



## JANUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER

Dear pupils, parents/carers and friends of Ratray

I hope this (slightly late – apologies) January newsletter finds you well and that you had a joyful and restful festive period. The start of term seems to have started as last term ended, with staff and pupils battling lots of winter bugs. Hopefully, this will pass, and everyone's energy will return, as our dedicated staff have already embarked on another term of learning, with a variety of exciting activities, projects, and special events planned for your children.

Already this term P4/5 and P5 have been receiving cricket coaching every Wednesday afternoon from Reg, the local cricket development officer. Our P6/7 and P7 classes have participated in the NHS wellgood Drama and Dance workshops which explored the impact of vaping and smoking. Both classes performed their dramatic learning to another class in the school. Our P7s have also been visited by St Johnstone and participated in the 'show racism the red card' workshop and we've had to contend with an unexpected school closure in the form of Storm Éowyn.

We have a few events happening in the coming weeks, these as always are in our annual dates at the end of each newsletter, but I would like to add more detail to these in the sections below. I encourage you to stay connected with our school community through our communication channels alongside participation in our school events. We are all looking forward to wonderful Spring term full of learning and growth.

### **Thank you**

I would like to thank all the parents, relatives, staff and pupils who participated in our Christmas events. Our school nativities and 'Christmas songs in the Hub' were well attended and at capacity. Your food bank donations as an entry fee, as always were overwhelming. Our Pupils Festive Funday, Disco, and Raffle were a great success. This brought in £1,171, and even after Christmas expenses, including food, materials etc... we had a huge profit of £711. The money raised has gone a long way to making Christmas so enjoyable for our Ratray children, and we also help towards funding our school excursions later in the year.

Finally, on behalf of the staff, I would like to thank you for the gifts which were given to each of us personally and handed into the staffroom during the festive season. Each gift was gratefully received (and eaten).

### **Welcome to our school**

We have had two new pupils join us since our last newsletter, Ollie Middleton in Miss Johnstone's P3/4 class and brother Blake Middleton in Mr Masterton's P5 class. We welcome Blake and Ollie to our school and their family to this community. We are delighted to welcome Miss Alanna Salmond (P4/5) and Mr Sean Curran (P6) to our teaching team, and we also welcome back Miss Jade Nesbitt from her maternity leave. Also, joining us for a short spell in P1b (Miss McAlpine) this week is student teacher Miss Kinmont. We hope all our new starts, returnees and visitors will enjoy their time here at Ratray Primary School.

### **Christmas card to local care homes**

Unless, you have an older child at school you may not be aware that our upper school classes send a personalised Christmas card with a lovely letter attached to every person resident in Blairgowrie care homes. This totalled 140 cards. We have received lovely emails, phonecalls and letters from the care home staff and residents thanking the school pupils and staff for their endeavours.

### **Digital Schools**

We are also delighted to share that prior to the Christmas break we were awarded the National Digital Schools Award. This is a national award to promote, recognise and encourage a whole school approach to the use of digital technology. The process to gain a digital schools award was a two-year long process, led very ably by Mr Masterton (P5 teacher) and equally able digital team consisting of 3 children in every class.

The validator who awarded our school was very impressed with a number of our approaches and highlighted the following:

**Ratray Primary School's vision and ambitious aims within its Digital Strategy set teachers high expectations for the learning, teaching and assessment contexts expected and for the experiences and skills learners should acquire.**

**Staff in interviews and within evidence showed high levels of commitment to accessing the potential of digital to improve their own preparations, learners' experiences and their partnerships with parents. Pupils showed pride in explaining the ways their classrooms and corridors reflected and highlighted their uses of digital technologies, and how their uses of digital helped them to learn and share their work.**

**The school's vision and aims to create a digitally literate school was already meeting with some recognisable successes and I recommend that the school should also be invited to become a mentor school, particularly with regard to Leadership and Vision as they have the capacity and skills to do so.**



We are absolutely delighted with this award and will share a more detailed report in the coming weeks. However, huge thanks and congratulations has to go to Mr Masterton and his digital team for this fantastic achievement.

### **Scots Afternoon – Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025 – 2pm (sharp)**

Our Scots Afternoon (poster also attached) will be led by our upper school pupils from P6, P6/7 and P7. During the afternoon all our classes will entertain parents/carers and relatives with Scots poems, songs and dancing in Ratray Community Connect. We hope you can join us on this celebratory afternoon but do remember to wear something tartan or Scottish and bring your dancing shoes - there may also be some shortbread on offer! **Use this link to book your tickets** <https://forms.office.com/e/JDpSsEu7X7>

**On this afternoon you will have the opportunity to hear our Scots poetry winners from each class. Parents of these children will be informed separately, and we will ensure that seating is kept at the Scots afternoon for 2 family members of each winning child.**

### **P6 Skiing – 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

We are still hopeful that the ski trip will go ahead this year. In preparation, can I remind you, if you haven't already, to return the form that shares your child's height/weight/shoe size etc. Also, to remind you that if you need to hire clothing from Cally Gordon, to contact him soon and arrange visiting him to organise. His contact number is 07720126638.

Please remember that we leave the school at 8.30am every morning and return at about 4.30pm. A message will be posted on Facebook (if we have sufficient signal!) to advise of arrival time each day.

### **Global Play Day – Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

*"You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation." – Plato*

At Ratray Primary School we value the importance of play and for the last 6 years we have celebrated Global School Play Day (GSPD). GSPD has been promoted by psychologists and is being celebrated in schools around the world. We are inviting all pupils to bring in things to play with on this special day e.g., dress up, board games etc.

### **Inset Days and Public Holidays**

A reminder that our school will be closed to pupils on **Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February** and to both pupils and staff on **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> and Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February**.

### **Ratray Primary School Registration 2025**

If your child is turning five up to and including the 28 February 2026, they are eligible to start school in **August 2025** and you should register your child for primary school. However, nearer to the start of the school year you may wish to delay your child's entry to school if you think that they are not ready to start. You can registrar online following this link. [Apply online](#). Please note, you will need to provide:

1. your child's birth certificate
2. your current Council Tax notice and
3. a recent utility bill

Although it is usual for children to attend their local catchment area school, you have the right to make a [placing request](#) asking that your child be granted a place in a school other than your local catchment area school. The closing date for submitting a placing request for session 2025/26 is **Saturday 15 March 2025**. If submitting a placing request, you should not register your child at the local catchment school.

### **Ratray Early Childhood Centre Registration 2025**

Applications for places in the Council's nursery classes and early childhood centres in 2025/26 are now open. Please follow this link and complete forms as required <https://www.pkc.gov.uk/nurseryregistration>

### **School Handbook 2025/26**

Our school handbook for next session is available to view on the council website or in paper form from school office. Follow this link – [school handbook](#)

### **School Terms and Holiday Dates 2025-26 and 2026-27**

The council have recently released the school term dates for the next two school sessions. Follow this link - [School term and holiday dates - Perth & Kinross Council](#)

### **Parent Council Update**

The next Parent Council meeting will take place on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February at 5.30pm, 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/>

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

We have had several intergenerational sessions already this school year, and eight local residents have been coming along regularly 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 2.15pm. Please get in touch or pop along if you know someone who would fancy a tea/coffee, biscuit and a blether with our pupils.

### **Assessing Children's Progress**

As you may be aware National Standardised Assessments have been in place across Scottish schools for a few years, 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 pupils will take place this term. If you require further information, could you please contact the school office.

### **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.

### **Tesco School Uniform Donation**

A reminder that we received a huge donation of school uniforms (30 boxes) and some school shoes from Tesco. We will hold onto these until the end of the school year, which will hopefully help families financially when it comes to new uniform purchases. **In the meantime, if your child has outgrown or damaged their uniform at any time this school year, please do not go to the expense of buying new items.** If you give our school office a call, we can likely supply you with what you need.

### **Just2easy**

This term we are hard launching our new school app Just2Easy. As you are aware we are using this new app as a means of sharing your child's learning with you. This app will also allow your child's class teacher to correspond with you too. Please be mindful however that Just 2 Easy is new to staff, children and the school, and it will take us time to navigate the way we use it.

This term all of our primary school pupils will have weekly learning added to their journals and we invite you to discuss these with your child and comment on their posts. Teachers will also be sending weekly messages with you through the app, and school will use this to communicate some information too.

By the end of this school year, we hope to be sharing most school information through Just2EasyMessage too. Eventually we will be sharing Homework through Jusy2 easy too. We appreciate that there are now many forms of school communication, however we are hopeful that Just2Easy will eventually lead to the streamlining of this.

Until then, we will however continue to keep you updated in our usual ways – Parentpay, school app, text messaging and celebrate our successes on our school Facebook page. **Therefore, please ensure your Parentpay account, email address and your mobile phone numbers are all up to date.** On behalf of all the staff I would like to thank you for your continuing support. If you have any questions or queries regarding any of the items within this newsletter, please don't hesitate to contact the email address below.

Yours faithfully



Headteacher

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### Rattray Primary School Key Dates

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

#### January 2025

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> – P7s to Blair High Visit (AM)  
Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January – Scots Assembly (2PM - sharp)

#### February 2025

3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> – P6 Skiing Days  
Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> - Global play day  
Monday 10<sup>th</sup> – P3/4 and P4/5 Stirling Castle Visit (TBC)  
**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> – Inset Day school closed to pupils**  
**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> – Public Holiday school closed to all**  
**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> - Public Holiday school closed to all**  
Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> (5.30pm) – Parent Council Meeting

#### March 2025

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> (5pm to 7.30pm)– Parent Contact 3  
Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> (4pm to 6.30pm) - Parent Contact 4  
Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March – Young Carers Day  
Friday 14<sup>th</sup> – Generation Science Workshops (P7, P6/7 and P6)  
Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March – Comic Relief Day  
Wb 31<sup>st</sup> March – Health Week

#### April 2025

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> - School closes for Spring holiday  
Monday 21<sup>st</sup> - **Public Holiday (Easter Monday) school closed to all**  
Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> – **Inset Day school closed to pupils**  
Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> - Back to School

#### May 2025

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> - **Public Holiday (May Day) school closed to all**  
Monday 26<sup>th</sup> to Friday 30<sup>th</sup> – P7 residential week Lendrick Muir (pupils only)  
Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May – Open Afternoon - Class Focus (2.15pm)  
Friday 30<sup>th</sup> (12 noon to 1pm) – School Summer BBQ (all welcome)

#### June 2025

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup>/ Friday 6<sup>th</sup> – P1 / P7 Transition Days (**more information to follow**)  
Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June (1.30pm) – Strong Start 2 sports day in courtyard  
Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> (1.45pm) – Nursery Sports Day (**more information to follow**)  
Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June (1.30pm) – School Sports day (**more information to follow**)  
Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June (1.30pm) – Strong Start 2 sports day in courtyard Contingency Day  
Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> (1.45pm) – Nursery Sports Contingency Day

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> (1.45pm) – Teddy Bear’s Picnic (Current and New P1 pupils)  
Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> – Moving up Morning/meet new class teachers  
Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June (1.30pm) – Nursery Fun Day  
Friday 20<sup>th</sup> June (1.30pm) –Prizegiving (by invitation)  
Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> June (9.30am) – Nursery Graduation (by invitation)  
Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> June (2pm) – P7 Leaver’s Assembly (by invitation)  
Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> June (PM) – P7 Leaver’s Party (pupils only)  
Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June – End of term fun day / staff v pupils netball. /Rattray’s got talent. etc  
**(more information to follow)**  
Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> June –P7 Shirt Signing (pupils only)  
Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> June (12 noon) – School closes for Summer Break