



# KEITH PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

## Hello, everyone.

The end of the school year is upon us, once again. As usual, it's been a real roller-coaster ride. Staff and pupils are all looking forward to a well-deserved holiday and this year it will be 7 weeks. For some of us, the holiday will last a bit longer than that. This will be my last Newsletter, before my official retirement date on 18th August. A change of Head Teacher is a big event for any school; the "unknown" brings uncertainty, but it also brings opportunity for new ideas and new skills to move things forward in a new and positive direction. My time at Keith Primary School has not been without its challenges but these have been more than outweighed by the pleasure that I've had in seeing the school and the pupils grow and blossom. I take with me, the fondest of memories and leave my positive thoughts and good wishes to all, for the future...



## Staffing

Parents and carers will already be aware that the Acting Head Teacher post will be taken up by Ms Susan Buchan. Susan is currently Depute Head Teacher at New Elgin Primary and has recently had a spell as Acting Head Teacher at Pilmuir Primary School. Some of you may remember Susan from her time in Keith, in her previous role as Education Psychologist. Susan has been visiting us, over the past few weeks and has been getting up to speed for her start in August. I'm sure she'll appreciate the Keith community spirit and support which was such a boost for me. As usual, at this time of year, there are many changes in the Pupil Support Assistant hours. We are still trying to work out the finer details of the timetables and contracts, but luckily, we will be retaining the vast majority of our support staff.

In a strange twist, we are losing Mrs Parr but keeping her at the same time! Following her marriage, during the Christmas holiday, Mrs Parr chose to keep her previous name until the end of the current school session (It certainly saved us changing all the paperwork.) However, in the new session, she will return with her new surname. Welcome, Mrs Grieve!

Big changes are afoot in pre-school settings all over Scotland and for Keith Primary School Nursery, there are a number of implications. Mrs Michele Fraser, who currently manages the Nursery at Tomintoul, has been appointed to manage Keith, in addition to her current charge. She will be assisted by Miss Fiona Russell and Mrs Rhona Henderson, as Senior Practitioners, Mrs Laura Milne and a number of new appointments. Nursery will no longer have a teacher as part of the team, so Mrs Whitecross will return to the main school's staff, while Mrs Ewen will begin her Maternity Leave. With Mrs Fraser managing the Nursery, Mrs Jane Connelly's focus will also shift from Nursery to the main school. We thank these ladies for their contribution to the development of the Nursery and its young people but a particular debt is owed to Mrs Connelly who has developed and cultivated the Nursery since its move to the present site. I'm sure her many talents will be well utilised, in school.

## Pupil Equity Update

More changes here, too. In the coming year, Mrs Lillian Brown, Family Support Worker (PEF), will be working full time with the pupils and families of Keith Primary School. She will be available through the school holidays, to provide support for those who need it. We will also retain our two Classroom Assistants, who will work with groups and individuals. Miss Shannon Gray will continue in this role and in September, Mrs Sarah Lippe will return from her Maternity Leave. We have also set aside some teacher hours in order to develop emergent literacy and numeracy.

## A Selection of Learning Experiences:

- **P.7** pupils have completed their **induction to Keith Grammar School** and they are now all set for the next stage on their learning journey. A few are mov-





ing to **Buckie High School**. They're now "too cool" for primary— so they would have us believe! We'll say our final farewells at our "Moving On" Assembly, on Friday morning.

- There has been a steady stream of pupils from **Keith Play Centre** and out with, visiting our Nursery as part of their transition. We look forward to welcoming them, in the new session.
- Similarly, those moving from **Nursery to P.1**, along with individuals from other setting, have been visiting the P.1 classrooms and meeting Miss Mitchell and Miss Mulraine, who will be their teachers, next session.



- Staff and pupils alike were inspired by a visit from **Paul Whittaker OBE**, deaf musician and speaker, who shared his love of music—despite never having heard a note—and his passion for introducing signed song to both the deaf and hearing communities. He was a true example of what can be achieved through determination to succeed.

- **P.6P** wowed us with their **Assembly** based on the human body and it's functions. Their knowledge, demonstrations, acting, costume and even their props were fantastic. Well done to everyone involved.

- Nursery boys and girls have had a number of exciting experiences, this last few weeks. The **Critter Keeper** visited with his selection of animals including a tortoise, a snake and a tarantella. **Drum Fun** activities encouraged rhythm work and the experience of using different sizes of drums. The very entertaining **Dinky Doctors** session was both fun and educational. What a fantastic way to round off the year.

- Gillian Kierans, **Attainment Advisor from Education Scotland**, visited us for the final time, this month. She spent some time discussing our attainment figures and giving us advice on how to target the support for pupils, to maximum benefit. We are grateful to Gillian for her input and wish her well in her move to a new post.
- Our **Celebrations Assembly**, was, as usual, jam-packed with a number of well-deserved certificates to be handed out. We are very grateful to all those family members who come along to support the event; it demonstrates the value of the awards and assists the school, greatly, in setting standards and underlining our aims. The finale of the afternoon was the presentation of **The Heather Stanning Award**, to Ferre Michielsen, P.7, who has shown dedication to all his curricular work and has also been a great supporter to others, working on his own initiative and without seeking recognition.
- Mrs Suzanne Ross and Mrs Linda Morrison have continued to work with teachers from around Moray and beyond, presenting workshops on **Emergent Literacy**. It's not just children who are learning new things; learning is a lifelong experience! We're very proud that Keith Primary School is helping to lead the way.



## Playground Developments

Well done to this year's focus group. Regular readers of our Newsletter will know how much effort has been put into improving the playground experience for our young people, over the past few years.



## "The Frog Squad" School Support Group

Many members and supporters have children who are moving on and there's a real need for "new blood", fresh ideas and enthusiasm. The group meet very informally and there's always open discussion and tidbits of school news. The main aim of this particular group is to fundraise for all the "extras" which help to make school so memorable for the children. Please remember that members can be involved in as many or as few of the events that they feel able to manage. Their most recent event, a Coffee Morning in North Church Hall, raised an amazing £633.30. A huge thank you to all those who donated bottles for the bottle stall and raffle prizes.

Please do consider coming along to the next meeting, which will be early in the new session. Confirmation of a date and more information will come out from The Frog Squad, directly.



**Gardening Club**

The weather has not exactly been conducive to being outside in the garden area, but that hasn't held back this enthusiastic group. Thanks to the wonderful new greenhouse, members have been able to take shelter and get on with the business of potting up seedlings. Thanks to Ms Stuart, Mrs Parr and of course, Mr Denis Reid, for their help.

**Eco-group**

The Eco Group have made a valuable contribution, this year, and they will be particularly remembered, each time a piece of litter is placed in a large, green frog-shaped bin! With their certificates and their badges as souvenirs, this year's group have stepped down to make way for a new group who will be elected and come with fresh ideas in the new session. With the emphasis—across the world—on cutting down on single-use plastics, they'll certainly have a challenge on their hands to think how to discourage the use of these, in school and in local homes. Thanks to Mr Harrison and Miss Hay, for organising this year's activities.



**Composite Classes**

Almost every year, we have enquiries from parents who are concerned that their child has been placed in a composite class. Sometimes they are of the belief that a P.7 pupil, in a P.6-7 class, for example, has fallen behind and will be set P.6 work or that a P.4 pupil in a P.4-5 class will struggle to keep up with P.5 pupils. I'd like to reassure everyone that this is not the case. Children in every class—be it a straight class or a composite—are grouped and taught at their own level. Sometimes, children may even be taught as individuals, if this is what is best for them. There are many advantages to a composite class, such as the maximum class size of 25, as opposed to 33 in a straight class. Younger children in a composite often look to the older ones and learn from their example, whilst the older ones in the group build confidence and self-esteem from acting as helpers and role-models for the younger ones. It can often be the case that due to the larger numbers in a straight class, there is a wider ability range there, than in a smaller composite class of different year groups. Teachers take great care, when allocating children to classes, that the most appropriate placings possible are made. Of course, in smaller schools, this question does not occur, as composite is very much the norm.



**School Lunches**

Following the recent trial of a 4-week menu, an evaluation will take place. In the meantime, school lunches will revert back to the 6-week menu rota, at the start of the new session.

**Keep Doric Alive**

Here are some Doric words:

<b>fariver—</b>	wherever	<b>tae clart</b>	to slap on	<b>wecht—</b>	weight
<b>faniver—</b>	whenever	<b>tae hap</b>	to cover or wrap	<b>trauchelt—</b>	worn down
<b>weel-kent—</b>	well-known	<b>forfechan—</b>	worn out	<b>rickle—</b>	loose heap
<b>jeelt—</b>	very cold	<b>spaiver—</b>	the "fly" on a pair of trousers	<b>hine awa—</b>	far away

Listen to find out if these words are being used by others, around school and in the community.

**Up-coming Events...**

- The ASG Cross Country Run, for P.4-7 pupils is all set for the morning of Tuesday 24th September, at the Simpson Trust Park.
- Dates are already in the diary for P.7 outdoor adventures with Outfit Moray, for the new session.







**Dates for your Diary (Please note that these may be amended and others may be added)**

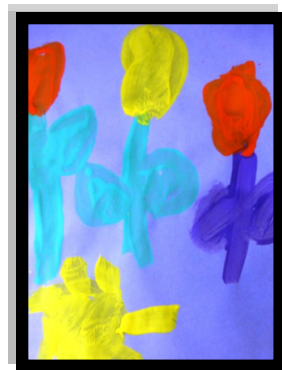
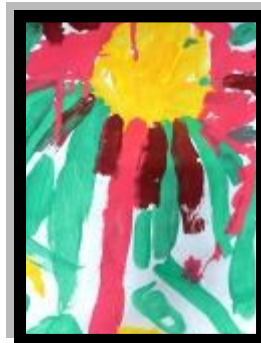
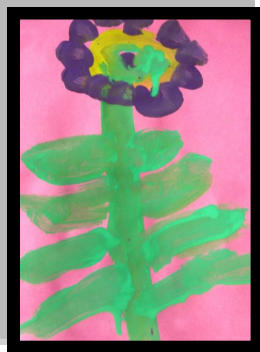
More details to follow, by letter, for some events. (TBC = to be confirmed)

27th June	Moving On Up—Pupils will visit their 2019-20 classrooms, for the afternoon and meet their new teachers and classmates.
28th June	“Moving On” Assembly. Farewell to leavers: 9:30 a.m.— <b>All welcome.</b> New Prefects and House Captains will be presented with badges. <b>2:30 p.m. finish.</b>
Looking ahead...	
19th August	In-service Day
20th August	First day of the new session, for pupils. P.2-7 in from 8:50 a.m.—3:00 p.m. P.1 9a.m.—12 noon, for the first week.

Thank you to all the very supportive parents, carers, friends and support agencies who have worked with us, this year.  
Thank you, too, for giving so generously of your time and money, when we are in need; we couldn't do the job, without you!

School Lunches	
w/b	Menu
24/6/19	Week 3
19/8/19	Week 1
26/8/19	Week 2
2/9/19	Week 3

## Have a super summer!



Regards,

Head Teacher

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**Something to think about:**

“Spend your time wisely, on the right things, because in the end, time is all you have and you may find out, one day, you have less than you think.

~ **Randy Pausch**