Dear Parents and Carers

This term is passing very quickly and it is hard to believe that it is February already. It has been a busy but productive beginning to the year.

Staffing

We are delighted to welcome Mrs McCormack back to her substantive post as our Nursery Teacher.

Unfortunately Mr Angus was redeployed to another school in South Lanarkshire but we hope that he’ll be very happy in his new post and we are very grateful to him for all of his work with our children.

Absence Reporting

If your child is absent you must phone in each day to let us know that they will not be in school and the reason for their absence.

Please remember that children who have been sick should remain at home until 48 hours after the last time that they have vomited.

Late Arrivals

During the last few weeks we have seen a rise in the numbers of children arriving after the 9.00am bell.

The weather has caused some disruption and we understand that on those occasions it is likely that people may run a bit later.

Today we had 21 late arrivals.

Please ensure that your child is in the playground before the 9.00am bell rings.

As part of our attendance monitoring procedures all absences and late arrivals are recorded on a daily basis.

Water Bottles

Unfortunately, we cannot supply each child with a water bottle.

Children should bring one in from home if they wish to drink water during the day.

Children can refill their bottles at break time and lunch time to ensure that their teaching and learning is not disrupted. In exceptionally hot weather, the children have additional access to the water machines out with these times.

We have a small number of disposable plastic cups that children can make use of if they forget their bottle, however this should not be accessed on a regular basis by any individual child.

Demolition

At the end of last week the construction team began to demolish our old school. Although we love our new building, the old one has happy memories for many of us and we are feeling a little sad.

PTA – Thanks

A huge thanks to our PTA for funding the creation of our new Maths Hub in the Atrium. The Hub has a big selection of Maths games and fiction stories that centre around key maths concepts. This resource is available to all staff and children in the school.

We would also like to say a huge thanks to ‘Go West,’ a local company who have sponsored our new football strips. We are delighted with them and can’t wait for our teams to start using them — thanks so much!

Nursery Fundraiser

Thanks so much to everyone who supported the Nursery Fundraiser on Saturday 2nd February. It was a huge success raising over £1500.

We are especially grateful to Lindsey Dodds who organised and ran the entire event.

Scots Literacy Month

January was Scots literacy month and many of our classes spent time working on texts based on Scots language or with a Scottish theme.

As well as reading, children also developed their writing skills by creating stories and poems in Scots.

This is something that we intend to embed and develop further each year. At present we have a staff working party who are busy planning a progressive pathway for children to build on their skills as they progress through nursery and school.

Burns Night

On Thursday 24th January our Parent Council held a Burns Drop-in night for families.

A huge thanks to them for organising the event and to Stuart Colquhoun (Madeleine’s Daddy) who was the DJ and compere of the evening.

All who attended had a lovely time and enjoyed the singing and dancing.
**School Improvement Plan**

Our School Improvement teams are working on priorities associated with:
- Health & Wellbeing, developing children’s readiness to learn and resilience.
- Scots Language
- Digital Literacy

In addition to this we have also been updating our planning and assessment procedures and documentation for all areas of the curriculum.

In our 2017 – 2018 end of year questionnairie and feedback gathered about things that you’d like us to work on, some people commented that they would like help to support their children’s learning in Maths at home.

We have been creating a bank of Maths Parent Prompts and hope to have these ready for you in the very near future. We also plan to make these available via a special App (not our communication app). We will also be getting in touch to invite you to share your children’s learning during a Maths session.

Our Maths results are good but we are always keen to do better and are always aiming to raise attainment. We also know from your feedback that this is also something that many of you are keen to see as well.

We’ve updated our Maths policy and it is currently undergoing the final touches before being shared with you.

We’ve also undertaken a massive exercise with our boys and girls to ascertain their feelings about Maths. There are a significant number who feel that they are good at Maths but do not enjoy it. We’ve asked them to tell us why and they’ve said a range of different things:
- It is boring
- It is too hard
- They like when it is easy but not when they need to think about how to solve questions

We also asked them what kind of activities and methods of learning worked best for them. The responses contained a mixture and what worked for some did not for others. We are trying to provide a range of activities and approaches to ensure that everyone gets a bit of what they enjoy.

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**Spotlight Jotters**

Once a term our boys and girls complete Spotlight jotters.

During the second week of the term they complete one piece of reading based work, one piece of personal / creative / functional writing, one piece of maths work and one piece relating to health & wellbeing in special jotters.

We use our Spotlight jotters as a snapshot of how the children’s learning progresses throughout the year and across their entire primary education.

We are planning on making a few changes this year as:
- each term (from P2 upwards) children will focus on a different number function (eg. addition, subtraction, multiplication and division)
- we will send them home during the first week in June to let you see them and to provide an opportunity for you to write some feedback for your child

**2019 – 2020 Classes**

We carried out our Primary 1 registration for August 2019 during the week beginning 14th January.

This year we will have an intake of 35 Primary 1 children and we are looking forward to welcoming them to the school when they visit later in the session.

It is still early in the year and it is likely that our numbers will change as this session progresses.

We are now beginning to think about the configurations for our classes next session. At this time I anticipate that we will have eleven classes but these will not necessarily be formed in the same mix as they are at present.

Please note that a fluctuating school roll can cause this to change at any point between now and the end of the session.

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**Sports Hall Athletics**

Congratulations to our P7 athletes who took part in the Sports Hall Athletics competition. Our boys and girls were fantastic and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

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**Dance Festival**

Miss Thomson’s Dance class started a couple of weeks ago and our P4-7 participants enjoyed an energetic session.

They will be practising hard over the next few weeks in preparation for the East Kilbride Dance Festival on the 20th March at Calderglen High School.

We’re looking forward to seeing the end product!

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**Parents’ Evening**

Don’t forget to look in your child’s homework diary to see your Parents’ Evening appointment for this term.

The appointment has been stuck onto the page for the 19th February.

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**Spare Clothing**

Sometimes boys and girls need a change of clothing eg. when they have a little ‘accident’ or a fall.

We’ve purchased lots of socks and pants but our supply is dwindling as people are forgetting to return them.

If your child has borrowed some, please could you give them a wash and ask your child to pop along and hand them into the office.

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**Shinty**

Our P5 boys and girls enjoyed their first two Shinty sessions at Strathaven Academy. They have thoroughly enjoyed being at the academy and developing a new skill.
If your child makes their way home from school via the back gate (Lethame Road side of the school), please could you remind them that they should cross the road using the Tommy the Lollipop person.

Quite a number of our boys and girls are making their way through the Glebe field and crossing directly across from the fork in the road splitting Lethame Road and Crosshill Road. This is a particularly dangerous part of the road and not a safe place for children to cross.

PS Music Programme

We had an opportunity to celebrate the work of our P5 children on Wednesday 16th January when they performed for an audience of children, staff and parents.

The performance showcased the learning that they had undertaken with Una Cunningham one of South Lanarkshire’s Music Specialists.

It was fantastic and they even included performances by children from other stages within the school.

Well done boys and girls!

Right Respecting Schools Reps

Our Rights Respecting Rangers have been working with Mr Marshall to produce a school charter. They have a few things that they need to finish before they are ready to share their work with the rest of the children, staff and parents.

They will also continue to help the other children to think about the United Nations Conventions on the Rights Of The Child and the SHANARRI indicators.

SHANARRI stands for:
S – Safe
H – Healthy
A – Active
N – Nurtured
A – Achieving
R – Responsible
R – Respected
I - Included

World Book Day

This year World Book Day is on Thursday 7th March.

We’ll be celebrating this by taking the opportunity to read stories and enjoy literacy related activities.

The teachers and Pupil Council are making plans for an exciting day.

More information will follow shortly.

Learning Community

Shared Vision & Values

Our staff and senior pupil council members have been working with members of the Strathaven Learning Community to produce a shared vision and values.

Our boys and girls have also contributed ideas about ‘what Strathaven means to them,’ via a poster competition. These ideas will be used by Strathaven Academy Art Department to create materials that will deliver our shared message.

Members of our Parent Council have been invited to attend a meeting at Strathaven Academy on Thursday 21st February to hear about the work that has been done so far and contribute to the consultation process.

We’ll keep you posted on future developments.

Nursery Expansion

Following on from the information communicated last week, the Council Executive Committee have now met and have given their approval for Nursery provision at KP to be expanded.

We do not have any further information at this time but will keep you updated on developments.

Parent Council

The next Parent Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 26th February at 6.30pm in the school.

Golden Time Zones

During the last few weeks our boys and girls have taken part in adult led activities during Golden Time.

These have included rugby, crafts, crosswords and puzzles, maths games, yoga, handball, outdoor fun, book folding, board games, food technology and many more.

A huge thanks to all of our staff and parent helpers who have worked hard to provide such a range of fun and exciting opportunities for our boys and girls.

Fun STEM

Primary 7 spent a very exciting morning at Strathaven Academy on Monday when they received their introduction to the project work that they will be involved in during the next few months.

This work is part of a transition project involving children from each of the feeder primary schools across the area.

STEM is an acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths.

Project work will include STEM and teambuilding tasks that will culminate in the groups producing a model, workbook or short presentation to share their learning.

On 8th March there is a celebration and assessment day where volunteers from local industry assess childrens’ finished projects. Children give a 5-minute presentation followed by a Q&A session. Whilst the volunteer assessors view the teams’ workbooks and decide on a winning team, pupils take part in a STEM activity and reflect on how taking part in FunSTEM has helped them to develop their teamwork, problem-solving and STEM skills.

STEM
Mrs Laing’s House Point Challenge!

Rights Respecting School Link:


Article 15 You have the right to choose your own friends and join or set up groups, as long as it isn’t harmful to others.

Boys and girls,
Earn 100 bonus points for your house by inventing a new playground game.

You can present your game in any way that you want to.

I would love to share your ideas during assembly but will only do this with your permission.

Please bring your ideas to my office.

Badminton Competition

Well done and congratulations to the boys and girls who attended the LASBA Championships yesterday. The children did really well we’re so proud of their achievements. Murray Gibb made it through to the second round, Harrison Mackenzie and Ross Anderson were runners up in the doubles and Amber Anderson won the P6 girls singles. A fantastic result!

Thanks to Mrs Mackenzie and Mr Campbell who accompanied the children to the competition and helped them to prepare beforehand during the club.

Primary Gymnastics Competition

We also had a fantastic result at the Primary Gymnastics Competition and our children were the delighted recipients of a number of medals.

Our Level 2 team, comprising of Sophia Prewett, Holly Mathie and Maddie Mackenzie achieved bronze.

Our Level 3 team, comprising of Millie Reid, Katie Reid, Cara MacFarlane and Eilidh Irons achieved Gold.

Cara MacFarlane also achieved an individual bronze award.

Thanks to Mrs Kinnear and Mrs Smith for all of their hard work in preparing the children for the competition.

A brilliant result – well done everyone!

Kind Regards
D. Laing
Head Teacher

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