



Milne's High School

Education & Social Care

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Dear Parent

I would like to take this opportunity to update you on some important matters. The term has got off to a strong start with many achievements to celebrate. The good behaviour of our students is evident across the school community and the wearing of uniform among S1-3 students is exemplary, with only a few students in the senior phase not fully supporting the school's ethos.

Health and Safety

Health and safety of pupils, staff and visitors is paramount. We continue to respond to pupil and parent feedback on feeling safe in school and are pleased to report that all of our external doors across the school were replaced during the October break. This high-quality system has resulted in greater security of the building during the school day as all external doors and secure internal doors, with the exception the automatic doors at reception, now lock during lesson time. This prevents any unauthorised access from outside whilst pupils are in class. We are extremely grateful to Moray Council for funding this essential spend in compliance with health and safety requirements.

As a school community, we all need to work together to ensure that our young people are safe and I would ask parents to encourage their child to be as safe as possible as they travel to school particularly with regard to encouraging cyclists to wear helmets and display lights when appropriate. Those who walk to school should be reminded to stay on the pavements and be alert to the dangers of passing traffic.

We still have issues with students, especially seniors, being left waiting with a member of staff for over half an hour after school events or trips have finished. Please make sure that you collect your child promptly and certainly no later than ten minutes after the conclusion of events. Please note that this also applies to the school day, especially on Fridays; the expectation is that all students should have left school no later than 1.45 pm. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the vast majority of our parents who have supported our requests in terms of collecting children promptly and not using the school car park as a drop-off point.

Parental Engagement

This continues to be a key priority and as always thanks to our very supportive parent council who represent the parent voice in our school community. Like our parent council, we as a school now have a Facebook page and this can be found on www.facebook.com/milneshighschoolmoray. Please note that this is intended to communicate information *from* school; parents are still encouraged to telephone or email the school office with enquiries and all matters of concern.

New staff joining the team

We are delighted to make some high-quality appointments to our vibrant staff team. Mr Adam Macleod, who joined us at the beginning of this year, has been appointed to the position of Depute Head Teacher on a permanent basis and is relishing the opportunity to contribute to the development of Milne's as an excellent school. On 4 December we will welcome Mr Robert Ross as Principal Teacher of Music and Mrs Ria Sparkes as Principal Teacher of Guidance with overall responsibility for Spey House. After the Christmas holidays, Miss Claire Crossman will join the Maths department to fill the post which has arisen from Mrs Shearer's retirement at the beginning of this session.

Change of date to Music concert

Due to staffing changes, the concert planned for Tuesday 11 December has been postponed to allow Mr Ross time to settle and establish a preparation programme for our talented young people to showcase their progress at a later stage.

Christmas arrangements

You may be aware that on Friday 21 December, the last day of term, we have a Christmas challenge whereby the timetable is collapsed for inter-disciplinary learning and team-building activities. A rota has been devised to facilitate attending a local Church – this year the Bellie Church - where we will enjoy carols and reflection in line with the school values. This has been a very enjoyable and worthwhile day in recent years. Christmas jumpers and other items associated with the festive period are welcome on the last day as students are not required to wear uniform due to the nature of the challenge activities.

Occasional day – mid-term break

At the beginning of each year, every school in conjunction with their feeder primary schools can decide on an additional day's holiday to reflect the local context. Traditionally, this day has been taken in May for Milne's High and our associated primary schools. Following on from concerns raised by staff that this would fall during SQA exams, a consultation which included the parent council agreed that for this year the school would be closed on Monday 3 December. This decision will be re-visited and advertised on an annual basis. All school closure days and holidays can be found on the Moray Council website or on request from the school office.

Updated vision, values, mission and aims

Earlier this term, there was a session attended by parents, staff, pupils and our local elected members to devise a new vision to focus the efforts of the school community. They utilised the information captured from significant consultation of parents, pupils, staff and partners earlier this session and I am pleased to report that we are now in the final stages of consultation on our draft statement. This will be discussed at the next parent council meeting in Room 43 of the school on Monday 26 November 2018. Why not come along and have your say and take a look at some of the school improvement work being done by the parent council? Please be assured that no prior knowledge or skills are needed – just an interest in the school and you will be made very welcome!

Children 1st in Moray

Children 1st is Scotland's National Children's Charity. They recognise that, at times, families can benefit from extra support. In Moray their 'Forces Family Service' is available for children with a parent or carer connected with the Armed Forces. It supports these children with issues including bullying, feelings of isolation and worry, low self-esteem and difficulties building friendships. If you feel your child could benefit from tailored one to one, small group or family support to help with any of these issues, then please get in touch with your child's Guidance teacher via the school office. We will help you to access the Forces Family Service. Alternatively, you can contact them directly on 01343 564170 or by emailing moray@children1st.org.uk.

Rights Respecting Schools

As we work towards our silver accreditation, S1-3 will be finding out about the importance of sanitary toilets around the world. On 18 December during their Wellbeing & Attainment lesson, pupils can enjoy a sponsored "squat-a-thon" in class to raise money to support the charity www.toilettwinning.org. For every £60 raised, a toilet will be built in the developing world and twinned with a toilet in school to raise awareness of the fact that others in the world do not have access to this basic facility.

Dates for the diary:

Thursday 22 November – S2 Parent’s Evening

Monday 26 November – Parent Council Meeting 7 pm

Wednesday 28 November – Senior Phase (S4-5) PTG Choice Parents’ Evening 1

Monday 3 December – Occasional Day – School Closed

Tuesday 4 December – S3 Parents’ & SDS Evening

Monday 10 December – Senior Phase (S4-5) PTG Choice Parents’ Evening 2

Thursday 13 December – Junior Dance

Monday 17 December – Senior Dance

Friday 21 December – Last Day of Term

Monday 7 January 2019 – First Day of Term

Thank you for your ongoing support of Milne’s High School and I hope to meet with you at some of our forthcoming events.

Yours sincerely



Trish Cameron
Head Teacher

DISCLAIMER: This letter and any attachments are solely intended for parents of Milne’s High School students. This must not be copied or re-distributed in any way.