

Skene School News August 2013

Welcome (Back) to Skene!



I hope you have all had a fantastic summer break and made the most of the lovely weather. We were excited to see everyone back again after the holidays, and to welcome our 9 new Primary 1s, and 1 new P3, to Skene School. The P1s are settling in just fine and will start full days on Monday 2nd September. At the moment they have some buddies from P4 and P6 who are looking out for them, and we really appreciate these children giving up their playtimes.



P1 2013-2014

We now have 36 children in Skene School; 15 in the P1-3 and 21 in the P4-7. We had no staff changes over the holidays, but Mr Crossan has now started as our new PE teacher, and will be here on Friday mornings. P1 parents, the P1-3 class will also have PE on a Tuesday afternoon, so these are definitely the days to make sure your child is wearing uncomplicated clothing! Mrs Hirst, our new Support For Learning teacher, has also started and will be with us on Monday afternoons and Thursday mornings. For the strings enthusiasts amongst us, Ms Davidson will be in on a Thursday morning this session instead of Fridays.

Promoting Positive Behaviour and our Zero-Tolerance to Bullying

As you are all aware, we want our children to enjoy their time here at Skene. If our children are having fun, their learning has a much greater impact and stays with them for many years to come. If children are miserable, scared or angry, it is impossible for them to concentrate. In order to provide a positive environment for this to happen, we need the children to be very aware of their own behaviour and the impact it has on others, and also equip them with strategies to deal with the tricky situations which they will very probably all encounter at one point or another, if not here at primary school, then later on in their lives. These situations may affect friends rather than themselves, but either way we would like our children to be able to process what is happening, and think about why, and what to do.

We think the term has got off to a very good start, and hope this continues, as we very much want to emphasise the positives rather than dwell on the negatives. We are about to embark on working towards our Rights Respecting School Award (details to follow later), and to review our Behaviour Policy, so both staff and pupils will be working on this area this term. Our Educational Psychologist, Natasha Robinson,

and our Pupil Support Worker, Aileen Kirkwood, will be working on positive behaviour with the P4-7 class. Mrs Adair also has some interesting drama lessons planned to look at not only promoting positive behaviour, but also at discrimination. Let's hope this equips the children well and sets us up for an excellent session! With these angels in school, how could we fail...



Skene School 2013-2014

Community Time

We will shortly be starting a new(ish) initiative, called "Community Time". P3-7 pupils have opted into 2 of 3 groups – Pupil Council, Eco Group and Healthy Skene. (Our 4th option, a Fairtrade group, only had a few takers. Within the Curriculum for Excellence, children should be given an element of choice in their learning, so rather than put them in a group they are not interested in, we will do a few Fairtrade activities in school this year, especially within the Eco group, and try again next year.)

Each week, for 45 minutes, the groups will come together to work on their area, and one group each week will work with the P1s and P2s. Children have chosen 2 groups which we will hopefully be able to allocate, and they will work with one group for the first 2 terms, and the second group for the latter terms. We will also hope to get some parent members to work with these groups, especially towards the Rights Respecting School award and with the Fairtrade Committee, both of which require parent members. Please get in touch if you are interested in working with any of these groups.

The Backpack Project

As part of Community Time, the Eco Group will shortly be starting to gather together the backpacks and contents as noted in the June newsletter, ready for the Rotary Club to collect. (Closing date to follow.) For those who may have missed the information, Mary's Meals is a Scottish organisation which works in several different developing countries providing meals and school equipment for children. The Backpack Project allows children here to put their old school bags to good use and help other children to enjoy some of the same privileges they have. We will be asking for donations to fill the rucksacks (see next page for details); alternatively you may wish to fill a bag in its





Wanted Items

Backpack/School Bag
Exercise Book/Notepad
Pencils
Pens
Crayons
Eraser
Ruler
Sharpener
Pencil Case
Towel
shorts / skirt & t-shirt, or dress
Flip Flops/Sandals
Small Ball eg Tennis Ball
Soap
Toothbrush
Toothpaste
Spoon

entirety with your family so the children have ownership of it. Further details of the fantastic Mary's Meals organisation can be found on www.marysmealsorg.uk in the What You Can Do section.

Health Week

We have so far only had one offer of help for our Health Week starting Monday 7th October. Please do get in touch if you have any input to give or have any good ideas for local contacts.

Help!

I am aware that so far I have asked for your help for the Rights Respecting School Award and Health Week, and I would like all of you to know how much both the children and the staff do appreciate your help and involvement here at Skene School. We have a very small, very hard-working staff, and in order for us to offer the different curricular and extra-curricular activities that bigger schools do, we have to rely on your support. We have been trying for some time to arrange other extra-curricular clubs and activities, but we need parent helpers (or friends, grandpas, aunties...!) for that to happen. If you could give one solitary morning, or could help for an hour each week, we will always be able to find something for you to do! We always have something – at the moment our reading books could do with a couple of willing helpers, and our lovely new library scheme needs a few days TLC before we can get it up and running. We really do need you!

Dates For Your Diary

Wednesday 28th August – P1 Parent and Child School Lunch

Tuesday 17th September – Whole School visit to Techfest (please note this is afternoon only and we will return late to school, where children should be met by a parent or other nominated adult.)

Please also see attached School Calendar (Provisional)

Any parents who have received a paper copy of this newsletter and would like to be added to the school e-mail list, please contact me on wendy.craig@aberdeenshire.gov.uk. The newsletter will soon also be available to view on our website – www.skene.aberdeenshire.sch.uk which is currently being updated.

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