**Ballater School Newsletter 1**

**2017/2018**



Welcome to Session 2017/2018. I trust everyone had an enjoyable summer break and has enjoyed the chance to relax and recharge ready for another busy session.

**You said ……………we did**

At Ballater School we are continually seeking to ensure we do everything as well as we can. We have listened to feedback from parents, pupils and staff and the following were identified as areas we could improve:

* Sharing Pupil Progress
* Communications
* Extra-Curricular Activities

In response to these suggestions we are doing the following:

**Sharing Pupil Progress/Learning**

* We now issue 2 pupil reports annually with next steps identified to allow you to support your child at home.
* Class Sharing Sessions – parents are invited in to visit classrooms throughout the year to see what learning has taken place.
* Class Assembly Sharing – you will be invited to attend your child’s class assembly at some point during the session.
* Twitter – sign up to receive our school tweets which often share what classes are up to - @Ballaterschool.
* Class Blogs – all our classes are setting up class blogs at present. We hope these will be updated regularly and will also provide you with opportunities to respond.
* Parent Meeting – a new item this term will be an invitation for all parents to attend a Class meeting at the start of the session with their child’s teacher. The aim is to share expectations around learning, homework and the year ahead.

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**Communications**

* In line with Aberdeenshire policy we will continue to aim to issue the majority of communications and most consents via email.
* We have recently re-vamped our school website and are currently adding to it. The website is [www.ballater.aberdeenshire.sch.uk](http://www.ballater.aberdeenshire.sch.uk). You will find the school calendar, newsletters and copies of consent letters on the website.
* We will continue to tweet reminders and information on our Twitter page - @Ballaterschool.
* A new idea we are trying this session is a drop in session once a term for parents to meet with me. The four dates for this session are on the school calendar. Anyone wanting to come along to share ideas, comments or concerns is welcome to attend the drop in sessions from 9.30 – 11.30 am. I look forward to seeing some of you over the session.

**Extra-Curricular Activities**

This is an area that has been raised a few times as part of the school that could be improved.

As a fairly small school, there is a limit to how many activities we can offer as the staff and parents who volunteer to run these clubs, do so in their own precious time.

We will continue to offer what clubs we can such as running club, choir, coding as time allows.

In addition Active Schools continue to offer a wide range of sports which our pupils can take part in.

As a trial last year we asked the older pupils if they would like to organise and run some lunchtime clubs for younger children in the school. This proved very successful and we are anticipating that the new P6 & P7 will also be keen to offer lunch clubs.

As I said at the start, there is a limit on how many clubs school staff can run. If you would like to see an activity or club offered for Ballater pupils, you could run the activity.

Please contact the school if you would like advice on how to go about setting up a club.

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**School Uniform**

It is great to see everyone wearing their uniforms with pride.

Please ensure that your child’s name is on all pieces of school clothing, including P.E. Kit.

We currently have almost 20 unclaimed school sweatshirts in school from last term – with no names on them.

We will continue to take part in our school run on a Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday in the park. Please ensure your child has suitable footwear to take part in this event.

**School Calendar**

This was sent out last week. If you misplace your copy an electronic copy can be found on our school website.

**Parent Volunteers**

We have identified that many of our pupils would benefit from some extra time to read or practice other skills. If you have some spare time and would like to help out on a regular basis in school, please contact the school office in the first instance.

**Dress Down Friday**

This is to continue every second Friday. Pupils and staff are welcome to wear casual clothes on DDF. The first DDF was on Friday, 1st September – see calendar for all other dates.