



Helen James (Head Teacher)
Macduff Primary School
Berrymuir Road
Macduff
AB44 1PT
01261 455765
Email macduff.sch@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

6.9.23

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been such a delight to welcome the children back to school. They have returned with their usual good nature and enthusiasm.

Welcome!

We are glad to welcome Miss McLennan and Miss Blair to school as our probationer teachers. We always learn so much from our new staff and they are already bringing great ideas to the team. Miss Smith has also joined our school this year, having previously been a student with us. It is lovely to have her back as a fully fledged teacher.

Pupil Leadership Roles:

Thank you to the pupils in p6 and p7 who have applied for leadership roles. Interviews will take place on Thursday 7th September. As you can imagine the standards are really high and it is going to be a very tricky task. I need to emphasize that in interview, as in life, not everyone can be a winner, this is a very important part of developing resilience and learning about life and work. We will have clear criteria, will be rigidly fair and our decision on the day will be final.

Health Week:

Mrs Clark and her class have arranged a week full of activities for the week beginning 19th September. We are excited to be having a Health and Wellbeing Week at Macduff Primary from 11-15/9/23. Pupils in P1-7 will be trying a range of activities, from petanque to gymnastics, during this week, led by groups from the community. Classes will have the Scarf wellbeing tent and active schools sessions. All arranged activities will be to promote health and wellbeing in our pupils.

On Wednesday 13th September, during our health week, we will have a Open Afternoon from 2pm where you can come along and see the learning.

Instrumental Tuition:

The Instrumental Music Service offers pupils instrument tuition in schools. The following instruments might be available and the recommended starting age is there to help you decide.

- Woodwind - P6
- Brass - P5
- Violin or viola - P4
- Cello or double bass - P4
- Percussion - S1
- Piano or keyboard - P4
- Guitar - P4
- Bagpipes - P4
- Pipe band drum - P4

Tuition is free for year 23/24 but is subject to availability as not all instruments are available in primary schools due to limited resources. [Register Here](#)

Support in School:

We have a range of supports in school to guide our children through the school day and best help with learning. Our Nurture Team spend time with children of all ages and offer support in social skills, self-regulation, bereavement, anxiety and many other gentle supports. The sensory Room is a muted space with materials specifically to meet the needs of young pupils with a diagnosis of autistic Spectrum Condition. The Zen Den offers a quiet space for any child to complete classwork with support in a peaceful environment. The ASN Team are part of our core curricular offer and work with children in class or on specific learning skills to offer confidence and challenge. They work alongside the teaching team and may work with any child in school if it is felt they can assist. Every child, at some point in their learning will benefit from a little intervention that can clarify their learning or



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build their confidence. Most importantly, we work closely as a team so that we can make the right intervention at the right time.

Clothing:

The weather has been as changeable as ever, yesterday I thought the summer had finally appeared and the later on the rain started. It is important that everyone brings a **labelled** outdoor coat every day ready for whatever nature throws at us. Please also put some spare clothing in for wet weather in case we get caught in a downpour and need to change!

Please do not allow your child to bring toys or other personal belongings to school as we cannot take responsibility for loss or damage and they can be distracting.

Lunches:

Due to allergies in school, please avoid nuts in packed lunches. To avoid choking please also cut grapes in half if you are providing them.

Our lunches are prepared in school and there is a lovely range of options. P1 – P5 are entitled to lunch for free. It is wonderful to see everyone coming with their reusable water bottles. Please remember we only allow water for classroom drinks, please do not put in juice.

Tuck Shop:

Tuck shop is available daily at playtime. Prices start at 10p and go up to 60p. We sell raisins, fruit, cheese, yoghurt, water and flavoured water.

Social Media:

We love your kind comments and encouragement on social media and we are always really keen to share what is happening in school. We don't monitor social media regularly so if you have a question or suggestion please contact us directly at school. If you wish to join our Facebook page your request will be declined if you have not answered the security questions.

Please also remember we cannot engage in negativity on social media, so when a hard-working teacher finds her efforts criticised it is not possible to respond and it can be distressing. Come and talk to us, we are approachable and keen to work with you.

Children on Social Media:

Under no circumstances, at any time, is it ok for your child to be on social media. Primary aged children are too young. I cannot emphasise enough the dangers of thinking everyone else is doing it so it will be fine. It really is not fine and a vast amount of time including police and social work has been taken up in past years due to under aged pupils on social media. My advice will always be the same when a parent contacts the school regarding an issue on social media – 'why was your child on it in the first place?'

Carpark:

At no time should parents or children be cutting across the school carpark. This is really dangerous as cars and large catering lorries are in and out at all times of the day. Please do not drive into the carpark to drop off your child, this is for staff only.

P.E.:

For safety we do not recommend wearing jewellery to school. All jewellery including earrings should be removed for P.E. If your child cannot remove their earrings, please provide tape to go over them. We would recommend always tying back long hair but for P.E. this is compulsory.

You said, we did.....:

Thank you to everyone who completed our questionnaire or came along to Parent Council meetings during the school year. Your input is so valuable, and we have been particularly heartened by the positive feedback.

- *Communication of dates*



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Please hold on to newsletters where up and coming dates are included. We also put our dates on the website and it is a good idea to check for updates. We do try to give as much advance warning as possible but sports day can be tricky as the weather is unpredictable.

- *Behaviour of some pupils*

Not every pupil has a good day despite our best efforts. If a child becomes distressed we guide them away from their class. Sometimes we ask the class to go out so that the child has space to calm down where they are. This isn't a drama and usually involves a story in the library. While we would love all of our children to be happy and confident but sometimes life feels hard for some of our little ones.

- *Pupil Support Assistants*

Your lovely comments regarding the wonderful work our PSAs do were greatly appreciated. We all agree it would be great to have more of these fantastic people, but schools are allocated their staffing based on measurable levels of need and a finite budget.

- *Reporting Learning*

We report learning in a number of ways including open afternoons, parents evening, the annual report card, google classrooms, social media, class assemblies and learning letters.

School Improvement Plan:

You have the opportunity to directly influence the school improvement plan through filling in our parental feedback form and even more directly through membership of the parent council. This year we will be focusing on:

- CIRCLE – resources for supporting pupils with a diagnosis of autistic spectrum condition
- Moderation – measuring our learning against the national average and working with colleagues in other schools to look at attainment.
- Talk for Writing – developing vocabulary in writing
- Outdoor Learning – embedding our brilliant Quests in our curriculum
- Pupil Voice – continuing our evaluation project with Whitehills School

School Policies:

Please find attached our approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. This should give you a clear picture of how we approach learning in Macduff School and how it is assessed.

Some Dates for your Diary:

Details to follow

7 th September	Pupil Leadership interviews
8 th September	Beeline building
11 th – 15 th September	Health Week
13 th September	Open Afternoon 2pm
16 th – 27 th October	School closed for October Holiday
16 th & 17 th November	In-Service
28 th & 29 th November	Parents Evenings, details to follow
12 th & 13 th December	P1-3 Nativity, details to follow
15 th December	P7 Christmas Party 6pm – 8pm
19 th December	P3 & P4 Party 1pm – 3pm
20 th December	P5 & P6 Party 1pm – 3pm
21 st December	P1 & P2 Party 1pm – 3pm
22 nd December	Christmas Service in Parish Church 10am <i>all welcome</i>

Kind Regards,



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