Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you are well and it is good to be back at school, giving us all some sense of normality once again. It is lovely to see our pupils settling back into their routines and everyone is now getting to know their teachers and becoming used to the routines and procedures. This session is the first since August 2019 that we have been able to look forward to a normal year ahead. We are looking forward to opening our doors again and working in partnership with our parents, families and community partners.

It is hard to believe that we have just had our September weekend and that we close for our October holidays on Friday 14th October, with an in-service day on Monday 24th October and the children return on Tuesday 25th October.

Thank you all for your support so far. We look forward to what the rest of this session has in store.

 **STAFF NEWS**

s was anticipated the numbers of Covid cases are on the rise as society openAs was anticipated the numbers of Covid cases are on the rise as society opens up. Please be aware of the following:

We welcome several new teaching staff to school this session. A warm welcome to Miss Meikle (P7), Miss Connell (P6), Mr McQueen (P6/5), Miss Robertson (P4) and also to our new school assistants Ms Lake and Mrs Griffiths.

**FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND CLOTHING GRANTS**

Application for free school meals and clothing grants can be made using this link: [Free school meals and clothing grant - South Ayrshire Council (south-ayrshire.gov.uk)](https://south-ayrshire.gov.uk/free-school-meals) Free school meals and clothing grant - South Ayrshire Council (southayrshire.gov.uk). Please note that applications need to be completed each school year and do not automatically continue. **You must apply each year.** If you would like some assistance to do this please contact the school office.

**QUEEN ELIZABETH**

The children have been reflecting on the life of Queen Elizabeth II in school, discussing with staff and peers the events that they have been following on television and her long reign. They have also talked about the wonderful celebrations we had to mark the Platinum Jubilee back in June. It is quite fitting therefore, that this week we received a batch of books to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee. Each family will bring home their own copy of the book to explore with you at home.

**SCHOOL UNIFORM**

Many thanks to almost all parents who have ensured our young people are smartly presented, wearing the Annbank Primary school uniform with pride. Can I please encourage parents to write their children’s names on all articles of clothing, this will hopefully help to reduce lost property. If your child has lost a piece of clothing it may be in our growing lost property area, please feel free to come in and look through this.

As we approach the season of more inclement weather please ensure children have appropriate footwear and a jacket on at school. We are outdoors in all weathers (as long as it is safe to do so).

Can I also please remind parents that children will not have access to the school building before 8.45am on wet mornings. I would ask that children remain at home as long as possible on mornings where weather is inclement. Please note, there is no adult supervision in the playground prior to 8.45am.

We have noticed a number of children coming to school with long, false nails on. Please could we request these are removed for school to avoid health and safety issues and to ensure children are comfortable when writing in class.

**PARENT VOLUNTEERS**

Parent volunteers are a great help to our teachers and pupils. If you would like to support the work of the school please contact Mrs Tonner via email and she will be in touch to discuss what you would like to do. caroline.toner@south-ayrshire.gov.uk

**COFFEE AND CHAT**

**Date: Wednesday 12th October 2022 Time 2:15pm – 3:00pm**

We would like to invite you to have an informal coffee (or tea) and chat with members of our leadership team in our meeting room. This is an opportunity to meet with other families and school staff and to discuss anything we can help you and your family with. If you plan to pop along please let the office know.

**PLAYGROUND**

The playground is a place for children to enjoy with their friends. It should be a time for playing games, chatting with others and getting fresh air and exercise. Unfortunately since we returned in August some children have found this part of school particularly difficult.

To ensure all pupils feel safe in the playground and enjoy their time with friends we are not allowing any type of ‘play fighting’. We find this leads to things escalating and getting out of hand very quickly and can result in unnecessary quarrels between pupils.

We ask that you reinforce this with your child at home and help us create a safe and happy playground environment – thank-you☺

**HOME LEARNING**

We are currently reassessing our home learning policy through the school. If you would like your say in this please follow the link issued by the office to take part in our home learning survey. Thank you very much to everyone that has already done this.

Until our survey is completed, class homework continues to be issued via Teams or SeeSaw. As we progress in a digital age, it is important we capitalise on the familiar and continue to use our online learning platforms, Microsoft Teams and SeeSaw, to support our home learning.

Our new home learning policy should be in place for term 2.

**FLU VACCINE**

The flu vaccine is offered to all primary school aged children in Scotland and is given to children at school by the local NHS team. Our annual flu vaccinations are scheduled for Friday 14th October 2022; thank you for completing and returning the consent forms. Public Health Scotland have produced the following animation, ‘What to expect during your flu vaccine’ which you may wish to watch together at home before the vaccination date: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qSm2Uvdb4GM>

**JOHN RODIE LIBRARY**

****The John Rodie Library – it’s on our doorstep!

**John Rodie Library Opening Times**

* **Monday: 2.30pm-7pm**
* **Tuesday: 2pm-5pm**
* **Wednesday: CLOSED**
* **Thursday: 10am-1pm and 2pm-4.30pm**
* **Friday: 2pm-5pm**

Please come along and use your local Library – it’s an amazing space with lots of great books just waiting to be read!

**READING SCHOOLS**

**Working in Partnership with the Scottish Book Trust – *Reading Schools***

This session we are working towards achieving our Reading Schools Award. In all classes Reading is enjoyed by everyone, as part of our learning curriculum and also for pleasure. Our Primary 5-7 classes are Reading Buddies to younger pupils and they meet twice weekly to practise reading. We have a ***Reading Schools Committee*** which is made up of staff, pupils, parents and our school Librarian. The committee works really hard to raise the profile of Reading and it organises lots of activities which hopefully inspire our young audience and further develop their love of reading and books. A current initiative is focussing on **reading in unusual places**. We are asking pupils to email in a photograph of them reading in unusual places. These will then be displayed in the central hall and there will be a prize for the pupil reading in the most unusual place. Can all photos please be emailed to caroline.toner@south-ayrshire.gov.uk Thank-you!

**MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING**

Primary 7 are organising a fabulous MacMillan Coffee Morning n Friday 30th September 2022 9:30 am - 11:00 am

Tickets: Adults £2 (incl. entry, tea/coffee, treat and raffle entry)

Children £1 (incl. entry, drink and treat)

(Maximum of 3 children per adult – children can join parents at the event but will only be attending if a parent is present).

If you can contribute any home baking to the MacMillan Coffee Morning then we ask that all donations are handed in on Thursday 29th September 2022 please. No cake is too big or too small, any support would be amazing! Thank you!

**SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

Each academic session we are required to produce a School Improvement Plan which outlines our main priorities for the session, and a Standards & Quality Report which evaluates the progress made the previous session.

You can access both documents on our school website under the Parent Zone tab. We have also created a summary version of this year’s School Improvement Plan for families so you can see our key priorities at a glance. This will also be available on the website.

**HARVEST AND FOOD BANK**

Our P4 classes will all be leading our Harvest Assembly on Thursday 13th October at 9.30am. We look forward to coming together as a school to mark this occasion and parents of children in these classes will be given further information nearer the time allow them to join if they wish.

As part of learning about Harvest and where our food comes from, the pupils will be collecting food for the local food bank. All pupils in the school are encouraged to bring in items and hand them to their class teacher. All food will be delivered to a local foodbank before the October holidays.

**HELP NEEDED – GAMING CLUB**

Next term Mrs Emmerson would like to set up a gaming club. However, to do so, she is looking to enlist the help of the pupils to raise funds to buy a games console and games to go with it. She will be announcing details soon, but she would really appreciate any donations of old games or equipment that she could trade in at CEX (Please note these donations **would not be returned** they are traded for credit against a games console suitable for the club). Please hand any preloved games or equipment to the school office – thanks in advance.

The aims of the club would be to teach the children how to conduct themselves whilst playing video games, teamwork and resilience.

**HALLOWEEN**

We would like to invite all pupils to dress up on Friday 28th October for Halloween parties in their classrooms. We are again going to hold a Halloween costume shops. Details of this will follow. If you have any preloved costumes at home that you would like to donate then please hand them into the school office.

**CLASS CHAMPIONS**

Last session we have introduced a ‘CLASS CHAMPIONS’ approach to celebrating children’s successes. Each week a champion was chosen from the class’s recognition board. Pupils are chosen by demonstrating ‘READY, RESPECTFUL, SAFE’ in the classroom or playground.

This session we listened to the children and made some changes to this approach. This session the children would like this award to be called ‘School Superheroes’. This will be celebrated in a similar way on a Friday but this session children will receive a wrist band rather than a badge. They will continue to receive their ‘trophy’ to sit on their desk until the following week and to receive a certificate displayed on the wall on our ‘SPOTLIGHT’ display. Their certificate will then come home to you the following week. Congratulations to Riley Vance P4T, Arwen Nicol P5 and Callie Cowley P4R who won the school competition to design our new superhero mascots for ready, respectful and safe. Congratulations also to Alexander Howat P6 who was the winner of our design a new house point competition. All designs will be ready to be displayed soon! At the end of the session a ‘Champion of Class Champions’ shield is awarded to one or two pupils. Congratulations to Alecia Houston and Iona Currie for being our winners last session. Class Champions/School Superheroes is only one way we recognise and celebrate success with pupils. We also use our class ‘Recognition Boards’ to highlight positive behaviour, use reward stickers and badges, highlight good work to leadership team, whole class rewards, House points, rewards, and more!

**PARENTS APPOINTMENTS/FAMILY LEARNING**

We were delighted to see so many of you at our recent ‘Meet the Teacher’ event. We have missed sharing learning and experiences with everyone and look forward to more opportunities over the session.

We would like to welcome all P1-P7 families to attend our Parents Evening/Appointments on Thursday 10th November from 3:15 – 8:30pm. As well as offering 1:1 face to face appointments with your child’s teacher, or a phone call if you wish, this is also an opportunity to come in and find out more about some of the methods and practice used in our school across the curriculum. Included will be Bug Club, Seesaw and Numeracy. More details will follow.

**PARENT COUNCIL ‘A NIBBLE AND A NATTER’**

Our Parent Council meetings have, for the past two years, been held over zoom.

Our next meeting will be face to face and is a ‘Nibble and a Natter’ on Monday 26th September 7pm – 8pm.

This will be a very informal get together to share ideas over refreshments. A crèche is available to support childcare.

**GREGGS HARDSHIP FUND**

We again have support from **Greggs Foundation Hardship Programme 2022.** By already receiving support for our school Breakfast Club, funding is available to benefit any of the children/families who attend our school. To help alleviate financial pressure/s felt by families, none more so for the provision of food and living necessities following the Coronavirus pandemic, applications can be submitted for the purchase of the following: fridge, freezer, fridge-freezer, cooker, washing machine, tumble dryer, beds/bedding, school uniform vouchers and food grocery vouchers. If you feel this is something that would support your family, please phone the school office and we will complete an application on your behalf.



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| Monday 26th September  | Parent Council ‘Nibble and a Natter’ 7pm  |
| Monday 26th – Friday 30th September  | ‘Reading Is Magic’ online reading festival – all classes  |
| Monday 26th – Friday 30th September  | Maths week Scotland – all classes  |
| Friday 30th September | MacMillan Coffee Morning |
| Monday 3rd October – Friday 7th October  | Scottish Digital Literacy week – all classes online lessons  |
| Tuesday 11th October  | P7 Ayr Academy Challenge Day 1 |
| Thursday 13th October  | P4 Harvest Assembly |
| Friday 14th October | Flu Immunisations |
| Friday 14th October  | Class book swap – details to follow  |
| Friday 14th October | Close for October holidays |
| Monday 24th October | In-Service Day- school and EYC closed |
| Monday 31st Oct – Friday 4th Nov  | Dyslexia Awareness focus week – all classes  |
| Tuesday 25th October | School re-opens for Term 2 |
| Friday 28th October  | Hallowe’en parties in school and EYC  |
| Thursday 10th November  | P1 & P7 dental inspections  |
| Thursday 10th November  | Parent Appointments (including family learning marketplace – more info to follow) |
| Monday 14th Nov – Friday 18th Nov  | Book Week Scotland – all classes  |

I look forward to continuing working together as a learning community.

I would ask that if you have any specific questions or ideas in relation to any of the above that you send an email to the school email box or contact the school office.

Best wishes

Karen Butchart

Head Teacher