

# Meldrum School Newsletter

## 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020



Welcome back to a new term at Meldrum School. As shared in Laurence Findlay's letter to you all on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, the Scottish Government has published updated guidance for schools on reducing the risks associated with COVID-19. The full document is available [here](#). Education Scotland have produced a short summary of the main points which is available [here](#). We have had a few recent queries around children taking school bags to school. The decision to ask children not to bring school bags is to reduce the risk of cross contamination between children's bags when they are stored in school. Many thanks to parents for wearing face masks at drop off time.

### Staffing

As part of national COVID response, the Scottish Government has provided funding to schools for the recruitment of additional teachers that may be needed "to compensate for any loss of learning suffered by pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown, as well as to bring much needed resilience to the education system". From this funding, we are delighted to have been able to appoint a teacher for three days per week for the remainder of this school session. Emma Cottingham took up post last week and will work Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Miss Cottingham will be supporting our P2 classes this term.

This term, we welcome five student teachers to Meldrum School and we hope they enjoy their time with us.

Student Teacher	Class
Lauren Massie	P2L
Victoria Boulind Arqued	P2MP
Alexandra Booth	P3YE
Rebekah Gray	P4MA
Caitlin Sheridan	P4/5WS

### Seesaw

For some time we have been using Seesaw as a tool for children to share their learning with you. Unfortunately, due to concerns about Seesaw not meeting data protection guidelines, schools have been advised by Aberdeenshire Council to stop using Seesaw as of Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November. Further information about this decision is attached to this newsletter. At the moment, we are working alongside Aberdeenshire Council Learning Through Technologies Team to identify an alternative to Seesaw and will update you about a replacement in due course.

### Interim Report

Due to current circumstances, we were unable to invite parents into school for our usual October Parent Consultations. In line with a number of other schools in the Meldrum cluster, this term you will receive short interim report from your child's class teacher. The focus will be around health and wellbeing and settling back into school. This interim report will be issued on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December. Please remember, if you need to speak to your child's teacher about their learning at any time, you can contact them through the school office.

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### Children in Need

To celebrate Children in Need day and to raise some money for this great cause, we are planning a dress down day on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November (no fancy dress and no football kits please). If children wish to donate, Mrs Holland, Mrs Brown, Mrs Park and Miss Harper will have a bucket to collect donations as children enter the playground/nursery. This will then be quarantined for 72 hours before we count it and make the donation to Children in Need. Our suggested donation is £1.

### Road Safety

We have had contact from a parent and a member of the community concerned about road safety around the school, particularly around Meadowbank. If you are dropping off or collecting children on Meadowbank, please be mindful of cars coming up the hill. Children will also be reminded about this in school this week.

### Remembrance Stones

A number of classes throughout the school have been decorating stones for Remembrance which will form part of a cairn in front of the war memorial at the church. The church would like to invite families to take a walk to the church to visit the memorial and the Remembrance Cairn over the next couple of weeks. We would also like to offer a warm welcome to our new school minister, Reverend Alisa McDonald. We hope to welcome Reverend McDonald into school in the near future.

### Scottish Child Payment

From Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021 many families will be entitled to the new Scottish Child Payment. The new payment is part of the Scottish Government Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan and will give eligible families on low incomes with children under 16 an extra £10 per week for each child. Further information and a link to apply are available here <https://www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/news-events/news/applications-to-open-early-for-scottish-child-payment>

### Christmas

As it is November, it is definitely time to start thinking about Christmas at Meldrum School and Nursery! This year our Christmas arrangements will obviously look very different as we are not able to invite parents into school to celebrate with us. We are planning alternatives to our usual Christmas Show, Singalong, Craft Afternoon and Nursery Christmas Stay and Play and these will be shared with you soon. In line with current COVID arrangements and risk assessments, we ask that children do not bring Christmas cards and presents to be distributed in school. Should you be considering a gift for school or nursery staff this year, we would like to suggest a donation to charity instead.

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### Calendar

More Christmas events to be added in due course.

Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> November and Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> November	Flu immunisations
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> November	Inservice Day 3
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> December	Interim Reports issued
Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Jumper Day (further information to follow)
Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> December	School Closes at 3.30pm for Christmas Holidays

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Carol Harper'.

Carol Harper  
Acting Head Teacher

SEESAW



Seesaw has been a very effective communication and learning tool for schools but following a recent ruling by the EU in relation to Privacy Shield, under which apps / software packages were covered in terms of data protection requirements, Aberdeenshire Council have been in the process of reviewing a number of apps and software packages to ensure they are satisfied they continue to be compliant with use under current legislation around data protection. SeeSaw is an app that Education and Children's Services has been looking into.

Use of SeeSaw, in terms of the way it collects users' data has been, up until recently, permitted through the Privacy Shield scheme. Now that Privacy Shield has been struck-down by the EU, SeeSaw, in its current form, is no longer data protection compliant, as data is held outside the EU. Those schools who have been using the paid-for version have the option to instruct SeeSaw to move their data to the UK and to continue using SeeSaw until the end of this school session in June 2021. Those schools who have been using the free version have been instructed to stop using this by Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November, as they do not have the option to request, moving forward, that data should be stored in the UK.

Presently we are looking at alternatives to Seesaw and when we have identified the right one for us, we will let you know.

Thank you for your continued support.