



## NOVEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

Dear parents/carers and friends of Ratray

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 school again. We were delighted that over the course of these events so many of our school families have been able to attend.

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 Ratray 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 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 four new pupils join us since our last newsletter Joanna Atinoe and Emmanuel Lucky-Agofure in Miss Johnstone's P4 class, alongside their siblings Joel Atinoe and Faithful Lucky-Agofure in Mr Masterton's P6/7 class. We welcome these children to our school and their families to this community, we hope all our new starts will enjoy their time at Ratray Primary School.

### Staffing Update

There are a couple of staffing changes to share with you. As you aware our office has been short on staff since the departure of Miss Hilary Duncan to Blairgowrie High School. I am delighted to share that we will have two new staff members in our office, firstly Mrs Shauna Scott who had a very hectic first week with us last week, secondly Ms Vicky Graham will join the school staff next week. Both Mrs Scott and Ms Graham have strong connections with the school and the community. We are delighted to have them as part of our wonderful Ratray team.

This term has also saw the return of Miss Carly Shaw after her maternity leave, we are not sure who was more excited to have her back – the pupils or the staff, but we are very pleased that Miss Shaw is back with us.

### Scottish Book Week 2023

In all our classes this week, we will be celebrating **Scottish Book Week**. We are also using this week to continue our journey into becoming an accredited Reading School.

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

- Opportunities to share their favourite books, stories, comics or poems
- Redesigning the front cover of their favourite book
- Creating a theme tune for their favourite book or character.
- Buddying younger children for reading.
- 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.
- The adults in the school are now wearing which encourage our pupils to ask them what they are reading. This is already sparked many an interesting conversation.
- We will also be visited by Hopscotch Theatre group who will perform Cinderella for the whole school.

Our Reading Ambassadors will now be meeting each Thursday lunchtime to help support our school on its journey to becoming a Reading School and excite and inspire our pupils to love reading!

### Book Fair

Scholastic Travelling Book Fair is currently in school and will remain here until Thursday afternoon. Every child will have the opportunity to visit the book fair with their class and children will return home with a form containing the

names and cost of books they like. If you would like to purchase a book, instructions are for doing so are on the form. **Please be aware there is absolutely no obligation to buy a book for your child from the book fair!**

### **Primary 6 Skiing Trip**

The skiing trip is still active on Parent Pay, and if you want to sign your child up for this trip, please do so by the end of this week. We arrange for Cally Gordon (local skiing instructor) to come into school to discuss the ki trip with parents.

### **P7 Residential – Lendrick Muir**

Our 5-day outdoor adventure at Lendrick Muir takes place from **Monday 20<sup>th</sup> to Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May**. The booking of places is now open, and all P7 parents should have been sent correspondence regarding this. Further information will be sent out soon to all children interested. Funding is available to those who will find the cost of this residential prohibitive.

### **Poppies and Armistice Day**

Thank you to everyone who has bought a poppy, our school have raised £75 for the Poppy Scotland appeal.

### **Parent Council Update**

The next Parent Council meeting will take place on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November at 6.15pm in the school staff room. All parents and carers are welcome to attend the parent council meetings, and as a school we would urge you to think about coming along to meetings. It would be very sad for such a thriving school community not to have an equally thriving Parent Council to support the children and to help parents have their say. Please think about joining them even for one or two meetings a year! If you have any items for the agenda or want further information about our Parent Council, please visit their Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/Ratray-Primary-Parent-Council-1486611214939520/>

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 £020 towards their funds.

Another fundraising event arranged by our parents is a Charity Shop, which again will raise money for Parent Council School Funds. The Charity Shop will be open from the 11th of December for one week. Therefore, if you have any donations for the charity shop, please hold onto them until beginning of December or pop them into the school. We are on the lookout for any items which will sell, including bric-a-brac, furniture, clothing etc., but especially toys as it's Christmastime.

### **Rag Bag Collection – 20<sup>th</sup> November**

Our Rag Bag collection is scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> November between 9 am and 3 pm.

If you have any donations, please bring bags to the school by the end of day on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November.

### **Wednesday afternoon Inter-generational Group**

We have now two intergenerational sessions this year. Eight local residents have been coming along to chat and play games with our pupils. This has been organised by our pupil support teacher Mrs Brodie. This group will continue to run every Wednesday afternoon from 2pm. Please get in touch or pop along if you know someone who would fancy a tea/coffee, biscuit and a blether with our pupils.

### **Swap Day – Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> November**

Primaries 4/5, 5 and 6 are hosting a swap day as part of their sustainability topic, Rattrays Reduce, Reuse and Recycle campaign. On Wednesday 29th November at 2.15- 3.30pm there will be a book swap, a clothes swap, a Christmas jumper swap and a food bank available in the dinner hall. This event is free, and we will have tea and coffee available too.

The classes have been very busy creating fact files, adverts and posters for the event. The Primary 6 class are in charge of the food bank and hand wrote letters to lots of local businesses asking for them to support us with donations. We would like to ask our school community to help support by donating any good condition books, winter clothes and Christmas Jumpers. The food bank team are requiring help with any non-perishable foods and household goods. We would very much appreciate any support with such a worthy cause. We look forward to seeing you on the day!

### **Pupil Council**

After collecting the views of our pupils our Pupil Council have been creating Recognition Boards for our playground, PE hall and the lunch hall. These boards have been used successful in our classrooms for a number of years and allow positive behaviour to be recognised, therefore our hope is that this method can now be used out with the classroom and recognise positive behaviour all over the school.

### **Rights Respecting Schools**

Earlier this year we received our bronze Rights Respecting Schools accreditation, and we are delighted to now be working towards receiving silver accreditation. To achieve this our RRS Steering group having been working hard to ensure that all the children in the school understand their rights and responsibilities. We have been gathering feedback from every class to help us create a whole school playground and lunch hall charters. As part of their sustainability topic some of our upper school classes have also organised an upcoming clothes swap and food bank which are closely linked to the RRS principles.

### **Parent Helpers**

Recently, 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 aware 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>

### **Appropriate clothing for winter 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 two sessions of PE each week. The table below indicates the days that your child will have their PE lesson. **On PE days only** children should come to school without uniform and wearing suitable sportswear on these days. This saves time in school for changing and allows the children to get their full PE time. Please note that on these days, jewellery should not be worn, and long hair should also be tied back.

<b>Class</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>PE days</b>
P1	Miss Wigmore	Tuesday and Thursday
P2	Mrs Russell	Wednesday and Thursday
P2/3	Ms McCulloch	Wednesday and Thursday
P3	Mrs Case/Miss Gunn	Tuesday and Thursday
P4	Miss L. Johnstone	Tuesday and Thursday
P4/5	Ms Gregg	Monday and Thursday
P5	Mrs D. Johnstone	Wednesday and Thursday
P6	Mrs Strachan	Tuesday and Friday
P6/7	Mr Masterton	Monday and Tuesday
P7	Mrs Newlands	Monday and Wednesday

## **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](#).

## **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. Mrs McCarthy (our school acting 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.

## **Last day of term**

Our school and early childhood centre closes for our Winter break at **12 noon on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> 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

## Ratray Primary School Key Dates

**Please note these dates are provisional and may be subject to change.  
Other dates will also be added.**

### November 2023

Monday 13th – 16th – Scholastic Book Fair  
Monday 13th – 19th – Book week Scotland  
Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> – Hopscotch Theatre performance  
Friday 17<sup>th</sup> – Library Bus Visit for P3 to P5  
Monday 20<sup>th</sup> – Ragbag Collection  
Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> (6.15pm) – Parent Council Meeting  
Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> – P4/5 to visit Blairgowrie Library  
Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> (3pm) – Blairgowrie Christmas lights switch on (Glee Choir)  
~~Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> (AM) – P7 Transition Event at Blair High (cancelled by High School)~~  
Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> (from 2.15pm) – P4/5, P5 and P6 food bank and clothing swap  
Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> – Tempest Photographer (individual and family photos)

### December 2023

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> - Infant Nativity (9.30am and 1.30pm)  
Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> – Flu Immunisations  
Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> (AM) in Hub - Nursery Christmas Party  
Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Disco - P1 to P3: 6 – 6.45pm; P4 to P7: 7 – 8pm  
Friday 15<sup>th</sup> - Christmas Jumper day  
Friday 15<sup>th</sup> (2pm) - Carols in the Hub  
Friday 15<sup>th</sup> – Library Bus Visit for P3 to P5  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> - Nursery Christmas Activity Day and Song  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> – Whole School Christmas Party Day (pupils only)  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Lunch  
Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> (PM) – Christmas Activity Day (pupils only)  
Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> (All day) – Christmas Activity Day (pupils only)  
Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> (noon) – School closes for Winter Break

### January 2024

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> - Back to School  
Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> – SSPCA class workshops

### February 2024

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> – Upper School Scots Assembly (PM)  
Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> - Global play day  
**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> – Inset Day school closed to pupils**  
**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> – Public Holiday school closed to all**  
**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> - Public Holiday school closed to all**  
Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> (AM) – P7 Transition Event at Blair High

### March 2024

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> – P1-3 Generation Science Workshop  
Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> (5pm to 7.30pm)– Parent Contact 3  
Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> (4pm to 6.30pm) - Parent Contact 4  
Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March – Comic Relief Day  
Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March – Young Carers Day  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> – P4-5 Generation Science Workshop  
Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> (2.15pm) – Open Afternoon  
Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> - School closes for Spring holiday

### April 2024

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> - Back to School

### **May 2024**

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> - **Public Holiday school closed to all**

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> to Friday 24<sup>th</sup> – P7 residential to Lendrick Muir

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> (12 noon to 1pm) – School Summer BBQ (all welcome)

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> (1.30pm) – School Sports day **(more information to follow)**

### **June 2024**

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup>/ Friday 7<sup>th</sup> – P1 / P7 Transition Days **(more information to follow)**

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June (2pm) – Strong Start 2 sports day in courtyard

Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> (1.45pm) – Nursery Sports Day **(more information to follow)**

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June (1.30pm) – School Sports Contingency Day

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> June (2pm) – Strong Start 2 sports day in courtyard Contingency Day

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> (1.45pm) – Nursery Sports Contingency Day

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June – Nursery Fun Day

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> – Moving up Morning/meet new class teachers

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> June (10am) – P4 – P7 Prizegiving (by invitation)

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> June (2pm)– P1-P3 Prizegiving (by invitation)

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June (9.30am) – Nursery Graduation (by invitation)

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June (2pm) – P7 Leaver's Assembly (by invitation)

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June (PM) – P7 Leaver's Party (pupils only)

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June – End of term fun day / staff v pupils netball/Rattray's got talent. etc

**(more information to follow)**

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June –P7 Shirt Signing (pupils only)

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June (12 noon) – School closes for Summer Break