



# Lairhillock School Newsletter

31 August 2015

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Welcome back!

This session we have 16 fresh faced Primary 1 children. Our P7 Buddies are doing a great job helping them settle into the school, as are the five P2 girls in their class.

Thanks to the Parent Council giving us £500 we have been able to replace the outside equipment the children use at lunchtimes. The nursery children also have their new climbing frame and A-frame. These were to be assembled during the summer break but unfortunately this was not the case. It is important to remind everyone that the nursery garden and equipment should only be used by children who are under 5 years of age and they should be supervised by an adult at all times.

We are collecting dressing up clothes for the children to use in the outdoor classroom. Old hats, coats, dresses, shoes, coats, scarves etc. would be perfect. If we are overwhelmed by the contributions any excess clothes will either be stored for use in the future or donated to the Rag-Bag recycling.

A Special "Thank You" Message from Mrs. Hazel Engel:

*"I would like to express my sincere thanks to all pupils, parents and staff for the many cards, good wishes and generous gifts received on my retirement.*

*The lovely Pandora bracelet and charm received from pupils and parents of my class is loved and treasured. It has solved the family's problems of what to give me for birthdays and Christmas for many years to come as they add more charms!*

*I still have a Hot Air Balloon Flight to look forward to and hope to come into school to share the photographs with staff and pupils after the experience.*

*For all the gifts and messages from individuals wishing me well, an enormous thank you - your kindness and warm wishes are greatly appreciated.*

*I am so glad to have spent the last - and best - few years of my teaching career at Lairhillock School."*

## STAFFING

Over the holiday we have had a change to staffing and I am delighted to announce that Mrs Gill will be a permanent member of staff. She has replaced Mrs Engle. The staffing of classes will be:

- Nursery –Miss May, Mrs McGachy & Ms Karen Shepherd (Nursery Nurse)

- P1/2 – Mrs Campbell & Mrs Gill. Mrs Gill will be replaced by Mrs Begg on her return from maternity leave on 26 October 2015
- P2/3 – Mrs Blair & Mrs Strachan
- P4/5 – Mrs Hodge & Supply Teacher covering until Mrs Gill takes over after the October break
- P5/6 – Mrs Kirk & Mrs Gill (until October break)
- P6/7 – Mrs Bosson

Most classes will have student teachers assigned to them this year.

P4/5 - Mr Brockie-Donald (MA2) and Mr Dixon (MA2).

- Monday 21 September – Friday 27 November.
- Monday 25 January - Friday 25 March.
- Monday 23 May - Friday 3 June.

During their time in school there will be periods where they are in for full weeks and for the remainder of their placement it will be one day per week. The final arrangements have not yet been confirmed.

P5/6 - Ms Rodriguez (PGDE)

- Monday 7 September – Friday 18 September
- Monday 26 October – Friday 20 November
- Monday 4 January – Friday 29 January

P1/2 – Ms Anderson and P2/3 – Ms Turner

- Monday 22 February – Friday 25 March
- Monday 25 April – Friday 13 May

## SCHOOL LUNCHES

The price of a two course standard meal in all primary schools has increased by 10p.

**Pupils** - two course standard meal - **£2.10**. Books of 10 tickets costs **£21.00**.

## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We would be delighted to welcome any **volunteers** into the school to share their skills and talents. We currently have volunteers who help with baking, library, gardening, trips, cross country and arts and crafts. If you would like to help with these, or any other activities (in particular music), please contact us by telephone, email or come in to the school for a chat.

This year we are introducing new **Pupil Profiles** for the children in Primary 2 – 7. There will be an information session for parents on Wednesday 7 October to explain how these will be used. The profiles are designed to give parents more information about what work the children are doing in school.

In addition to the Pupil Profile session we will also have a '**Learning Conversation**' event on 7 October for parents and their children to discuss the work that has been going on in class over the term. This will run alongside the meetings for Primary 1 parents.

If at any time over the course of the year you have **concerns, comments or question** about your child please contact the school to arrange an appointment with your child's class teacher. Alternatively you can arrange to come and meet with me.

A number of parents have indicated that they would like more advice on **how to support their children's learning at home**. The following information is from the 'Supporting Learning at Home' document I sent out in September of last year.

Learning doesn't only take place in the classroom. Much of children and young people's learning takes place at home, through interacting with family, friends and the wider community.

### **What can I do as a parent?**

Parents, carers and families can make a positive difference to a child's learning. Your support can play a vital role at all stages of your child's education.

- **Listen, talk, and encourage** – this can have a big influence on children's learning
- **Encourage your child to talk** to you about their learning, what learning is happening at school and do what you can at home to build on that
- **Talk** to your child about their strengths and interests and how they are progressing
- **Encourage your child to talk** to you about their next steps in learning and find out how you can work with the school to support this
- **Ask for help** if you think your child needs it for any reason.
- **Praise** your child if he/she is working hard at something or has achieved something within or out of school
- **Encourage any reading**
- **Look for opportunities at home** to develop literacy and numeracy skills: money, number problems, time, measuring, matching, size, reading, writing, understanding instructions, questioning information
- **Encourage your child to take part in activities** e.g. hobbies, clubs which will provide opportunities to develop a range of skills
- **Help them work on tasks on their own** and then talk about it with you afterwards
- **Do things together where appropriate** – learn together e.g. if your child has a project or task to do, take an interest and discuss with them what he/she is doing or offer support if this is needed
- **Help prepare for change** particularly at key transitions – talk about the change together.
- **Talk** to them about how they are feeling
- **Work together with the school** by taking part in discussions about your child's learning and progress e.g. at parents nights, reviews

### **Supporting Literacy**

Literacy is important in all areas of learning. Being able to read and write accurately, to listen carefully and to talk clearly about ideas will increase the opportunities for young people in all aspects of life and will allow them to participate fully in learning and later in a work environment.

Parents play a crucial role in helping children to develop literacy skills from an early age. They contribute to this by reading to their children every day, learning nursery rhymes together and using normal events in life to help children learn about the world around them, for example by pointing out signs. Parents can contribute further to their children's learning by encouraging children to talk about their thoughts and ideas, and about how they are feeling. Parents can encourage children to explore literacy outside the classroom.

Young people will enjoy reading different types of texts and all reading helps them to develop their skills. So whether they are reading a book, a blog, a magazine or a sports report, it will help if parents are encouraging and supportive.

## Supporting Numeracy

Numeracy is about being able to understand and use numbers in a range of situations e.g. when solving problems or making decisions in situations involving numbers.

All staff and all teachers, regardless of the subject being taught, are responsible for supporting, developing and extending learners' numeracy skills and for ensuring that what a child has learned in earlier years is built upon, practised and refreshed regularly throughout their time at school.

Families are key partners in supporting and developing numeracy skills at all stages of their child's development.

### **How can you help?**

Learning doesn't just take place in the classroom, it can happen anywhere. A child or young person's everyday routine offers many opportunities and experiences to (practice and) apply their numeracy skills in real life and in meaningful ways.

There are many ways that you can build learning activities into everyday routines to support your child's numeracy skills. Excellent learning opportunities exist within daily experiences such as washing the dishes, preparing a meal or doing the shopping.

### **Some simple ideas at home**

- **Time:** Encourage your child to use a watch or clock to tell the time, provide timed activities and read timetables.
- **Calendars:** Plan family birthdays on a calendar and do a birthday countdown.
- **Measure:** Take advantage of measure opportunities in the kitchen; weighing, timing and temperature.
- **Money:** Talk about best deals with your child, budgeting pocket money or wages.
- **Estimating:** plan for activities in advance like calculating the number of rolls of paper or paint required to decorate a room, the length of time activities may take.
- **Logical thinking:** Ask your child to explain their thinking and consider consequences of actions e.g. using the information gathered from reading newspapers, using the internet and watching TV to draw conclusions and make choices that involve numeracy.

The above information is from the Education Scotland Parentzone website:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/index.asp>










Information relating directly to Lairhillock School is available in the school Homework Policy, which will be emailed out with this newsletter, and during curricular events held in the school.

## **EVENTS**

In previous years children have stood for election to be members of pupil groups i.e. Eco, Health, Pupil Council, Right Respecting and Web, but this year we are moving away from that model in order to allow all children in Primary 1-7 to be involved in organising whole school events. With this in mind Primary 2/3 will be organising our **Jeans for Genes** day and will be in touch with you in due course.

As in previous years the **Macmillan Coffee** afternoon will be the responsibility of our P6/7 class. They too will be updating you with the arrangements of our events

## LUNCHTIME GROUPS

Day	Club	Group Leaders	Year Group
Monday	Chess Library 	Rasmus & Seumas	P1-7
	 Football	Carl, Craig, Findlay L & Roan C	P1-4
	Drawing GP room	Amy S & Tara	P1-7
Tuesday	Hockey 	Cara & Isobel	P1-4
	 Dancing GP room	Abby, Freya, Hayley, Lilia & Millie	P3-6
Wednesday	Playground Games	See rota	P1-7
Thursday	Hockey 	Cara & Isobel	P5-7
	 Drama GP room	Albie, Finlay, Lewis & Robert 	P1-5
	 Lego Music room	Isla, Rebecca G & Ruby	P1-7
Friday	Football	Carl, Craig, Findlay L & Roan C 	P5-7

## PARENT COUNCIL

The next Parent Council Meeting will be held on **Tuesday 1 September 2015 at 7.30 p.m.** This meeting will be the Annual General Meeting to which all parents of children from Nursery to P7 are invited. The Parent Council members will be **electing new office bearers** during this meeting. Items for the agenda should be forwarded to the secretary, Mrs Rachel Anderson.

Christeen Seward  
Head Teacher

**Dates for your Diary** (Dates may have to change but you will be kept informed)

<b>TERM 1</b>			
01 09 15	TUESDAY	19.00	PARENT COUNCIL AGM
18 09 15	FRIDAY	ALL DAY	JEANS FOR GENES DAY
24 09 15	THURSDAY	TBC	MACMILLAN COFFEE AFTERNOON
<b>TERM 2</b>			
13 11 15	FRIDAY	ALL DAY	CHILDREN IN NEED
<b>TERM 3</b>			
21 01 16	THURSDAY	TBC	SUITCASE SALE
25 02 16	THURSDAY	TBC	FAIRTRADE CAFE

## **SCHOOL HOLIDAY / TERM TIME DATES**

### **SESSION 2015 – 2016**

<b>Term 1</b>	18/08/15 - 09/10/15
<b>Term 2</b>	26/10/15 - 22/12/15
<b>Term 3</b>	06/01/16 - 01/04/16
<b>Term 4</b>	18/04/16 - 01/07/16

#### **In-service Days**

17 August 2015  
16 November 2015  
17 November 2015  
16 February 2016  
17 February 2016

#### **Public Holidays**

15 February 2016  
25 March 2016  
02 May 2016

#### **Occasional Days**

11 February 2016  
12 February 2016

Lairhillock  
August 2015

With a very successful 2014/15 year for Active Schools initiatives behind us, I look forward to once again maintaining all established sessions and with the help of school staff & parent/community volunteers, hope to be able to offer some new out of school clubs/activities to allow the further development of our youngsters in sports/physical activity.

Lairhillock team at the Kincardineshire Badminton competition.



Pupils last school year had the opportunity to participate in Active Schools clubs out of school hours in:

Basketball (Mon P4/7)  
Table Tennis (Tues P5 Terms 2 & 3)  
Table Tennis (Fri P6 Terms 2&3)  
Badminton (Fri P3/4/6/7 – Term 2 & 3)  
Tennis (Tues P4/7 Term3&4)

Also, Active Schools coordinated in-school time activities in:

Curling (P6)  
Rugby (P5/6)  
Football (P4/5)  
Badminton (P3/4)  
Hockey (P6/7)  
Golf (P5)  
Tennis (P3)

The out of school clubs are mainly run by volunteers/parents rotas/school staff and I much appreciate their help in offering the pupils the chance to partake in these activities. Most of the activities both in school and out have further links to community clubs where, if desired, the pupils can gain further skills within that particular sport. I hope to be able to offer all these activities once again this coming school year and indeed would like to offer other out of school activities.

If there is any parent or indeed you know of a member of the community who would like to get involved with Active Schools initiatives through working with pupils in out of school time sports activity

clubs, please get in contact with myself, I can assure anyone who may be interested of my full support i.e. help in organising/setting-up/ accessing training/first aid etc. I am especially looking for a parent/volunteer to set up a tennis club – Jenny Munro the PE specialist did a taster club last school year with 13 pupils attending and it would great to re-establish this but I need a volunteer, so if there is anyone interested please get in touch with me:

Doreen Seery, 07851287035  
or email [doreen.seery@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:doreen.seery@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

Thank you.



Lunchtime table tennis: great fun where skills improved greatly.



Monday Basketball P4/7s run successfully with Coach Aidan Dempsey and a parent's rota



Firstclubgolf offered to P5s in school time with an onward invite to more lessons at Stonehaven Golf Club



“We are a research group from the Departments of Psychology and Psychiatry at the University of Cambridge, investigating individual differences in how the mind works. Our research aims to provide a better understanding about the brain and behavioural differences within the general population, as well as those who have a psychiatric diagnosis. We are inviting you and your partner (if applicable) to join our research panel of adults so we can collect data that represents the make-up of adults in the UK, across all socioeconomic and educational levels.

You have been contacted because your son/daughter attends a primary school in Aberdeenshire, and we are writing to every parent who has a child age 5-11 years old in primary education. We need as many people as possible to help our research and it will only take you 5 minutes!

If you are interested in being part of our volunteer panel, please go to our secure website at <http://cambridgepsychology.com/psp>. If you register, we will ask you to provide some background information about yourself, and then you can go on to take some questionnaires and tests online. You can complete these at your leisure by logging in and out of your volunteer homepage with your chosen login details and will only need to complete them once. We will also encourage you to invite your partner (if applicable) to register (you can do this from your volunteer homepage once you are registered).

We will also contact you from time to time to tell you about new projects which might be of interest to you. Many of our research projects only involve filling in 5 minute questionnaires or doing tasks online. Some of our studies involve being assessed by one of our team (such as brain scanning studies). You are under no obligation to participate in any of the projects but you may find them fascinating and taking part is an excellent way to see what research is going on in Cambridge University. Any information you provide is entirely confidential. You can opt out at any time and we will remove your details, and any data you have provided, from our volunteer database. If you have any questions about registering as a volunteer, please contact our Volunteers Coordinator Paula Smith ([pls28@medschl.cam.ac.uk](mailto:pls28@medschl.cam.ac.uk)).

There is also a Participant Information Sheet for additional information ([link](#) to PIS or [https://cambridgepsychology.com/docs/CamPsych\\_PIS.pdf](https://cambridgepsychology.com/docs/CamPsych_PIS.pdf)).

For more information about our research into psychiatric conditions such as autism, please visit [www.autismresearchcentre.com](http://www.autismresearchcentre.com)

Thank you for considering our request.”

Best wishes  
Professor Simon Baron-Cohen  
Departments of Psychology and Psychiatry  
University of Cambridge.



## COMMENTS, COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

We welcome feedback on how we are doing and will use this to plan for improvement. Please note any points in the space below and return to the school office. Please sign your name if you wish someone to respond to your comments.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_