**Balhousie Primary School Newsletter – April 2017**

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am glad to see that we are beginning to emerge from a long winter and that the sunshine is becoming more regular. I hope you all had a happy Easter break. We can now look forward to a lovely summer term for all of the children.

**Staffing**

During a period of staff illness, I am very happy to have welcomed Mrs. Findlay to P.4. She has been a marvellous addition to the staff team. Mrs. Campbell has also negotiated with her other school so that she can give us a full week – and this is wonderful. Mrs. Roper has been on loan to us from North Muirton and she too has very quickly fitted in with the classes in P4 and more recently, with P3/4. I am very glad to be able to rely upon such a dedicated and flexible staff at Balhousie. Mr. Angus agreed to teach P.E. prior to Miss. Wylie’s return this session and have been very glad to have him with us. We also welcome back Miss. Wylie from her work at Perth Grammar School. We do however send our best wishes to staff who are currently off work. We look forward to seeing them back with us.

**Parent Council**

Recently, the Parent Council met for their AGM. I am very excited about some great ideas they discussed that will benefit all pupils in school. I am sure they will unveil their plans shortly!

**Playground**

I also have to clarify rules around bikes and scooters in the playground: we welcome bikes and scooters (with permission from parents) but for safety reasons, they must not be ridden in the playground. Children should walk them through the grounds and lock them up securely.

**Learning and Teaching**

You may have heard a lot about reports of Scottish education. What remains true is that investment in education from both a local and national perspective remains a Scottish priority as we prepare young people for lives as citizens in a changing world. In Balhousie, staff have taken time to consider the skills we need to provide children with for successful futures. Not surprisingly, we agreed to focus upon some very basic skills:

* Strong reading skills – reading out loud but especially the understanding of text.
* High levels of written and mental numerical skills at all levels.
* Correct use of spelling, grammar, sentence construction, punctuation and layout.
* Creative numerical and literacy skills that will build upon sound foundations in both areas.

By focussing upon these identified skills, we are in no way diminishing the importance of the other areas of the curriculum but we do recognise that without these foundational skills, it becomes hard to make progress in many other areas of school and later life.

As a school, we will continue to offer many opportunities to children to excel in sport, art, music, science etc. but we will also seek to raise the attainment in the core skills above.

**Clothing**

A table of unclaimed lost property will be made available outside the staffroom at 3pm every night this week and until Tuesday next week. After this time, we will have to give items away. Please write your child’s name in permanent ink on every piece of school clothing. This will save a lot of upset and save on everyone’s time.

**Learning Achievement Visit**

Next Wednesday **(26th April)** we are having a Perth and Kinross inspection of the learning within Balhousie. This is very important to the school as results are published on the council website. As always, it will be particularly appreciated if children looked extra smart and tidy on that day and that we are able to show off Balhousie in the best possible light. I am very pleased to be part of this school community and I think that we have a lot to be proud about:

the children are very enthusiastic about their work and standards are high, behaviour is largely excellent, the quality of music is exceptional, art work is beautiful and we see clear evidence of exceptional work in maths and language. As a school, we are very privileged to have a diverse community of learners, with all families contributing to the character of Balhousie. I am also highly delighted with the parental support we receive in activities such as the Roman homework models, art and craft activities, help with school trips and visits, fund raising and the guidance of the Parent Council.

**Staff Car Park**

Sorry, but this area cannot be used by anyone other than Perth and Kinross Staff. Please contact Pullar House for further details. Please avoid this area at all times.

**Important Dates**

I have set out some key dates below. Please alert me to any clashes you may find. I will make every effort to keep the dates and times as they stand.

|  |  |  |
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| **Date** | **Event** | **Venue** |
| **April** |
| 20.04.17 | P3/4 to museum visit (packed lunch and warm clothes required) | Perth Museum |
| 21.04.17 | Swimming for P5-7 classes until 5th May. Swimwear needed. (Transport provided) | Swimming pool |
| 24.04.17 | Glee Concert 6.15pm | Perth Concert Hall |
| 26.04.17 | External Council Inspection of School. Full uniform essential. | School |
| **May** |
| 01.05.17 | May Day Holiday for everyone |  |
| 02.05.17 | P5/6 to attend drama production from 1pm to 3pm.  | Perth Concert Hall  |
| 09.05.17 | Play on Pedals sessions (Nursery) 11:00 and 13:00 | Nursery |
| 11.05.17 | Family Musical Evening – bring national food. 18:00- 19:30 | School hall |
| 8th & 15th May | SAFE TAYSIDERS w/b 8th and 15th | School |
| 11.05.17 | Class photos for P7 class (Evening Telegraph) | School |
| 18.05.17 | P5-7 to Verdant Works, Dundee.  | Verdant Works, Dundee  |
| 25.05.17 | Transition day for P7 at Perth Grammar School | Perth Grammar School |
| 29.05.17and 30.05.17 | P6/7 residential to Kinloch Rannoch | Kinloch Rannoch |
| 31.05.17 | Flouride dental varnishing for nursery to P.4 | School |
| **June** |  |  |
| 02.06.17 | School Sports Day (am in school grounds, pm at the North Inch) | School/North Inch |
| 06.06.17 | French Café. Everyone invited. Morning only. | School |
| 08.06.17 | P7 Induction Day 1 at Perth Grammar School | Perth Grammar School  |
| 08.06.17 | All pupils move up one stage for **today only. (09:30-11:15)** | School |
| 09.06.17 | P7 Induction Day 2 at Perth Grammar | Perth Grammar School |
| 16.06.17 | Whole School Outing to St. Andrews. Buses leaving school. | St. Andrews |
| 28.06.17 | Nursery Graduation - morning and afternoon | School Hall |
| 28.06.17 | School Concert and Prize Giving. 18:30-19:30 | School Hall |
| 29.06.17 | School Closes for Summer – 12:00 | School |

Thank you in anticipation of your continued support of the school.

Regards,

Peter D. Ferguson

(Head Teacher)