

Tuesday 16.1.13

Dear Parents/Carers,

Happy New Year and welcome to our first new term in the new school. We are delighted that Mr Miller is now a permanent, full time member of staff and will be the full time Primary 5 Teacher until the end of this session. Mrs Lacharini has a temporary full time position in Primary 2-until the end of the session also, to replace Mrs Lambie-who popped in on Friday to thank everyone for making her last day at Spittal so special.

As you know we won a competition for a school website last term. The company building our website is called The Design Core and we met with them last week to plan what our website will look like. We want to include lots of photographs of children so if you have any objections to your child's photograph appearing on our website please let me know in writing.

The children settled in very well last week and we are all looking forward to beginning our Whole School Scotland Project this month. Similar to last year, all classes and the Nursery will be learning about Scotland. Last week Teachers asked pupils what kinds of things they had learned last year and what they would like to learn this year and are now busy planning a range of learning experiences.

#### Scots Poetry Competition

This was very popular with the children last year. All children will learn a poem (or part of a poem) in Scots Language. Each class will listen to each other recite/perform their verse and then a finalist will be selected who will enter the whole school competition of behalf of each class. This entry may be an individual or a small group. To celebrate Burn's Day on 25<sup>th</sup> January-we will have a Special Assembly and the 7 class entries will perform in front of the whole school. A panel of judges will have the difficult task of selecting 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place and the winners will receive a trophy.

#### Sharing Our Learning

On Friday 1<sup>st</sup> February we would like to invite all Parents/Carers into school to join us in sharing and celebrating learning for our Scotland Project. This will start at 1.30pm in the Gym Hall where you will hear Scots Poetry recitals, music and songs. After this you will be invited to walk around the school and visit the classrooms where the children will share some of their learning through presentations, displays and activities. We hope you can join us for this.

### School Tours

Last week, Mrs Neil and I met with the Pupil Council to discuss School Tours. These will take place next Monday-21<sup>st</sup> January at 9.00am and again at 2.30pm. If you would like a tour of our beautiful new building please come into the Gym Hall at these times-please enter the school via the Main Entrance. Pairs of children from the Pupil Council will then lead you on a tour round our school.

### Golden Time

You may have heard the children talking about this! It caused great excitement all around the school last week. The staff have been discussing our School Behaviour Policy and we all agree that the vast majority of Spittal pupils consistently behave well all the time. Therefore we want to ensure there are treats in place to highlight and reward this positive behaviour. On a Friday afternoon we have set aside an hour for Golden Time. During this time the children can choose from 11 activities including Dance, Baking, Wii, quizzes and board games and Ball Skills in the Gym. All children start the week with the full hour entitlement and if their behaviour is good all week they will enjoy the 60mins on a Friday. If behaviour is not good children may lose some minutes of Golden Time. In each class, Teachers have a positive behaviour system which the children are all aware of. This varies from class to class to suit different ages and different children. Some classes have weather clouds and some operate the red/amber/green system. If a child is sent to Mrs Neil or myself for disappointing behaviour we may remove some of their Golden Time. We hope that all the children will keep the full hour and we encourage positive behaviour at all times.

Mrs Neil and I are working on a Policy Statement which focuses on rewarding positive behaviour. In December Teachers asked the children what kind of behaviour they wanted in school and how this could be achieved. Their comments helped us to draft a Policy Statement and we are now asking for Parents/Carers comments. Please complete the attached sheet which asks for your views- and we will incorporate this into a final Policy Statement. The promotion of positive behaviour with rewards is very important to all staff at Spittal and we welcome a partnership approach with Parents/Carers.

### Attendance at School

Children who attend school and arrive on time every day have the best opportunities to progress with their learning and to enjoy a wide variety of learning experiences and activities. However, there are times when children are ill and have to be absent from school. Parents/Carers must contact the school to inform the Office of any absences

and the reasons for these. If you do not contact the school then Office Staff will try to contact you by telephone. If they are unable to contact you then a letter will be posted out asking you to get in touch to explain why your child is absent. Guidance has been issued from South Lanarkshire recently on monitoring pupil attendance and a new set of formal letters have been devised. I will be using these letters to correspond with individual families regarding attendance in school. If you are having any difficulties regarding your child's attendance then I would like to support you so please come and speak to me if there is anything I can do to help.

### Parent Council

The next Parent Council meeting will be held in school on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January at 9.30am. All Parents/Carers are welcome to attend any meetings-you do not need to come to them all and you will always be very welcome if you can help out in any way.

The parent Council would like to thank you for all your Bags To School donations-last term we raised £230. We are again collecting bags-these can be handed into the School Office and our Janitor, Mrs Gardner will store them until the collection date. This is still to be confirmed but you may start handing in bags now.

I have attached a letter from a company called Edu Voice which has been identified by our Parent Council. This is a fund raising programme where you can help to raise school funds by completing online surveys. I hope you will be able to support this programme.

### Raffle for Prince and princess of Wales Hospice

Congratulations to all the winners of the Christmas Raffle. We raised £144.10 and a cheque has been sent to the Hospice. Thanks to everyone who donated prizes-the staff who contributed to the hampers and Jamie's Mum who donated Beauty Treatment Vouchers.

### School Safety

Could I remind all Parents/Carers that the Drop Off Area should only be used when dropping children off for school-not for parking in. This area is also used by buses dropping off and collecting groups of children.

Please ensure that you do not bring dogs into the school playground. We have a number of younger children who are scared when they see dogs in the playground.

Thank you for your co-operation in these matters.

### Class Photographs

Last Term John Wilson Photographers took Class photographs. We will be displaying these photos on the Noticeboard near the Main Entrance. They are lovely photographs showing the children in informal poses rather than the more traditional rows. A few Parents have expressed an interest in purchasing these so you will receive a small proof copy with information about costs- there is no obligation to buy. We plan to have these photographs taken each year.

### Ardeonaig

Pupils in Primary 6 and Primary 7 have the opportunity to attend a residential visit to Outdoor Centre Ardeonaig. It's not long now until the children go-they leave on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> February. Mrs Neil will hold a further Information Meeting nearer the time. Please could you send in any outstanding payments as soon as possible-thank you.

### Diary Dates

P1 Enrolment Wed 16<sup>th</sup>-Fri 18<sup>th</sup> January 9-10am and 1-2.00pm

Our P7 class have been invited to take part in a SLC video to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day. This will take place on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January. Please contact the school if you do not wish your child to be involved in this video.

School Tours Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January 9.00am and 2.30pm

Parent Council Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 9.30am

Sharing our Learning Friday 1<sup>st</sup> February 1.30pm

### School Holiday Dates

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February In-Service School closed to children

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> February Mid Term Holiday

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> February Mid Term Holiday

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> February Local Election School closed to children

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries, concerns or suggestions.

Yours Sincerely,

Lorna Hunter

Head Teacher