

Dear Parents/Carers

Bliadhna Mhath Ur! Happy New Year!

We hope you managed to enjoy making precious memories with family and friends over the festive period!

Portlethen Academy hosted their Primary 7 Parent/Carer Information Evening last night and it was almost standing room only in the Theatre, which can hold 264 people! They were so pleased to have such a great turn out. Thank you to all Fishermoss Primary 7 Parents/Carers who were able to attend this event.

Effort/Attitude/Behaviour Comments from Pupils & Parents.....thank you for all the responses received so far. We really appreciate the time families set aside to complete these. We would be most grateful if these could be sent in via the Microsoft Form by Wednesday 17th January if possible. If there are parents away with work, then comments after this date would be most welcome.

Parent Connect.... Please see the attached flyer which has information about support for working and unemployed parents in Aberdeenshire.

Aberdeenshire's Registration Week for Primary 1 admission is Monday 15th January to Friday 19th January 2024..... Parents/Carers are being invited to complete the online application form for a school in their catchment area. Where a parent/carer wishes to place their child at a school out with their catchment area they are to complete an out of zone placing request too. Parents/Carers are to email supporting documents such as the child's birth certificate and a recent utility bill as proof of address. The link to the online form will only be made available during that period on the Register for Primary One page.

Primary 7 Abernethy Adventure.....A gentle reminder that the deadline for paying any remaining balance for the Primary 7 Abernethy Residential Adventure is Sunday 21st January. Please do not hesitate to make contact if you have any concerns about this deadline.

Primary 7 Leavers' Ceilidh.....this will be held Thursday 20th June 7-9:30pm at Fishermoss School. There have been a few enquiries about when this event will be held hence the advance notice. We as a school arrange the ceilidh including the food, refreshments, ceilidh band and music for other dancing. Our **PSC** cover the cost of the food and refreshments. There is no cost to parents for this event, making it very inclusive of all our Primary 7 families! We have previously had support from some mums to help decorate the hall so help with blowing up balloons, putting up bunting, fairy lights etc is always appreciated. Our Leavers Ceilidh, sometimes referred to as our Prom, is always a special memorable occasion! A wee photo of last years' pupils at their Leavers Ceilidh to make you smile.....



Adverse Weather Arrangements.....something to stick on the fridge door!

Aberdeenshire has a clear presumption in favour of keeping establishments open whenever practicable and safe to do so, in order to minimise the impact on learning provision and associated community impact. Should the school be closed, or should there be a delayed opening, the information will be posted on Aberdeenshire Council's website. Should I be unable to access the Aberdeenshire website due to power failures etc. I will contact Northsound Radio to add us to their broadcast.

There are three methods for informing parents/carers of school closure/delayed opening:

1. **Aberdeenshire Website-School Closures and Transport Changes** is updated daily on days of adverse weather-contact details below:

Aberdeenshire website <https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/Apps/Schools-Closures/>

2. **Northsound Radio** uses the information from the Aberdeenshire website for their broadcast.
3. **School texting facilities, i.e. Groupcall:**

Please do not attempt to call the School to establish if we are to be closed.

If the school is forced to close during the course of the school day, parents will be contacted by group text message or telephone. We know it is tempting to call Fishermoss School directly to establish if we will be closing early but please avoid doing this as we need to keep the line free for other essential calls. If it is not possible to contact parents, the school will contact your named emergency contact. No child will be released from school without arrangements being made with an appropriate adult. It is important that contact, and emergency contact, details are current and the people named are available-particularly during bad weather. If there are any changes to your contact details, then please do update these as a matter of urgency via **Parents Portal**. If you are not signed up to Parents Portal, then please contact the school office for assistance to do so.

Where **school transport** is not running, please do not take your child(ren) to school yourself, unless it is safe to do so. If you do take your child(ren) to school, you must also be able to collect them at the end of the day.

Learning Activities for pupils are available on our website by going to the tab 'Parents' and selecting 'Home Learning Links' from the drop-down menu.

As a Head Teacher, making school closure decisions in adverse weather is without question stressful and my least favourite responsibility. It is never clear cut and is always an inconvenience to everyone concerned. I do my best to reach a decision as early as possible, but I am required to establish a number of factors before a school closure decision can be made. Our teaching staff stay across Aberdeenshire and therefore it is not only the local weather conditions in Portlethen that have to be taken into consideration. Conditions can also change in a very short space of time and the weather forecasters do not always get it right, as indeed I won't either! I make the decision if and when the school closes but ultimately parents must decide if it is safe for their child to travel to school, be it by family car or on foot.

Finally.....much as we all tell pupils to look after their belongings, we continue to have a significant number of items of clothing left behind at school. It is helpful when items of clothing are named so we can trace them back to their owner. Please do come and check our lost property box in our school reception area as we will be clearing out items to charity shops and our Rag Bag by the end of next week, as our box is overflowing.

My very best wishes for a happy, healthy and peaceful 2024.

Kindest regards

Margaret M. Ferguson
Head Teacher

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Aberdeenshire Council Education and Children's Services



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