**Session 2016-17**

**Skene School Bulletin 1 16.08.16**

**Working Together, Learning Together, To Be The Best We Can Be**



Welcome back to a new year at Skene School and a very warm welcome to all of our new pupils and families. The staff team and I hope that you all had a relaxing and enjoyable break with lots of happy memories created. As always, we are set for a flying start to the year as we welcome our new Primary 1 pupils and have a ‘Day at the Olympics’.

Classes will remain as we had planned before the holidays with minimal movement in/out of the school over the holidays. I look forward to working with you all again over the coming session. Please, do not hesitate to get in touch should you have any questions/queries.

Miss Hampton

**Staffing**

Staffing remains largely the same as Session 2015/16 and we welcome Mrs Natalie Burness to the team as P5/6/7 teacher. We have had some unexpected yet exciting news in the last few days for Mrs Burness and I am sure you will join me in congratulating her on the news that she is expecting her first baby due in February. Obviously this will leave an opening in the staff team but please be assured that I am working with Aberdeenshire Council to ensure the vacancy is filled in good time. I will keep you informed as the process progresses.

Classes are as follows:

P1/2 – Miss Bruce

P2/3/4 – Miss Law

P5/6/7 – Mrs Burness and Miss Hampton (Tuesday)

**Lunch**

A reminder that lunchtimes have changed for this session and lunch time is 12:30 until 13:25 for everyone.

The price of a lunch ticket has increased by 5p to £2.15 for this session. A block of 10 meals will now cost £21.50. Please remember to top up accounts regularly on-line. School meals are free for all pupils in Primary 1, 2 and 3. We would still encourage all parents to register on the electronic system – letters will be sent home with individual registration details very soon.

**Car Parks**

A polite reminder that the car park closest to the school in front of the black railings is the STAFF CAR PARK ONLY. The car park nearer to the road is for Parents/Visitors. Towards the end of the year we had a few repeat offenders using the staff car park – please use the other car park. Thank you.

**School Shows**

I am sure you will agree that our production of ‘Porridge’ was a great success and enjoyed by many pupils, staff, parents and family members. Due to the amount of hard work involved in producing a show like that, we have decided to do one every 2 years with the P6/7 pupils in line for the top roles, supported by their P5 peers. We will host another show this session, in May 2017, and then again in 2019. We have decided to trial presenting the show slightly earlier, at the end of May, before P7-S1 Links days and the Barcaple Trip.

P1-4 pupils will present a Christmas Nativity. This will be an annual event.

**Please come prepared…**

A plea from myself and all of the staff is that children come prepared for school everyone. All children require indoor shoes and a waterproof jacket every day. The children will go outside in most weathers and will only be in in extreme weather. Children should ensure they have gym kits at school each day as they will have one session with the class teacher and one with the PE Specialist (Wednesday).

Please make sure all items of clothing/shoes are clearly labelled. If not, teachers will use Sharpie pens to do this.

A well-stocked pencil case is also required.

Although we do have a water fountain in school, we request that pupils bring in their own water bottle which can be refilled at the start of each day and left by the sink in each class area. This will prevent disruptions to class work/learning.

**Homework**

As agreed last session and as stated in the Homework Policy, homework will be handed out on a Monday and due in on a Friday. Please may we ask that parents sign ALL homework and reading records to acknowledge that they have seen it/looked over it. It is important that we work together to support learning and promote neat presentation. Most homework **will not** be given out in the first or last week of any term, except for Reading.

**Roald Dahl Day**

This year is the 100th birthday of Roald Dahl and to celebrate all classes will be supporting their topic with a Roald Dahl book. Roald Dahl day is on 13th September and P2/3/4 will be organising a special and fun filled day for us all. To give lots of warning, we propose a dress up day – either as a character from a Roald Dahl book or in your party gear to help celebrate his birthday. We will give you more information nearer the time.

**Communication for parents**

Aberdeenshire council has changed the way parents receive online alerts about school closures and changes to school transport. You can now sign up for these notifications through *myaccount* on the Aberdeenshire Council website – if you currently pay for school meals online, you will already be registered.

*myaccount* is a simple, secure way of accessing a range of Scottish public services using just one username and password and 13,000 parents across Aberdeenshire are already enjoying the benefits of it.

As well as being able to sign up for alerts, your home page will automatically give you handy information such as your bin collection days, where your nearest recycling centre is and the names of your local councillors.

So, if you want to be kept up-to-date and take advantage of the other *myaccount* benefits, sign up to the new system by going to the Aberdeenshire Council website and clicking on the red **register** button in the top right-hand corner.

**Class Work**

Please see the attached leaflet outlining key points for each area of the curriculum. We are striving to achieve a more consistent approach across the school throughout the session.

Class teachers have been working hard to establish new groupings for classes. Please be assured that decisions are made with individual needs in mind – children will be grouped based on the level that they are working within and not their year group. In a small school setting this can result in children from varying year groups working in the same group. This session we are trialling cross class working for P2/3/4 and P5/6/7 for Maths. Both classes will do Maths at the same time to allow for children to be grouped according to their individual needs.

We have purchased additional reading resources for the Oxford Reading Tree and Tree Top Schemes to complement our current resources. The new resources are from levels 9-20 and will widen the variety of genres and challenge on offer. All books will be re-banded for ability levels – please note that we will be using the ORT levels and not the colour coding as before.

**Dates for your Diary:**

* Tuesday 16th – Friday 26th August – half days for P1 pupils, 9am-12:20pm
* Friday 19th August – Skene School’s ‘Day at the Olympics’ – children only
* Tuesday 30th August – Parent Council AGM, 6pm
* Tuesday 13th September – Roald Dahl Day
* Tuesday 4th October – Parents Evening 3:30 – 5:30pm
* Wednesday 5th October – Parents Evening 5pm – 7pm
* Friday 7th October – Last day of term

**Curricular Newsletter**

Class teachers will provide a termly newsletter for their own class detailing content to be covered for each curricular area, how parents can support learning at home, dates for your diary and a list of recommended websites. Please see the table below for key information about each curricular area:

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| **Literacy and English**  Reading: Main scheme is Oxford Reading Tree and Tree Tops. This is supported by Four Corners, Novels and Usborne.  Writing: We use BIG Writing for assessments ¾ times a year and also the philosophy is developed through weekly writing lessons.  Spelling/Phonics: We use the North Lanarkshire Active Literacy Spelling materials. This is supplemented in P6/7 by Nelson Spelling and individual spelling lists.  Handwriting is tied in with spelling and Grammar with Reading. | **Health and Well-being**  Pupils are entitled to 2 hours of Physical Education each week. Each class will have one session a week with PE Specialist, Jason Strachan, on a Wednesday. Class teachers will deliver the other session. Active Schools are actively involved in the school and offer many additional activities including Curling, Golf and Football.  Mental, social and emotional health are covered in Assemblies and by class teachers.  Sexual Health, Parenthood and Relationship Education will be developed in the last week of Term 3 to pupils in Primary 5-7 (levels appropriate to age and stage). | **Expressive Arts**  Drama: Class teachers deliver this area of the curriculum in the absence of a Drama Specialist. This will often be tied in with topic work.  Music: This is delivered by class teachers and also our Music Specialist, Mrs O’Gallagher. Each class will have lessons with her for at least 2 terms in the year. Music is also a key focus during the Christmas Nativity, P5-7 Show and Assemblies.  Art: This is delivered by class teachers and also our Art Specialist, Mrs Cooper. Each class will have lessons with her for at least 1 term in the year. |
| **Numeracy**  Main resource used is Heinemann Active Maths (HAM).  Other resources include Teejay and Heinemann.  Mental Maths is class specific with some using BIG Maths. | **Technologies**  Digital Literacy is a strength within the school and as our resources expand, we are striving towards a 1-1 allocation of iPAD’s.  We have a range of iPAD’s, netbook and laptops to support ICT learning. | **Modern Languages**  As we strive towards the national target for 1+2 in Modern Languages, we have a French Specialist who teaches P5-7 once a week. Miss Hampton will take P1/2 and P2/3/4 for French lessons once a week. |
| **Social Studies**  Teachers work with pupils to select relevant topics to ensure coverage of the Experiences and Outcomes in Curriculum for Excellence.  Throughout the year all classes will cover one history, one geography and one science based topic. | **RME**  This is covered by class teachers and also our partnership with Kirkton of Skene Parish Church. We visit the Church several times per year and also welcome Minister Assemblies once per month. World Religions are explored across the school. Pupils are under no pressure to share/discuss their beliefs during these lessons. | **Science**  Each class will cover one science based topic per year.  Science outcomes can be taught discretely and/or link to other subjects.  Topical Science is also embraced. |