

# Newsletter – November 2019

## Staffing



It is with great excitement that Mr Buchan shares his personal news with us, that he has decided to take early retirement from teaching. After working at Balhousie School for 26 years, Mr Buchan is trading in his pen for the golf clubs. He has been an amazing teacher, always reliable and very focused and skilled in teaching children the real skills that matter in life. His great character, wealth of experience and knowledge of the job will be missed by us all. So we wish him very well, as he moves on with his life...spending time with his family and enjoying his hobbies. We may very well see him now and then as a supply teacher... who knows! Thank you, Mr Buchan, on behalf of past and present families and staff who know you have made a positive difference. Mr Buchan will finish with us at the end of this term, and we hope to tell you of his replacement soon.



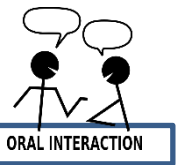
Miss Hall, Senior ECP in our Nursery, is having to take some time off work for an operation next week. We wish her very well and a speedy recovery and look forward to having her back in January.

## Snack at Playtimes



Please can we ask for parents help... in making good choices for the snacks children bring to school. More and more often we are seeing sugary sweets with scary ingredient lists that would make your eyes pop before even tasting them. We use the example of fuel in cars ..... what 'goes into your engine' determines the miles you get out in performance. When children's packed lunch boxes and morning break snacks are full of sugar and 'junk' it really has an impact on attention spans, behaviour and effort. Please help your child by encouraging 'healthier' snack choices during the school day.

## What did the staff do on in service days?



On Thursday we talked about Formative Assessment, and how to get children more involved in leading their own learning. We are improving in our understanding and use of...

- self and peer assessment (children identifying 'good work' when they see it, and looking for ways they can get better – if kids can do this for themselves, without the teacher having to tell them, they'll be smarter and ready to challenge their own learning);

- Learning Intentions and Success Criteria (being clear about what we want children to learn and for them to know this, and how they can deliver quality work)

Top Tip for Parents here...when you're doing homework with your children, ask them what's 'good about it' and 'what they need to get better at'.



On Friday, we talked about the skills for ORACY. We know children who can listen and talk effectively are the ones who will get better jobs and life chances when they're older. More will follow as we develop great practise here. Top Tip for



Parents ... 'open' questions encourage children to think and explain an answer; 'closed' questions usually have one word answers. Do you ask more open or closed questions when you chat with your kids? Aim for open where you can.

### School Photos



On Thursday 28 November, the Tempest Photographer will be in school to take photos of individual children and sibling/family groups. This is for Nursery to P7. We usually take photos of everyone, and then you choose whether or not you want to buy them. These can make nice Christmas presents. Please dress your child smartly that morning.

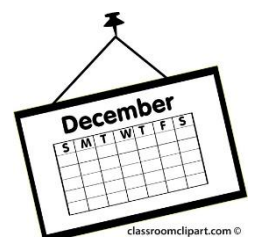
## Keeping the cost of the school day down....

At Balhousie we are always trying to keep costs to parents as low as possible. To help with that, recently Mrs Tough and Mrs Whittet have 'passed' their Minibus driving assessments! This means they can both now drive a minibus to take children on school trips. This means that we can try to keep the costs to families down, as usually hiring buses/coaches is the most expensive part.



## Christmas Plans

This year the children from Nursery to P7 are hosting a Christmas Fayre in the gym hall on 5 December. The children have been given a budget from Mrs Whittet, and will use their leadership and creativity skills to decide upon their Enterprise...making/baking/creating lovely things which we hope you will want to buy! The stalls we set up will hopefully help make your Christmas shopping easier! Please keep the date free and come and enjoy a warm welcome, with teas and cakes in our Christmas Café...it's an afternoon not to be missed. Please invite all your family and friends to come along too.



*Here are some more seasonal dates for you ...*

Thurs 5 Dec 1.15pm ... Christmas Fayre for all, in Gym

Monday 9 Dec, 1.15pm ... Nursery – P3 Gingerbread Man's Christmas (puppet show)

Tues 10 Dec ... winter ride-out for P7s on their bikes (weather dependent)

Fri 13 Dec ... Christmas Lunch in Dining Hall

Fri 13 Dec ... Christmas Jumper Day (£1 donations for Save the Children)

Mon 16 Dec 6pm ... School Christmas Show

Tues 17 Dec 1.30pm ... School Christmas Show

Wed 18 Dec ... Nursery Christmas event

Wed 18 Dec, 1 – 3pm ... P4-7 Christmas Party


Thurs 19 Dec ... Nursery Christmas Party and family singalong

Thurs 19 Dec, 1 – 3pm ... P1-3 Christmas Party

(Children can bring in party clothes and get changed after lunch if they wish – party food and game prizes provided by the School, with no cost to parents)

Absence and Lateness



When a child is late for school, it's usually because the parents are held up. Please try to have your child ready for the school day starting at 9am. If your child is ill, you should  phone the school office on 472222, to tell us why. It is our legal and moral responsibility to ensure children are safe and well, and an unexplained absence can cause unnecessary worry ... a call can avoid this. Please don't email.

It is a short 5 weeks until the next school holiday.

Please note that school will close on Friday 20 Dec, at 12 noon, and we return on Monday 6 January 2020!