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**NOVEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER**

Dear parents/carers and friends of Rattray

Firstly, thank you to all those who managed along to our open afternoon last term and to our parent contact evenings recently**.** We hoped you enjoyed seeing the learning in your child’s classroom, alongside hearing about your child’s progress. It was so lovely to have our parents and families back into the school again. We were delighted that over the course of these events over 90% of our school families have been able to attend.

It has been several weeks since our last newsletter, and we’ve had quite a few different events in and visitors to the school during that time. Callum Garden, the cricket development officer has been coaching our P4 – P5 pupils every Wednesday and runs an after-school club on Wednesdays too. We are continuing to work with PKC Play Leader Sarah Milne to promote positive play experiences in our school. Every Tuesday Sarah works with individual classes, developing children’s co-operative play and games skills in an outdoor play context. Our P7 pupils who took part in willow weaving sessions, visited the high school as part of this project. The Fire Brigade visited some of our classes and gave a safety talk to our P6 and P7 pupils, and our P1 and P1/2 classes also got to explore the fire engine, practise hosing a ‘pretend’ fire and try on a firefighter’s uniform. All our classes have taken part in Anti-bullying week last week and had learning activities in their classes and assembly which focussed on this theme. In all our classes last week and this week, we have also been celebrating **Scottish Book Week,** pleasesee separate entry later in this newsletter**.**

We have also been visited by our woodwind musical instructor Fran Baker, bagpiping tutor Scott Methven, drumming tutor Stuart Foggo and Lawrie Mitchell from Blairgowrie and Rattray Community Football Club (BRCFC) who runs a few after school clubs for our boys, girls and under 5s. Watch this space for an exciting new partnership with BRCFC coming soon.

It is also hard to believe that the hectic Christmas Season is almost upon us. As we race towards the end of another term it is going to be a remarkably busy December for Rattray Primary School. The staff have once again been busy thinking about how to make this a magical time in school for all our pupils and families, and I would like to thank them all for their efforts. We have also considered that this year many might struggle financially, at the cost of living continues to rise, therefore we have decided to drop a couple of things (Cauliflower Christmas Cards and Winter Fayre) from our festive calendar this year as we do not want to add anymore financial stress to our families. However, we have still pulled together a wonderful array of festive fun for the children this year. A more detailed festive news bulletin will be sent out later this week, but all key dates are included at the end of this newsletter. Alongside these winter events, there are several other items I wish to draw to your attention.

**Welcome to our school**

We have had two new pupils join us since our last newsletter Maksim Dieiev and Stanislaw Guz in Mrs Russell’s P2/3 class. We hope both our new starts will enjoy their time at Rattray Primary School.

**Temporary Staffing Changes**

There are a couple of staffing changes to share with you for the coming weeks. Ms Emma Byrne will remain in P1/2 covering the absence of Ms Wigmore, and P6/7 will be covered by Miss Brogan Campbell whilst Mrs McCarthy is absent.

I am delighted (but saddened) to announce that Mr Brown, our Depute Head Teacher was successful recently in securing a temporary secondment to Angus Council as a Scottish Attainment Challenge Project Leader. This will be a wonderful opportunity for Mr Brown and is very thoroughly deserved. Mr Brown will provisionally start his new post in January (staffing pending) and will be in his new post until at least the summer holidays. Mr Brown will be very much missed by pupil, staff and parents alike. We wish Mr Brown well in this new challenge. The vacant Depute Head Teacher post is currently being advertised across PKC schools.

**National Industrial Action – Thursday 24th November 2022**

All Perth & Kinross Council schools will be affected by the national industrial action due to the staff membership of the unions involved. **Therefore, Perth and Kinross Council has made the decision to close all schools and nurseries (including Rattray) to pupils on Thursday 24 November 2022**. Breakfast Clubs, Kids Clubs and Wraparound Care will also be closed. Free school meal payments will be made directly to those who receive free school meals and who are in receipt of qualifying benefits. This will be paid in December payments.

**Scottish Book Week 2022**

In all our classes last week and this week, we have been celebrating **Scottish Book Week**. We are also using this week to launch our journey into becoming an accredited Reading School.

Across the school children have been participating in various experiences including:

* Designing a bookmark
* Designing a new reading acronym and character for the whole school to use
* Opportunities to share their favourite books, stories, comics or poems
* Creating video blogs about their favourite books
* Acting out their favourite part of a book they have read.
* Redesigning the front cover of their favourite book
* Creating a theme tune for their favourite book or character.
* Buddying younger children for reading.
* Participating in Library treasure hunts
* P1-3 receiving their Book bug and Read, Write, Count bags and wearing their PJs and bringing a cuddly toy to cosy up with whilst listening to stories from their special bags.

As a final celebration of Book Week Scotland, we would like to invite all pupils and staff to a ‘dress up or dress down’ day on Friday 24th November. On this day children should bring their favourite book to school and could

* Dress up as their favourite character from a book (or film)
* Dress up as their favourite author

**or**

* Just dress up or down.

**There is no cost to this day, and we certainly do not want families going to any expense buying outfits.**

**Reading Schools**

Rattray Primary School has begun its journey into becoming an accredited Reading School. Literacy is part of this year’s school improvement plan and becoming a Reading School will support us in raising attainment within this area of the curriculum.

During this term we will be asking children from all classes to become ambassadors to lead our school on its journey. Our focus will be to make reading accessible and fun for all no matter the challenges and we will be hosting events throughout the year to promote and share our successes.

We will be in regular contact to let you know how we are getting on and if you would like any more information then please click on the link below.

<https://www.scottishbooktrust.com/learning-and-resources/reading-schools>

**Primary 6 and 7 Skiing Trip**

Thank you to Cally Gordon for coming to school to discuss the P6 and P7 ski trip with parents. This skiing trip is still active on Parent Pay, and if you want to sign your child up for this trip, please do so by 25th November.

**Pedal Cinema**

On Tuesday 29th November children will have the opportunity to take part in a pedal cinema. This is a fun activity where children will power the projector by peddling on bikes connected to the projector.

**Football**

Last week, several our P6 and P7 pupils took part in a football festival at Davie Park. We were able to enter two teams, both teams played four games did incredibly well, collectively winning five games and scoring 17 goals between them. The children representing our school were Emily Gruneberg, Jack Higgins, James Fowler, Robert Crisan, Andrei Hunea-Anania, Hayden McDonald, Ryan Whyte, Ayla Meikle, Stevie Grant, Mason Forbes-Whyte, Cody Meikle, Keegan Fergusson, Kane Warner and Cody Meikle.

As a result of their performance three of our pupils Keegan Fergusson, Robert Crisan and Jack Higgins have been selected to become part of a Blairgowrie schools cluster team who will participate in an upcoming Perth and Kinross tournament. Congratulation to these three children.

**National Youth Choir of Scotland (NYCOS)**

Recently all our Primary 4 to 6 boys took part in a workshop for the Voice Male Singing Project run by NYCOS. The aim of the workshop was for NYCOS to uncover and nurture new singing talent in boys, as they are sometimes shy about singing after they reach a certain age. NYCOS hope this project will go some way to reinforcing the belief that singing is a natural and fun thing to do.

We are absolutely delighted that we have so many talented singers amongst our boys, as 22 of Rattray Primary School boys were selected to participate in further workshops, and a culminating concert at St John’s Kirk in Perth on Tuesday 22nd November 2022. Congratulations to P6 pupils Joey, Iain, Andrei, Nathan, Jamie, Lewis, Jai, Keegan and Niko. Our selected P5 pupils were Ethian, Matias, Danny, Laiton and Crawford. The P4 boys chosen were Jayden, Tayon, Nathan, Marcus, Max, Krystian, Riley and Martin. Well done all!

**Rights Respecting Schools**

This term the RRS Steering Group have been working towards achieving our bronze accreditation to allow us to be formally recognised as a Rights Respecting School. We have now submitted our application and are hoping to receive our award soon. The children have worked hard to create a whole school charter and then created individual designs for Mrs Robertson and Mr Brown.

**Poppies and Armistice Day**

Thank you to everyone who has bought a poppy, our school have raised £77 for the Poppy Scotland appeal.

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

**Parent Council Halloween Disco**

Thanks to our Parent Council for organising a fabulous disco. There was lots of fabulous costumes and dancing on display, but most importantly the children (and adults) had a ball. Added thanks to parents and staff members who supported the evening. Lastly, well done to MC Kylie Gill for stepping in at last moment as a DJ.Due to the success of the evening the parent council raised £220 towards their funds.

**Pupil Council**

Pupils have been enjoying the playground equipment that the pupil council ordered last term. This term the pupil council have created a survey that they are going to be conducting with focus groups around the themes of outdoor learning, homework, writing, and support in class. They will then look at what pupils say and find common themes for the school to look at.

**Parent Helpers**

On the back our request last term, we have had a couple of parents who have offered to support in school – but we’d still love to see more! Therefore, if you can offer your support in any way to the school, whether long-term, short-term, or one-off for an hour, afternoon, morning or full day, we would be delighted to have you. We are always looking for extra hands in our classrooms, lunch hall, playground, skills groups or on school trips. If you can support us in any way, please do contact the school office at [rattray@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:rattray@pkc.gov.uk)

**Severe Weather Guidance**

Accompanying this newsletter is guidance on our school closure procedures, in the event of severe weather or other emergencies.

**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 P4 and P7 pupils will take place this term. Further details can be found at the web link below. <https://www.education.gov.scot/parentzone/Documents/parent-leaflet-assessing-progress.pdf>

**Home Learning**

In a survey prior to the summer, parents/carers requested some changes to home learning. We have tried to address these, however in some classes we still have a considerable number of children who do not regularly complete home learning. As a reminder I have included our home learning instructions for infant and upper classes.

**Homework in P4-P7 classes** will follow a Monday-to-Monday pattern. Homework will be issued to children on a Monday and returned the following Monday. Teachers will explain to their class what their homework is and where to find it. This will also be shared on the class Teams page. Most weeks there will be spelling to be completed in a jotter, and maths will often be on Education City. Reading tasks may be given at different points during the week.

**Homework in P1-3 classes** will follow a Tuesday-to-Monday pattern. Homework will be issued to children on a Tuesday and returned the following Monday. Teachers will explain to their class what their homework is and where to find it. There will also be instructions for parents too. Most weeks there will be phonics/spelling to do, and maths will often be on Education City. Reading tasks may be given at different points during the week.

Every child in school has a GLOW log in for teams and an Education City username. If you do not know it, please contact the school and we will help you.

Education City Homework help video <https://youtu.be/SST88gvTkl0>

Team Help video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tBulFa2Gce8>

**Appropriate clothing for the weather**

Please can we ask that your child comes to school each day with a coat and appropriate footwear. It is important that our pupils get plenty of exercise and fresh air, so children will be outdoors for break and lunchtimes in all weathers (except torrential rain and high winds). During the school week, children will spend periods learning outdoors too, therefore it’s always best to be prepared.

**PE Times and Kit**

All our classes have at least two sessions of PE each week. On these days **only,** children can come to school without uniform and wearing suitable sportswear. Please note that on these days, jewellery should not be worn, and long hair should also be tied back. **Can we also ask that children bring indoor PE shoes to school on their gym days too?**

**Pupil Absence and Lateness**

Absent - If your child is 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. If we do not hear from you, this absence will be classed as unexplained and unauthorised. This is normal procedure across Scotland. Your support in this is much appreciated.

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

**Term-time Holidays**

A little reminder that whilst we appreciate some family holidays can only take place during term-time, council guidance is that these holidays will be marked in school as an unauthorised absence and no schoolwork will be given. This will be done even if you have told the school you intend to take your child on holiday. Further information can be found at the [this link.](https://www.pkc.gov.uk/media/10239/Family-Holiday-Leaflet/pdf/Family_Holiday_Leaflet.pdf?m=636110894744430000)

**School Playground Entry**

A reminder that all parents can enter our school playground now, there is no longer a requirement to wait on the Common or on the High Street to collect your children at the end of the school day. **These restrictions were only in place due to covid.**

**Contacting Staff**

Teaching staff are available at the end of the school day on most days to discuss any general matters or concerns you have. Mr Brown (our school depute) or myself (Mrs Robertson, Headteacher) are usually in the playground before the start of the school day and at the end of the school day. However, if you are concerned about something, no matter how trivial, and you are unable to speak to us at these times please do not hesitate to contact the school office and we will contact you as soon as we can.

**School Refurbishment and Extension**

Those of you who have been in our school will have seen how good the school is looking post refurbishment and extension. We are now in the position that the contractors are offsite, and our playground and car park has returned to us, alongside our library, staffroom, school resources room and spare classroom. As with any significant works, there will be snagging issues, however we have been assured that these alongside external works will take place in the evenings, weekends and school holidays.

We could not have predicted prior to the commencement of the project a few years the challenges that the project would encounter or anticipate how long the project would have taken. Unfortunately, the impact of the Covid pandemic alongside labour shortages due to illness, the war in the Ukraine and the current economic situation impacted costs and delivery of materials.

Personally, I would like to thank all the school staff for their commitment in ensuring that, despite packing, decanting and unpacking classrooms and other school areas, our pupil’s learning has not been impacted. All our school staff have gone above and beyond to ensure that our school learning environments were still conducive to effective learning and teaching in the midst of these essential school works. Our building is not the finished product yet, but we are not far off it and its already looking fantastic.

**Last day of term**

Our school and early childhood centre closes for our Winter break at **12 noon** on **Thursday 22nd December**.

**General Updates/Reminders**

* Please ensure that your child comes to school on PE days in appropriate clothing that can be worn both indoors and outdoors. No jeans, jeggings please.
* Please ensure your child wears full school uniform on the days they do not have PE.
* Mobile phones or devices are not permitted for pupils in school. Senior pupils are recommended not to bring them to school, and if they do, they must hand their phone into their class teacher during the day.
* Whilst we do not want to ban football or Pokémon cards, we would like to remind you to reinforce to your children that the trading of cards should not take place in the school building or playground. As you can imagine we have had a few squabbles about this which spill over into the classroom.

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.**

If you have any questions or queries about any of the items within this newsletter, please don’t hesitate to contact the school office or the email address below.

Yours faithfully

Joanna Robertson

Headteacher

[rattray@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:rattray@pkc.gov.uk)

01250 871980

Rattray Primary School Key Dates

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

**Other dates will also be added**

**November 2022**

Monday 14th – 20th – Book Week Scotland

Tuesday 22nd – NYCOS performance in Perth (selected pupils)

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

Thursday 24th – School closed to pupils (Teacher strikes)

Friday 25th – Book Week Scotland Dress up/Dress down day

Tuesday 29th – Ibike event Pedal Cinema (in-class event)

Tuesday 29th (AM) – P7 transition event at Blairgowrie High School

**December 2022**

~~Thursday 1~~~~st~~ ~~- Winter Fayre (6.30pm)~~

Monday 5th to Friday 9th – Ibike event – Leg it to Lapland (in-class event)

Wednesday 7th – Flu Immunisations

Friday 9th (PM) – Hopscotch Theatre (Jack and the Beanstalk)

Tuesday 13th - Infant Nativity (9.30am and 1.30pm)

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

Thursday 15th (AM) in Hub - Nursery AM Party

Friday 16th - Christmas Jumper day and Christmas Lunch

Friday 16th - Carols in the ‘Hub’ (2.15pm)

Monday 19th - Nursery Christmas Activity Day and Song

Monday 19th – School Christmas Activity Day (in-school event)

Tuesday 20th – Whole School Christmas Party Day

**Wednesday 21st - End of term Church service (10.30am) - TBC**

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

**January 2023**

Monday 9th - Back to School

Wednesday 11th – ibike event – Smoothie Bike (in-school event)

Tuesday 17th – NHS well good event for P7s (in-school event)

Monday 30th – Monday 6th February – National Storytelling Week

**February 2023**

Wednesday 1st - Global play day

Wednesday 1st – ibike event – P1-4 scooter sessions (in-school event)

Wednesday 1st (5.30pm – 6.30pm) – HT- parent drop-in session(contact school office)

Thursday 2nd – ibike event – P1-4 scooter sessions (in-school event)

Friday 3rd – Upper School Scots Assembly (PM)

Monday 6th – Friday 10th – P6 and P7 Skiing Trip

**Wednesday 15th – Inset Day school closed to pupils**

**Thursday 16th – Public Holiday school closed to all**

**Friday 17th - Public Holiday school closed to all**

**March 2023**

Tuesday 7th – ibike event – P5-7 Dr Bike/Bike Wash sessions (in-school event)

Tuesday 7th (4pm to 6.30pm) - Parent Contact 3 (4pm to 6.30pm)

Wednesday 8th (5pm to 7.30pm)– Parent Contact 4

Monday 20th – Thursday 23rd March (1.30 to 3pm) – P6/7 Bikeability sessions

Thursday 24th (2.30pm) – Open Afternoon

Thursday 30th – Easter Service (2pm)

Friday 31st – School closes for Spring holiday

**April 2023**

Monday 17th - Back to School

**May 2023**

Monday 1st - **Public Holiday school closed to all**

Wednesday 3rd (5.30pm – 6.30pm) – HT- parent drop-in session (contact school office)

Friday 26th (12 noon to 1pm) – School BBQ (all welcome)

Wednesday 31st (1.30pm) – School Sports day **(more information to follow)**

**June 2023**

W/b 5th June – Health Week **(more information to follow)**

Tuesday 6th (1.45pm) – Nursery Sports Day **(more information to follow)**

Thursday 8th/ Friday 9th – P1 / P7 Transition Days **(more information to follow)**

w/b 12th – P7 residential week Lendrick Muir (pupils only)

Wednesday 21st – Moving up Morning/meet new class teachers

Friday 24th (10am) – P4 – P7 Prizegiving (by invitation)

Friday 24th (2pm)– P1-P3 Prizegiving (by invitation)

Monday 26th (9.30am) – Nursery Graduation (by invitation)

Monday 26th (2.15pm) – P7 Leaver’s Assembly (by invitation)

Tuesday 27th (PM) – P7 Leaver’s Party (pupils only)

Wednesday 28th – End of term fun day / staff v pupils netball etc... **(more information to follow)**

Thursday 29th – P7 Shirt Signing (pupils only)

Thursday 29th (12 noon) – School closes for Summer Break