Dear Parents/Carers, Date: 2nd September 2016

I will keep this newsletter brief so that it summarises information quickly. Thank you for taking the time to read it.

* Rainproof jackets – every child should now bring one to school daily because the weather is changing.
* School lunches – these are free to all children in **P1-3**. You do **not** need to apply. Children should just order daily. I would like to see more children take a school lunch in the primary 1-3 classes. If your child has never tried one, then why not get them to do so next week. There is great selection of hot and cold food available daily.
* Lunch orders – next term we hope to get children to order their lunches electronically in school each day. This will give each child more independence, responsibility and freedom of choice. More information will follow.
* Parent Pay – we really would appreciate more families making use of this system. In future, school show tickets, school outings and excursions etc. will all be made available on Parent Pay. Please contact the school office if you have mislaid your password or if you would like help getting logged on.
* Staff changes – due to staff illness, Primary 1 will be mainly taught until October by Mrs. Campbell. Mrs. Campbell already knows the children very well and has had contact with each one since nursery. Mrs. Findlay will be coming to teach Primary 4 for the same period. We will welcome her as a very experienced and well regarded teacher. I also wish Mrs. Crossley and Miss. Crabbie a speedy recovery.
* Primary 7 outdoor residentials. I am currently exploring options for residential outdoor learning for P.7 this session. One model is to develop a two day, one night option. Other possibilities may be single days or potentially a two night trip. I would aim to make this an affordable option for all families. We expect a lot from our P7s this session and so we intend to give them the tools to develop independence, resilience, leadership and positive choices.
* School uniform is looking good. Thank you! I am very proud of the way the children look and behave.
* Perth Youth Orchestra outing. I had the privilege of taking a number of pupils to hear an orchestra on Monday night. The children showed exemplary behaviour and were a great credit to their families. I hope that we will repeat similar type events throughout the year.
* School clubs – we are currently running Homework Club on a Monday, netball and table tennis on a Tuesday and Scripture Union on a Friday. We hope to extend this list to include Lego and possibly basketball.
* Pupil Voice – children have recently made a number of suggestions for school improvement. Some are relatively easy – such as provide football goals for playground use. Other options are complex and costly – like install a climbing frame in the grounds. We do however list to what the pupils say and we are clear with them about the easy choices as well as the challenges. The easy options will happen as soon as possible.
* Charlie Taylor demonstration night. Unfortunately, this evening has been cancelled because there were not enough people available for the evening.
* Parent Council – this group is very active in the school. Very soon, the parents will issue a calendar of meeting dates for the year. All parents are very welcome to attend any meetings.
* Class organisation. I have had some enquiries about how teachers meet the needs of different ages of children in the same class. The simple answer to this is that groups within the class will be doing different levels of work at the same time. In addition, we also have maths and literacy times where teachers work together to take mixed groups of pupils who may be working at similar levels. Throughout the school, we have agreed that teachers will teach maths and language at the same time in order to let this happen. We have also spent a lot of time this session assessing children in maths, reading, writing and spelling. Teachers now have a very good indication of the types of support that each child may require. Although this work is initially slow, it will be of great benefit as the year proceeds.
* SHANARRI. This year, we will be emphasising the values held across Scotland for all children:

**Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included.**

We will be discussing these values regularly with children and families.

**Finally, how do you want us to communicate with you?** E-mail, text, Facebook, website, paper newsletter, please let me know at: Balhousie@pkc.gov.uk

Thank you,

Peter D. Ferguson

Head Teacher