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**Ballater School**

**Weekly Update**

**Friday 19th March 2021**

It has been great to finally see all our pupils returning to school this week. Staff have reported a lot of very tired children as we all try to get used to “normal” school routines again. Class teachers have been very aware that school will not be normal for a while to come yet due to the ongoing Covid mitigations in place and the fact that it will take some time for everyone to get used to being back in a classroom with many other people.

As a result, for the next few weeks, staff will be focusing on identifying any learning gaps and supporting learners through our Health and Wellbeing curriculum using the Emotion Works resources.

We have spent a lot of time ensuring all staff are fully aware of the most recent Covid return to school Risk Assessment which includes procedures on what to do if there are any suspected or indeed confirmed Covid cases in school.

A reminder that as the symptoms for the current Covid variant are more general than the original strain, if you your child is unwell in any way, please keep them at home until they are feeling better.

**Nursery staffing**

Firstly, we would like to officially welcome Hannah George to the nursery team in her role as part time Early Years Practitioner. Hannah started in the nursery last week and will cover the middle part of the day to allow staff to take lunch breaks. We wish Hannah well in her new post with us.

We are sorry to be losing Amber Lanigan from our nursery team. Amber has been a key part of our team always showing a willingness to develop her knowledge and expertise and I know she will be greatly missed by everyone associated with the school and nursery. Amber will leave us at the end of this term to take up a new post at Allachburn Care Home. We wish Amber well in her new role and thank her for all she ahs brought to our nursery.

Amber’s post is currently advertised and we hope to make an appointment shortly after Easter, we will keep you updated when we have more information.

In addition to the part time post to replace Amber, a full time Early Years Practitioner Post is currently advertised by Aberdeenshire Council. This post will be based at Ballater Nursery but will include days working at Braemar Nursery and provide cover in other Early Years settings locally who may need relief cover. As before, we will keep you updated when we have any news to share.

**Parent Council Snacks**

The parent council have successfully received funding from Aberdeenshire Council - Community Food Fund and are therefore delighted to advise that for the next few months free school snacks will be offered to nursery children & pupils twice a week starting from Monday 22nd March.

It would be helpful if parents/carers could discuss the snack options with their child to make sure the child knows whether they are bringing their own snack or having one of the provided snacks.

***Munching Monday***: Breadsticks & raisins (22nd March)

***Friday Fruit Day***: Banana (26th March)

Please note “free from” alternatives will be provided.

Any surplus fruit (Fridays) will be left outside beside the School reception for anyone to help themselves.  Please do!

***The look ahead snack plan is as follows:***

**Week 1: w/c 22/03, 3/05, 31/05**

Monday: breadsticks and raisins

Friday: banana

**Week 2: W/c 29/03, 10/05, 7/06**

Monday: Kellogg’s Nutrigrain cereal bar

Friday: tangerine

**Week 3: W/c 19/04, 17/05, 14/06**

Monday: Welch’s fruit snacks

Friday: Apple

**Week 4: W/c 30/04, 24/05, 21/06**

Monday: popcorn

Friday: yogurt and raisins

*\*We’ll keep you posted if there are any changes to the above*

We will send out a reminder in the weekly news for menu for the forthcoming week.

**Pupil Reports**

Normally around this time of year staff would be hard at work writing pupil reports. As this year has been far from normal, we are to be offering all parents in the school and nursery a verbal report next term.

These will take the form of a planned telephone call and staff will keep notes of what has been discussed to ensure there is some form of a record of the conversation.

We will be in touch shortly after the Easter holidays with further information.

**Transitions**

**P7**

The transition programme for the P7s moving to Aboyne Academy has not been shared with the primaries yet. We understand that it will be similar to the programme that took place last session, where the vast majority of the learning and sessions will be done virtually.

Pupil profiles are about to be completed by primary staff to be sent to Aboyne Academy.

As soon as we receive the programme, we will share this with P7 and their parents.

**Nursery to P1 Transition**

We have already started planning the transition for those children in the nursery starting in P1 in August. Some of the children have made visits into the main part of the school to get to know where they are going to be in class from August.

We will share full information on this transition programme after the Easter break. As with last session, there may still be some limitations on the programme eg we may need to have an online parents session.

After a long a tiring week for everybody, we wish you a pleasant and relaxing weekend.

The Ballater School Team