



**Glenurquhart Primary School
Session 2015-2016
March Newsletter**



Staffing - we welcome **Miss** McLoughlin as **P6/7** class teacher and send best wishes to **Mrs McLean** as she begins her Maternity Leave. **Miss MacKinnon**, Pupil Support Assistant in the Gaelic Class begins her Maternity Leave in April. Good wishes are sent to them both as they begin this exciting stage in their lives.

Absences and Lateness – after an initial period of very few pupils arriving late for school after the change in school times at the beginning of the term, it is disappointing to note that the number of late arrivals has started to rise again. Please note that the name of pupils who arrive late is noted, along with their arrival time and reason for lateness, in the school “Late Book”. Parents are asked to make an effort to ensure that their children arrive in school on time as late arrivals are disruptive to learning and teaching in classes. Further measures for persistent latecomers may need to be introduced next term. Apart from illness, absence from school should be kept to a minimum and parents/carers should not take a child away from school for holidays or social purposes. All parents are asked to telephone the school office before **9.00am** on each day of absence, to notify us of the reason for absence. Therefore any unnecessary absences should be avoided. When a pupil’s attendance record falls below 80%, it is considered a cause for concern.

Indoor Shoes – pupils are all asked to bring a pair of indoor shoes to wear in class. This is particularly important during times when the playground is wet and muddy as changing from outdoor to indoor shoes helps keep the school floors clean.

School Lunches– the price of school lunches is to increase to £2.30 as from the beginning of next term. If your child is in P4- P7 and requires a school meal please ensure that payment is made on **MONDAY** of each week. In order to avoid confusion, payment **MUST** be made by cash or cheque (made payable to Highland Council) and sent in an envelope clearly marked with **Pupil’s Name, Class** and **amount** enclosed. It would also be helpful to write the **days** on which lunches are required on the envelope.

Traffic Congestion and Parking - concerns continue with traffic congestion and parking in the mornings. Parents are reminded that the circular area is for **drop-off only** and should **not** be used for parking. In order to avoid traffic congestion, parents/carers are asked to park at the public car parks at the local shop or at the Tourist Information Centre and walk their children for the remaining part of the journey to school. Please park safely and responsibly and consider possible outcomes of **irresponsible** or **prolonged parking**. Access to the school is via the **main gate** on **Pitkerrald Road** and **this is the only gate that should be used by pupils and parents to gain access to school grounds. The St Drostan’s gate is for school business vehicular access only.**

School Facilities – it is planned to have all pupil toilets repaired and repainted during the Easter holidays. This is as a result of pupils raising concerns about the state of the toilets and the behaviour and lack of respect shown by some pupils. This is evidence of the pupil voice being listened to and acted upon.

It is also planned to erect a high security fence around the school grounds – see accompanying letter from the Parent Council. Plans are under way for extending and renovating the school kitchen in the summer holidays.

PE Lessons – all classes are to receive additional PE lessons for the first 3 weeks on next term. These lessons are an opportunity for staff development for class teachers and will be led by Mr MacIntosh, a PE specialist teacher. Pupils are reminded to bring their **PE kit on Fridays** as well as on their usual PE days.

School Photographs – new informal style class photographs were taken on 24th February and orders need to be returned to school as soon as possible. Parent views regarding these photographs would be welcomed.

Music Festival – well done to all pupils who competed at the Inverness Music Festival recently – Grace Montague and Hannah Gookooluk who achieved second place.

NEJCA “Chess for Kicks” Competition - On Saturday, 6 brave pupils took part in the North East heat of the “Chess for Kicks” competition. This is the first time a team from Glenurquhart Primary have ever taken part. The children had to learn how to use chess clocks as well as scoring their own games. They showed real resilience battling tough opposition for six games over six hours! Our team included the only girl at the event, and ranged from P3s to P6s. Thanks to Mrs McWhirr & Mrs Knotts for their help throughout the day. The event gave Miss Mullin lots of food for thought about how best to organise the lunchtime and after school chess clubs – more details about next term’s chess arrangements will follow in the first week back after the holidays!

Achievement Tree - Parents and carers are encouraged to share pupils’ out of school achievements with the whole school community by completing the accompanying slips** for displaying on the Achievement Tree in the school hall.

Piping - Drumnadrochit Piping Society are offering opportunities to children and adults who want to learn to play the bagpipes or drums. They meet on Mondays at 7.00pm at the Glenurquhart Day Care Centre. For more details please contact Joyce Joy on 01456 450683 or joycejoy08@fsmail.net

Transitions – P7 pupils have participated in two afternoon visits to Glen Urquhart High School along with P7 pupils from Balnain and Cannich Bridge Primaries. A further visit is planned on 17th May as well as their transition Week in June. Meanwhile, Miss MacDonald and P1/2 have welcomed pupils from Glen Urquhart Childcare Centre who will be starting in P1 in August to join them on two separate occasions.

Parent Council – the next meeting of the Parent Council is planned for Thursday 28th April at 7.00 pm in the school.

School Website – the school has a new website – please take time to have a look glenurquhartprimary.org.uk

Distribution of newsletter – if you have not already signed up to receive an electronic copy of the school newsletter, please inform the school office of the e-mail address you would like the newsletter to be sent to.

End of Term Activities

Tuesday 22nd March – Mrs Woodhouse is organising a cross country event for P4-P7. This will take place within the school grounds. Pupils are reminded to take PE kit.

Wednesday 23rd March – Mrs Montague and Mrs Tree are taking teams from P4 - P7 to compete in the McRobert Cup Cross Country Event at Bught Park.

Thursday 24th March – all pupils are asked to bring hard boiled eggs to decorate in school. They may also bring art and craft materials to use.

Holidays – school closes for the Easter Holiday on **Thursday 24th March** and re-opens on **Monday 11th April**. Good wishes for an enjoyable holiday are sent to all families.

** Achievement Tree

Pupil Name _____ Class _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Pupil Name _____ Class _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Class Activities

Student Teacher – P5/6 were fortunate to have student teacher, Mrs O'Hagan in their class for a period of 5 weeks.

Primary 4 have had a busy term finding out about their local area.

We have enjoyed discovering from first hand experiences about what has happened in our area and where it takes its place within the story of Scotland.

What a fabulous place to grow up.

We discovered that Drumnadrochit means The Ridge of the Bridge and that the settlement grew up around the River Enrick. We were very lucky to meet Adrian Shine, at our super visit to the **Loch Ness Exhibition Centre**, who told us about the history of the Loch, with the discovery of the Bomber plane and the speed record attempt by Mr Cobb. Mr Shin also told us about the mystery surrounding the Loch Ness Monster. However Primary 4 believe most definitely in Nessie!

Our visit to the Centre finished with a treat in the café which was a lovely surprise which we all enjoyed.

Urquhart Castle was another super trip. After the interesting film, our guide Andy brought the medieval life of the castle alive for us. We were also very lucky to be able to touch, at first hand the artefacts that have been discovered and to try on chain mail, some of the helmets and touch and see the things used throughout the life of the castle.

Borlum Farm fed the castle. Mrs Macdonald Haig gave the class a talk on the history of the farm and its place in the life of Urquhart Castle. Feeding the people and looking after the animals. Mrs Haig invited us for a visit, to the farm; we learned a lot and had great fun in the afternoon. We really loved our special rosettes.

On Wednesday Primary 4 are leading a Scottish Assembly. They are very grateful to all the other children for taking part.

Roots of Empathy -Primary 4 have also participated in Roots of Empathy, a programme that sits very well with Curriculum for Excellence ,Health and Wellbeing. The children are learning about developmental milestones; snap connections; brain development and how to regulate their emotions to name but a few life skills we are learning.

P5/6/7 have been learning about World War 2 and visited Fort George as part of their learning experiences.

We learned that Fort George was built to control the clans after the Jacobite Rising of 1745 and it was named after King George II.

We didn't realise that the soldiers had to wash from a bucket of water from the well! It was interesting comparing the modern day soldiers uniform with the uniform from WW2. (It was really scratchy.)

We enjoyed the tour of the Fort & being able to hold (replica) guns & grenades. It was amazing to be able to see Adolf Hitler's despatch box in the museum. He carried it everywhere with him.

To improve future visits we'd like the gift shop to reduce prices!

By Freya, Logan H & Hannah S (P5/6)

Safety at Sea - P5/6 were given a special presentation from Mr Stebbings. He shared lots of information, photos & equipment to teach the class about how safety at sea has evolved from the 1850s to the present day. He managed to connect topic work on Titanic with our current focus on WW2. Many thanks to Mr Stebbings for giving up his day off!

P7 were invited to visit **Urquhart Castle** to see renovation work that has taken place there.