

November (2) 2024

Dear parent(s)/carer(s),

After a mild autumn so far, the weather is due to become colder over the next few weeks. Please send in a hat, scarf and gloves in a suitable PE style bag to keep these items in school. The children will be outside when it is dry and walking regularly to the church to practice for the Annual Carol Service.

STAFF

Mrs Ferguson is on extended absence from school. Mrs Hutchinson will continue to teach P7 full time. Mrs McLean has taken on the role as Acting Principal. To fulfil the requirements of the role it is necessary for Mrs Moore to provide principal release cover in P3/4 approximately three days per week. Mrs Moore and Mrs Hutchinson are experienced, talented teachers who have previously worked in the school. We plan to utilise the staff's collective experience and expertise to continue to provide consistent and high-quality education. We thank you for your understanding and support.

ATTENDANCE

Our yearly school attendance target is 95%. Following a pastoral visit from the Education Welfare Officer last week we identified that attendance figures have fallen significantly for some pupils. We strongly encourage our pupils to attend school every day when they are well. Parents must provide a written note explaining absences when children return to school following an absence. Holidays should be booked outside of term time. Teachers will not provide work for pupils who are on family holidays.

SICKNESS

We are approaching the time of year when sickness levels increase due to viruses, bugs etc. It is important that your children are kept at home if they are ill. Unwell children are unable to fully participate in lessons and can often be contagious. I ask parents to be mindful of the health and wellbeing of the other pupils and the staff. Teachers will contact parents to collect their children if they come to school unwell.

SAFEGUARDING – ANTI BULLYING WEEK

Every November schools throughout the United Kingdom take part in Anti-Bullying Week. This is an opportunity to shine a spotlight on bullying and consider the steps we can take together to stop it. Anti-Bullying Week 2024 will be taking place from Monday 11th to Friday 15th November, with the theme 'Choose Respect'. Pupils in P4-P7 will participate in an online assembly hosted by HIP Psychology and all classes will complete activities and discussions around this important topic. We will join with many other schools on Tuesday 12th November to participate in "Odd Socks Day." **The children should come to school wearing odd socks.**

CURRICULUM NEWS

A copy of this newsletter is available on the school website

<https://www.parkgate-primary.co.uk/>

Nanny Thompson from Mount Stewart (National Trust) is visiting P1-P4 pupils on Wednesday 27 November. She will bring a collection of old toys and games to show the children. This visit links with The World Around Us topic Toys and Bears (P1/2) and Life in the Recent Past and Change Through Time (KS1). We ask that every pupil from P1-P4 donates £2.70 in a clearly labelled envelope to contribute towards the cost by Tuesday 26 November.

During the months of November and December, Foundation Stage and Key Stage One will focus on developing **STEM skills**. Through active learning and age-appropriate experiments the pupils will further develop their skills of enquiry, investigation, prediction and estimation.

PTA NEWS

RAFFLE TIME!

Local councillor Stewart Wilson has generously donated tickets for free admission to the opening night of the Enchanted Winter Garden. The PTA have organised a raffle to fairly distribute this valuable gift and raise funds for the expansion of our outdoor learning environment. 4 sets of family tickets are up for grabs! Tickets cost £5 each or you can buy three tickets for £10. Tickets have been sent home with pupils. You can purchase additional tickets in school. Completed tickets and money should be returned to school by Thursday 21 November. The winners will be announced via Facebook on Monday 25th November. Good luck everyone!

Please note- Each family is only permitted to win one set of tickets!

CHRISTMAS PARTY LUNCH – CLOSING DATE 22 NOVEMBER

This year a Christmas Buffet Lunch will be served on **Monday 2 December**. If you wish to order a meal for your child, please complete the google form below and submit by **Thursday 21 November**. Payment of £2.60 per child is **not** required until **Monday 2 December**. All pupils will eat lunch in the hall that day and should wear a Christmas jumper/festive headwear.

<https://forms.gle/Pw6NJX4dP29yQHTT7>

CHRISTMAS PARTY P1-P7

Continuing the party atmosphere the pupils will have their Christmas party on the **afternoon of Wednesday 18 December**.

Time: **1.00pm-2.30pm ALL PUPILS SHOULD BE COLLECTED AT THIS TIME**
Pupils: P1-P7
Venue: School Hall
Charge: Free – refreshment provided by PTA
Supervision: Staff

Parents are asked to provide **two** lucky dip items. These can be sent into school from **Monday 2 December** onwards. The value of the gifts should be no more than £1. Pupils may bring up to £2 spending money to try their luck in the 'Christmas Lucky Dip.'

This is a non-uniform event. Pupils may choose to wear Christmas jumper/t-shirt or party clothes appropriate for party games.

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COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS

The Parkgate and District Community Association has invited the **P4-P7** school choir to participate in the Christmas Lights Switch On (**Friday 22 November**). Please complete the google form below by Tuesday 19 November so that staff know there will be an adequate number of choir members on the evening. This is an important community event and opportunity to promote the school prior to Open Day. Currently only 11 children have confirmed their attendance. The PTA along with Holestone Young Farmers have organised a Tractor Run and refreshments in the Church Hall following the switch on.

<https://forms.gle/MUrfGkrit5iFka6TA>

Choir members should wear some festive headwear and meet Mrs Magowan and Mrs Fenton at the phone box adjacent to the green at 6.45pm. Pupils are not required to wear uniform.

OPEN AFTERNOON

The school is hosting our open afternoon for prospective P1 pupils 2025. Parents and pupils will be able to see our classes in action, experience the foundation stage play resources, tour the school and hear a principal's address.

The open afternoon is planned for **Friday 29 November**. Pupils in **P1-P3** should be collected at **2.15pm** on this date.

Refreshments will be offered to visiting parents and pupils. If you are available to help with serving tea and coffee and chatting with parents about your experience of the school, please contact the school office by Monday 25 November for further details. Currently no parents have volunteered.

The PTA have distributed flyers to local businesses/groups and placed promotional banners in the local area. Thank you to Mr Neill who kindly purchased two additional banners. The new school prospectus is available and a digital copy is on the school website. Please like, comment and share on our Facebook Page to promote this important event.

SCHOOL CLOSURE REMINDER

School will be closed to pupils on **Friday 22 November for a School Development Day**.

PARKHALL INTEGRATED COLLEGE

Thursday 16th January – Open evening

Primary 7 Testing- Friday 6th June or Thursday 5th June

For further detail contacts croberts943@c2ken.net

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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12.11.24	Anti-Bullying Week – Odd Socks Day
22.11.24	Parkgate Christmas Lights
22.11.24	SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT DAY 2 – NO PUPILS SHOULD ATTEND
27.11.24	Visit from Nanny Thompson (Mount Stewart)
30.11.24	New P1 Open Afternoon
04.12.24	P1-P7 Christmas Lunch
18.12.24	Christmas Party – All pupils finish at 2:30pm
10.12.24	Christmas Concert (6.30pm)
20.12.24	End of term – School closes at 12.00pm for all pupils and staff.

Mrs McLean
(ACTING PRINCIPAL)