support programme for their child.

9/10 would like staff to regularly assess their child's learning and development and use this to plan their next steps

9/10 would like the service to make good use of resources in the community

Some parents indicated that they would like extended opening hours.

After a month's trial period in March, Fàs Mòr Board of Directors and staff decided to extend the facilities opening hours. We are now open to children from 8.45am to 5.30pm. Can parents please keep to these times as staff need time to prepare and tidy down each

day and this cannot get done whilst children are still in the facility.

### Staffing

This is Shonnie's last week and we would all like to thank her for returning to work with us for a while. We look forward to seeing a new member to the family in November!

We would also like to welcome Emma Micski and Seonag Dow on board. Emma began part-time at Fàs Mòr in February and is to begin her SVQ2 in Children's Care, Learning and Development with Himats in the next intake.

Seonag began with us this week and shall be working with us until the end of July. Seonag is currently in her first year at Ayr College studying 'Early Years and Childcare'.



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We are happy to have both Emma and Seonag with us!

Staff training so far:

Kirsten successfully completed a 3 day First Aid course with 'Mountain Medicine' in March. She also completed a 7 day training course (PLIP, Play and Learning into Practise) in June with Himats (Highlands and Islands Accredited Training Services) and CALA (Care and Learning Alliance).

Sileas and Shonagh attended training in Child Protection (Getting it Right for Every Child - GIRFEC) in May this year with CALA.

Sileas also attended a course in May on 'Encouraging Language Development in Early Childhood Settings' with the Highland Council.

Both staff and members of the Board attended training this month in 'Birth to Three - supporting our youngest children'. We would like to thank Louise Gibson, CALA Practice Development Officer for this region for coming to SMO and for presenting this training.



## Cafe Feis

As part of the Feis, Fàs Mòr will be running a charity cafe in the Ardvassar Hall again this year to raise money. The cafe will be held on Tuesday the 20th July. Parents will be given more information nearer the time.

We would really appreciate your contributions of baking and sandwiches, and if you could come down and support us on the day that would be great.

We are also looking for raffle prizes so if anyone can contribute we would be delighted.

We would like to raise money to put towards replacing the surface of our play area. As mentioned earlier we plan to extend our outdoor area and incorporate a grassy area which is located at the front of Fàs Mòr. The children have been consulted and would like to have a trampoline and swings. This will give the children more opportunity for physical outdoor play.

We are also looking for raffle prizes so if anyone can contribute we would be delighted.

Could you please get in touch, whether by e-

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mail, phone or just popping in to let us know if you can help.



## word from a member of the board of directors

The Board of Directors were looking for additional parent members to come and help, so myself (Mairi Ord) and Fiona MacKinnon were co-opted onto the Board recently.

The Board would like Fàs Mòr to be more open to the whole community and we have a lot of ideas so it would be good if we could have your thoughts on some of the following:

- Different sessions where people could get involved and come in to read a story to the children, do an art activity, play with puppets etc.
- Hold Gàidhlig classes for parents/carers through Ulpan and hold them within the facility
- Hold open sessions for parents perhaps once a month to come in with their children to meet for tea, coffee and home baking.

- Invite Gaelic speakers from the community to come in and talk to children and staff on particular subjects such as baking, art, woodwork etc. so they have the opportunity to learn some Sleaf Gaelic.

We would be really grateful to hear from any parents/carers/members from the community if they would be willing to come in and do this for Fàs Mòr staff and children.

Mairi Ord, Board Member, Fàs Mòr

## Feedback

We would like to take this opportunity to gain some feedback from parents to help us improve our service. The Care Commission Inspection Report last November advised Fàs Mòr staff to meet with parents on an individual basis, at regular intervals to discuss children's progress and any other issue about the service provided. We hope to offer this as part of our service so that parents will have the opportunity to come and talk with us each term.

It is also necessary for us to consult with parents and carers about whether or not they would like staff to support their children with tooth brushing. Could you please e-mail us with your views on this or alternatively speak to staff when picking up/dropping children off.

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There are also comment cards in the lobby available for you to fill in.

### Fees Increase

After researching child care prices in the Highland Region the Board of Directors has decided to raise the child care prices for Fàs Mòr from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2010.

Please find details in our letter about Bookings and Payments. If anyone would like to discuss the price increases please contact a member of staff or a member of the Board.

Fàs Mòr is a registered charity and therefore fees that parents/carers pay contribute towards the salaries and running costs of the facility. Fàs Mòr also receives funding from the Highland Council and Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

### Gaelic Family Learning Week

The Gaelic Family Learning Week will be held as of next week from 5-9<sup>th</sup> July. As you know we shall be very busy during this week and if you phone at the last minute to make a booking we cannot guarantee there will be a place for your child/children. Also if we are notified with less than 48 hours notice that your child will not be attending when they have been booked in we shall still charge you for that session. More information on bookings and payments is included in a separate letter included with this

newsletter.

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter. We hope you all enjoy your summer holidays and those of you who will not be with us; we will see you at the start of the new term!

**Many thanks,  
Fàs Mòr**

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*Some of our favourite pictures this term!*



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