

**AUGUST 2021 NEWSLETTER**

Dear pupils, parents/carers and friends of Rattray

This is our first newsletter of the school year, therefore on behalf of everyone at Rattray School I welcome you all to session 2021/22. I do hope you have all had a wonderful summer and taken full advantage of the glorious summer weather we have had and continue to have. It has been lovely to see all our pupils (and staff) return to school refreshed and ready for the new school year. This newsletter contains many of our usual ‘housekeeping’ items, apologies if they are repetitive for some families, but they are very usual for our new families or even as a reminder for our existing families. At the end of this letter there will be a number of dates which I hope will be of assistance to all families in planning busy family routines.

Please be mindful that our school procedures will be adapted and updated in line with changes in government and council guidance around Covid. We will continue to keep you updated in our usual ways – Parentpay, school app, text messaging and our school Facebook page. **Therefore, please ensure your Parentpay account, email address and your mobile phone numbers are all up to date. Look out for the annual data collection forms coming to you soon and return these as soon as you can.**

Please take the time to read this lengthy newsletter and as always, if you have any queries or concerns (no matter how trivial) please get in touch via our school office 01250 871980 or rattray@pkc.gov.uk

Although the return to school this year has been very different, I am proud to say that

our pupils have shown courage, resilience and positivity in the first few weeks of term.

Young people seem to be very good at taking changes in their stride and I a

**Welcome to our school**

I would like to extend a very warm welcome back to school for our P2 – P7 pupils and a special welcome to our new P1s and other new pupils. We also have a number of new staff joining us too (see below). We hope all our new starts and returnees enjoy their time this school year at Rattray Primary School.

**Staffing Update**

There are a number of staffing changes to share with you for the coming session.

Sadly, leaving Rattray are Miss Amy Needs (Nursery Senior ECP) who has secured a temporary secondment to another PKC post within the council, Mr Roddy Wood (Pupil Support Assistant) who will now be enjoying his retirement, Mrs Elaine Donaldson (nursery pupil support assistant) who has moved to another PKC post closer to her home address and Mrs Lorraine McGregor (nursery play assistant) who will also be enjoying early retirement.

Joining the Rattray school team are probationary teachers Mrs Gillian Newlands (P4/5) and Mrs Debbie Wilks (P5), Mr Chris Wallace (Nursery ECP) and Miss Lucy Thomson (Covid recovery teacher – government funded posts). We are also fortunate this school year to have modern Apprentice Jack Alexander joining our school team, Jack will be supported by the Blairgowrie Active Schools Team, and our goal (using Jack) is that across the school more sporting and exercise opportunities will be available for our pupils.

Congratulations to Miss Danielle McAlpine (nursery teacher), Ms Gillian Rae (nurture teacher) and Miss Carly Shaw (pupil support assistant) who have been appointed permanently to our school team. Further congratulations to Mrs Diane Johnstone (continuation) and Mrs Sarah Russell who will take up Principal Teacher roles in the school’s senior management team for the coming school year.

We have some vacancies which we are in the process of interviewing for, we will update you with any further staffing changes as they occur.

**School Refurbishment and Extension**

Our extensive school refurbishment commenced in June, and parts of the school are already looking fantastic. Our office areas and upper school classrooms have been fully decorated, recarpeted, refloored and refurnished. Alongside these changes the plumbing, electrics, heating and Wi-Fi systems have been upgraded too. We recently shared photos on our school facebook page of the newly refurbished areas.

Our P3 and P3/4 classes are currently in our decant classrooms, whilst their rooms are being refurbished, thereafter P4/5 and P5 will spend four weeks in the decant classrooms. Each class in turn (including our nursery) will spend a period of time in our decant classrooms. Unfortunately, this means that during the school year we will have to change the playground entry and exit points for classes.

Throughout this academic session, our playground will be split into two areas, however we are already looking at ways to ensure that all our classes get a chance to meet during breaks and lunchtime (covid restrictions permitting).

This extensive project will last until Summer 2022. As you know, our nursery space will be extended to accommodate more families in local community with extended hours and weeks. The school and nursery will look very different when the works have been completed, and we do hope that you will be able to visit our school to see the ongoing works very soon.

**Annual Events / Dates for your diary**

Included in this newsletter are provisional dates for this school year, at the moment we can’t predict if and when we can allow adults or other visitors into school, or when large scale gatherings in school will be permitted. However, we have pencilled in several dates and events in the hope that we can go ahead with them. If these events/dates require to be cancelled, we will try to accommodate in other ways, virtual or otherwise.

We look forward (hopefully) to meeting many of you at the various upcoming events. Mr Brown (our school depute) or I are usually in the playground before the start of the school day and at the end of the school day. However, we are conscious that it may not always be easy to catch up with us, we can however always be contacted via the school office.

Teaching staff are available at the end of the school day on most days to discuss any general matters or concerns you have. However, if you are concerned about your child’s education or welfare at any time please do not hesitate to contact the school office as soon as possible.

**Pupil Absence and Lateness**

Absent - If your child requires to be absent from the school for any reason, please contact the school (01250 871980) as soon as possible on the morning of the absence and before 9.30am. **If the phone is not answered by a staff member, please do leave a message on our voicemail system.** If there has been no parental contact by 9.30am staff will send a text message to enquire as to your child’s absence. This is normal procedure across Scotland. Your support in this is much appreciated.

Sickness/Diarrhoea - NHS advise that they should not attend school for at least 48 hours after the last bout. This helps stop the spread of infection. Please also see your local GP for advice.

Cold-like symptoms - If child does not have symptoms of COVID-19 but has other cold-like symptoms, such as a runny nose, they do not need to be tested and they and you do not need to self-isolate. Your child can come to school or nursery if fit to do so.

COVID-19 Symptoms - The main symptoms to be aware of are:

* new continuous cough
* fever/high temperature
* loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste

If a young person or a child in your care develops any of the above symptoms, they should self-isolate and you should book them a test as soon as possible at <https://www.nhsinform.scot/test-and-protect>, or by calling 0800 028 2816.

It is recommended that testing is only for those with a continuous cough, fever, or loss of or change in the sense of taste or smell.

Lateness - If your child is going to be late, please call us to let us know their lunch choice for that day as we have to report to the kitchen by no later than 10.15am. Late lunch choices may not be accommodated after this time, due to kitchen deadlines. This also includes children who may change their mind midway through the morning.

**House Captains**

Our P7 pupils are in the process of applying for our house captain roles. Each applicant will complete an application form and participate in an interview to gain selection. We are encouraging all our P7 to apply. We will update you as soon as our captains have been selected.

**School Prefects**

All our P7s will have the privilege of becoming school prefects again this academic session. All our prefects will be given Rattray prefect hoodies/zoodies to wear throughout their final school year. There is no cost to parents/carers for this and we hope to have these ordered soon. We do need to know your child's preference and what size to order. Please [follow the link](https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=oyzTzM4Wj0KVQTctawUZKSWGpsJ8CuFKtKRsv3LhdpNUQUc1Q0pWOVVCUFhGVFRFNkZTOUcwUTNLVC4u&fbclid=IwAR25Mmn8xubB6zcMsKjn2-apg3-3MHY4hjcJsi0jyKTih285qv9NpdplH5A) for the order details. We strongly suggest that you consider selecting a size that will allow room to grow. Last year the majority of sizes ordered were Child XL age 12/13. If you think your child needs an adult size, then please contact the school office.

We would like all parents/carers to encourage our P7s to wear their prefect hoodies to school every day (where possible). There are a number of responsibilities and expectations which come with the prefect role, but so far our P7s have really shone and risen to the challenge this year. I am certain that our P7 prefects will continue to be wonderful role models for our younger pupils.

**PE Times and Kit**

All of our classes have at least two sessions of PE each week. The attached table indicates the days that your child will have their PE lesson. Until further notice, children should come to school without uniform and wearing suitable sportswear on these days. Current advice is that changing rooms cannot be used. Please note that on these days, jewellery should not be worn, and long hair should also be tied back.

**P1 photographs**

The photographer from the Perthshire Advertiser will be in school on the afternoon of Friday 24th September to take class photos of our new P1s. Please ensure your P1 child comes to school in full school uniform on this date.

**Breakfast club**

Our breakfast club is currently operating from 8am daily. Please note there may be a reduced number of places available therefore it is highly recommended that places are booked in advance for the required days. Currently, places can be booked by either emailing our designated breakfast club email RattrayBreakfastClub@pkc.gov.uk.

**School Crossing Patroller Update**

As you will know, the school no longer has a School Crossing Patroller. Vehicle Activated Signs have been installed from the Alyth side in March and the 20mph speed restriction will be a permanent (i.e. not just during school hours) road speed restriction. The following video link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8rDH7ms18U> may support yourself and the children in using the crossing outside our school.

**Water in Class**

Children are encouraged to drink freely from their school or other water bottles in school, however we ask that **only** water is brought into school to drink during class time. The staff will endeavour to ensure that water bottles return with pupils each evening in order to be washed and refilled.

**Staggered entry times, exit times, breaks and lunchtimes.**

The staggered timings we have followed from the start of term will continue until further notice, this is in line with Scottish Government and PKC guidance. This is to alleviate congestion in the playground. We will review this on a weekly basis and inform you of any changes.

**URGENT - Books from the last academic year**

Can we please ask that all library and reading books from last academic session are brought in to school, as soon as possible. To replace any missing books is considerably costly for the school, so please have a good search for books.

**School Uniform and Lost Property**

It is lovely to see the children at school so smart in their school uniform, thank you for making this effort. However we have already accumulated a large amount of lost property, which are largely grey jumpers/cardigans. It would be really helpful if your child’s name or initials could please be written on the labels of school clothing, this will also aid teachers when it comes to gym time too. Thanks for your co-operation.

**After School Clubs**

These clubs are on pause at the moment, but staff are keen and eager to have these up and running quickly. As soon as we are given the go ahead to run any extracurricular activities, we will inform you of the arrangements for these.

**Behaviour/ Relationships**

Over the last two sessions we made some changes to our behaviour approach, involving a greater emphasis on teaching specific but very simple guidelines across the school. With consistency and fairness at its heart, the approach included frequent positive feedback and structured consequences, to encourage children to make the right choices about their behaviour and to ensure they are always learning and always safe. We also used class-wide rewards more often, whilst consequences of recorded ‘warnings’, time working alone and phone-calls/test messages home. These consequences will also be used to ensure support for children is delivered early.

We are keen to inform you as early as possible when even low-level behaviour issues are affecting progress and when necessary, it will be your child’s class teacher who will contact you in the first instance. We believe these enhancements to our approach will improve behaviour, relationships and attitudes to learning and lead to even higher achievement. We look forward to your continued support and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to speak to myself or your child’s class teacher.

**Session dates**

The school holiday dates up to June 2023 are available at the following link. <https://www.pkc.gov.uk/schoolholiday>

**ParentPay**

ParentPay is the school’s online payment system.  Rattray Primary, for the main part, is a cashless school with all dinner money, trips, school shows etc. all paid online.  Most importantly, we send all our school communication and newsletters via ParentPay.  In order to access the system, you need to log on to ParentPay and activate your child’s account using activation codes given by the school.  Please contact the school office if you require a copy of these.

Can we please ask that if you change your email address, please log in to your ParentPay Account using your existing details and change your email address in the Profile Settings section.

**School and Early Childhood Centre Social Media Pages**

A reminder to new and existing parents that our school has Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Rattray-Primary-School-496557997081831/> where pupil learning, school and community events and general information is posted and celebrated. We will endeavour to update these media platforms regularly.

**Rattray School and Early Childhood Centre App**

Our school app is live in the Apple and Google Play Stores. Using the app you can keep in touch with our events, news and receive important messages from us. To download the app, search ‘PSA’ or ‘PSA primaryschoolapp’ in the play app stores. Once you‘ve opened the app, search for Rattray Primary School and download the app. You will be given a username (you should leave this blank) and our password is 1980.

**Flu Immunisation Programme**

Tayside Health Board nurses will be in school on **Wednesday 27th October** to carry out the flu prevention programme for all children from Primary 1 to 7. Again this will be in the form of a nasal spray. Letters have gone out please make sure you return these.

**School Improvement Plan 2021/22**

This year’s school improvement priorities, outlined in our strategic curriculum plans, will soon be on display in our school foyer and available on request. These will also be shared at our next Parent Council meeting. Our Standards and Quality report 2020/21 is available on the Perth and Kinross Council website. Copies are available from the office or on request by email.

**Assessing Children’s Progress**

As you may be award National Standardised Assessments have been introduced across all schools in Scotland, and each year pupils in Primaries One, Four and Seven are assessed in schools locally and nationally. This is part of the Scottish Governments commitment to raising standards across Scottish Education. Testing of our P7 pupils will take place later this term. Further details can be found at the web link below. <https://www.education.gov.scot/parentzone/Documents/parent-leaflet-assessing-progress.pdf>

**PKC Strengthening Families Programme**

**PKC Parenting and Family Learning** are currently inviting families to attend their Strengthening Families Programmes which start on 25 August 2021. Strengthening Families is a 7-week programme that helps families with young people aged P6, P7, S1 and S2 to prepare for their teenage years. As a family, you will attend one session per week for 7 weeks. Each session is held in the evening and lasts 2 ½ hours.

**PKC Raising Attainment Strategy**

Perth and Kinross Council is committed to raising attainment and achievement and supporting every child and young person to reach their potential.The information page [**https://www.pkc.gov.uk/RaisingAttainment**](https://www.pkc.gov.uk/RaisingAttainment)has been created on the Council’s website for parents and carers.

**Thanks from the school staff**

On behalf of the staff, I have been asked to thank you f**or the** gifts which they received prior to the summer break. All staff are incredibly grateful and appreciative of your generosity.

On behalf of all the staff I would like to thank you for your continuing support.

Yours faithfully



Joanna Robertson

Headteacher

rattray@pkc.gov.uk

01250 871980

Rattray Primary School Key Dates

**Please note these dates are provisional and may be subject to change**

**Other dates will also be added**

**September 2021**

Friday 24th – P1 class photos

**October 2021**

Friday 8th – School closes for October holiday

Monday 25th - Back to School

Wednesday 27th – Flu Immunisations

**November 2021**

Tuesday 9th - Parent Contact 1 (4pm to 6.30pm)

Wednesday 10th – Parent Contact 2 (5pm to 7.30pm)

**Thursday 11th – Inset Day school closed to pupils**

**Friday 12th – Inset Day school closed to pupils**

Monday 15th - Odd socks day (anti-bullying)

Wednesday 24th (5.30pm – 6.30pm) – HT- parent drop-in session

**December 2021**

Thursday 2nd - Winter Fayre (6pm)

Tuesday 14th - Infant Nativity (9.30am and 1.30pm)

Tuesday 14th - (PM) in Hub- Nursery PM Party

Friday 17th - (AM) in Hub - Nursery AM Party

Friday 17th - Carols in the Playground (3pm)

Monday 20th – Whole School Christmas Party Day

Tuesday 21st - Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Lunch

Tuesday 21st - Nursery Christmas Activity Day and Songs

Wednesday 22nd - End of term service (10.30am)

Wednesday 22nd (noon) – School closes for Winter Break

**January 2022**

Thursday 6th - Back to School

Tuesday 25th (5.30pm – 6.30pm) – HT- parent drop-in session

Friday 28th – Upper School Burns Assembly (PM)

**February 2022**

**Wednesday 16th – Inset Day school closed to pupils**

**Thursday 17th – Public Holiday school closed to all**

**Friday 18th - Public Holiday school closed to all**

**March 2022**

Tuesday 1st - Parent Contact 3 (4pm to 6.30pm)

Wednesday 2nd – Parent Contact 4 (5pm to 7.30pm)

Wednesday 23rd (5.30pm – 6.30pm) – HT- parent drop-in session

Thursday 24th – Open Afternoon (2.30pm)

Tuesday 29th – Upper School Show (afternoon and evening performances)

Thursday 31st – Easter Service (2pm)

**April 2022**

Friday 1st – School closes for Spring holiday

Tuesday 19th - Back to School

**May 2022**

**Monday 2nd –** **Public Holiday school closed to all**

Tuesday 10th (5.30pm – 6.30pm) – HT- parent drop-in session

w/b 16th – P7 residential week Lendrick Muir

**June 2022**

Wb 6th June – Health Week

Thursday 9th – Nursery Sports Day

Wednesday 8th – Sports day (Upper School AM/Infant school PM)

9th/ 10th – P7 Transition Days

Wednesday 15th (5.30pm – 6.30pm) – HT- parent drop-in session

Thursday 16th – Open Afternoon (2.30pm)

Monday 20th – Nursery Graduation

Thursday23rd – P7 Prom

Friday 24th – P7 Leaver Assembly

Wednesday 29th– Prizegiving (Upper School AM/Infant school PM)

Thursday 30th – School closes for Summer Break (12 noon)