



January 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

A belated 'Welcome Back and Best Wishes for 2024' to you all. On a personal note, thank you to those who have sent in their kind words. They are much appreciated, it's been a hard few weeks.

As we begin Term 3, I will start with a few reminders –

School uniform – Whilst we appreciate the need for everyone to stay cosy during the winter months, please remember that all pupils should be wearing school uniform every day (unless it is Outdoor Learning or they have been specifically told to wear other clothing). School uniform forms an important part of our identity and ensures equity amongst all our pupils. Please keep designer clothing for occasions outwith school. Thank you.

Indoor shoes – All pupils have been reminded to have a pair of indoor shoes which they should keep in school. During the winter days, the corridors become especially hazardous at the start of the day. The mopping up is always done, but we must ensure that our classroom carpets are looked after too.

P.E. kits – All pupils were provided with P.E. kit bags at the start of last session. Please ensure that your child keeps a named pair of shorts and a change of top in their kit bag. These items are for keeping in school and will be sent home frequently for washing.

Assemblies – This term we will be revisiting our School Values of Kindness, Achievement, Respect, Perseverance and Honesty. There will be some exciting developments along the way which we would like parents/carers to become involved in too – watch this space!

School Improvement Plan – As part of this session's Improvement Plan, staff and pupils will be working on creating a brand new Curriculum Rationale. We would like the Monymusk community to contribute to this, so in the next few weeks, we will be sending out some questionnaires along with details of what this is and what it will look like.

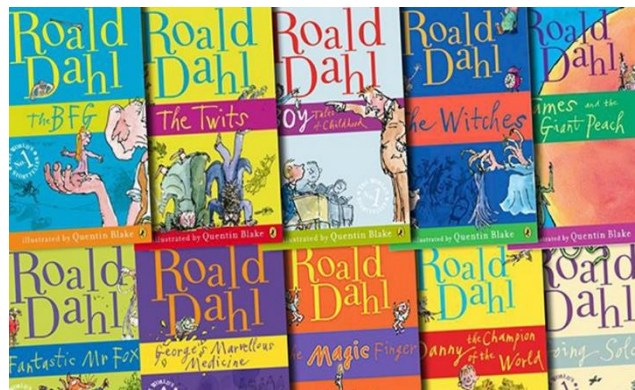
Student Teachers – Well done to Miss Scott who has had a thoroughly enjoyable and successful placement in our P6/7 class. She leaves us on Friday and we wish her all the very best in her next placement and future career as a primary teacher. Well done Miss Scott 😊

We also have another student teacher about to join us – this time in our P1/2/3 class. Mr Dougan will begin his placement on Monday 19 February until the end of the term. We hope he enjoys his time with us.

Burns Day – All classes will be celebrating Burns Day this Thursday, 25 January. Staff and pupils are invited to wear a 'touch of tartan'.



World Book Day – This year, World Book Day takes place on Thursday 7 March. We will be having a Roald Dahl theme this year where we can come to school dressed as a character from a Roald Dahl novel (there are plenty of those to choose from!)



Hungry Haggis Café – On the afternoon of World Book Day on Thursday 7 March, we shall be holding this term's Hungry Haggis Café. More details to follow.



And finally.....keeping the best news for last....

This article was published in the Press & Journal yesterday – Huge congratulations to all staff, pupils, parents and the Monymusk community. Keep up the fantastic work everyone!!

Rankings primary performances

BY CALLUM PETRIE
AND ISAAC BUCHAN

Seven primary schools out of more than 400 across the north of Scotland received 100% in our Pup11 Performance 2023 rankings.

Schools are scored out of 40, based on the proportion of children in P1, P4 and P7 meeting expected curriculum levels for reading, writing, numeracy and listening and talking.

Aberdeenshire
In Aberdeenshire three primary schools achieved the top score, the most out of all the council regions in the north, with those being Auchincruive, Braconden and Rindrig.

Along with the three top scorers, Mellick, Marykirk and Banchory managed to get 39/40, with Marymuir, Lathliffick, Goshan, and Elrick rounding out the top 10 for the area.

At the other end of the scale, Aberdeenshire had the lowest scoring school for the north of Scotland, with Fraserburgh North scoring 15/40 in the rankings.

Plus are currently in motion to merge Fraserburgh North and St

Andrews Primary, who scored 32/40, into an £18 million facility with capacity for 450 pupils.

It is interesting to note that despite being the biggest population hub in Aberdeenshire, Perthshire only had one school in the top 50% for Aberdeenshire - Buchanava, with a score of 34/40 - while also having two schools in the bottom five for the region, Central School with 27/40 and Dales Park School with 25/40.

Central School's catchment area contains the most deprived area of the town according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation's (SIMD) most recent survey, carried out in 2020.

Aberdeenshire Council was approached for comment.

ABERDEEN CITY

In Aberdeen itself, two schools obtained 100% in our rankings, Millinburn and Culls.

Making up the rest of the top 10 were Ashley Road on 39/40, Middleton Park on 38, and St Joseph's RC, Seaton, Forehill, Rosestone, Culter and Ayrhall, each with 37.

At the lower end of the table, Kingswaver, Sunnyside, Tullos and Woodside were tied bottom

for Aberdeen City with a score of 27/40.

Similar to the Aberdeenshire results, according to the SIMD, the high-scoring Millinburn and Culls catchment areas are in the top 10% of areas with least deprivation, while the lowest scoring four are located in areas in the top 50% most deprived areas.

Aberdeen City Council was approached for comment.

HIGHLANDS

Highland Council saw one school achieve 40/40 in the rankings, that being Cromarty School.

In the top 10 for the area, Minlough scored 39/40, Tarradale, Broadford and Auldern managed 38, and St Joseph's RC, Miller Academy, Lathnall, Inverlochy and Colbokie achieved 37/40.

At the bottom for Highland Council area were Balmore with 21/40, Cawdren with 22, and Ardennie, Milton and Tomnacross at 25.

Similar to the trends seen in the rest of the council areas, the schools which scored the highest tended to be found in the upper 10% of the least deprived areas according to SIMD while the bottom two were located in

areas in the 20% most deprived category.

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

A Highlands Council spokesperson said of the rankings: "There is a collective commitment to work together to increase attainment for our young people in Highland."

"We were delighted to note, on the release of the Scottish Government's ACEL data in December, that the percentage of Highland pupils achieving the expected Curriculum for Excellence levels in both literacy and numeracy increased for the last academic year.

"Highland has seen accelerated improvement compared to national trends and continues to close the gap to the national figures.

"Schools are supported and challenged through our agreed collaborative improvement framework which sets out our priorities and plans to collaborate, support and challenge as well as share the good practice of high performing schools and settings.

"Work will continue with schools to maximise achievement for children and young people across the region, and progress is

regularly reported to members of the council's education Committee."

MORAY

The Moray Council area, like Highland had one school that achieved a 40/40 score - Bishopmill Primary School.

The schools which found their way into the rest of the top 10 were Alves with 39/40, Moorlach and Berghed both with 38, Portnockie and Newmill with 37, and West End, St Geroline, Mossowie and Hopeman on 36/40.

The lowest scoring schools in Moray were Balhemp with 21/40, Plinuir and St Peter's on 26, Lathliffe on 27 and Applegrove with 28/40.

Moray seems to be the council that bucks the trend with regard to levels of deprivation in its catchment areas, with no real correlation to be found.

A Moray Council spokesperson said our scores are "not an official ranking" and are "not a fair nor accurate representation of attainment levels."

They added: "Raising attainment remains a priority and there are always improvements to be made.

"We're continuing to work with schools and in partnership with learners and families to improve outcomes and support all youngsters to achieve their full potential."

COMPARISON

Averages across the board were quite similar, with Aberdeenshire scoring the highest 33.7, Moray with 32.7, Aberdeen City with 32.6, and Highlands with 32.

Scoring

We based scores on the percentage of pupils in P1, P4 and P7 meeting expected levels in the Curriculum for Excellence, which cover listening and talking, reading, numeracy and writing.

Teachers observe children at work, assess classwork, and talking to them about their learning.

They also use standardised assessments.

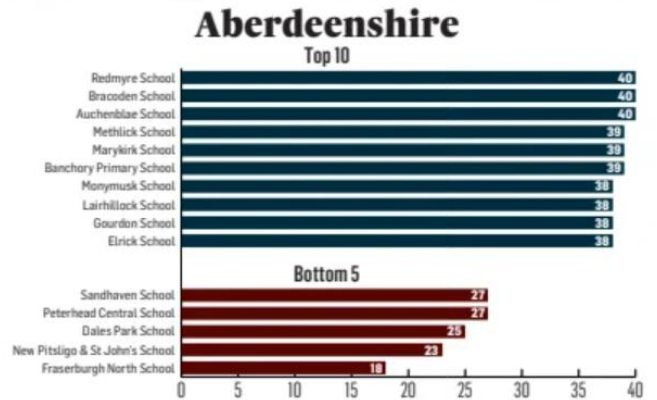
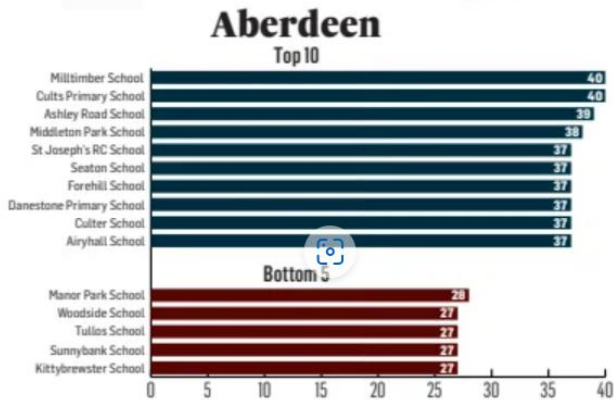
Our scores are based on the latest results for the 2022/23 academic year.

We awarded points in the four areas - one for 0 to 10% of pupils meeting expected levels, two points for 10% to 20%, up to 10 points for 90% or more - to a 40 point maximum.

Scan this QR code to see our online analysis of how schools near you ranked



Schools with the highest and lowest rating for attainment levels



Dates for your Diary

Thursday 25 th January 2024	Burns Day – everyone invited to wear something tartan
Monday 5 th February 2024	3:15pm – London meeting for P4 parents and pupils
Friday 9th February 2024	Holiday (Occasional Day)
Monday 12th February 2024	Holiday
Tuesday 13th February 2024	In-Service Day 4
Wednesday 14th February 2024	In-Service Day 5
Monday 26 th – Thursday 29 th February 2024	P4 trip to London, including visit to Palace of Westminster
Wednesday 28 th February 2024	P5-7 visit to Royal Northern Spring Show, Thainstone. Details to follow.
Thursday 7 th March 2024	World Book Day – Roald Dahl themed dress-up 1:30 – 3:00pm Hungry Haggis Café
Friday 15 th March 2024	Comic Relief Day – wear something red
Monday 18 th March 2024	(pm) Glee Competition, Beach Ballroom, Aberdeen. Details to follow.
Thursday 28th March 2024	School closes
Monday 15th April 2024	School opens
Monday 6th May 2024	Holiday (May Day)
Monday 3rd June 2024	Holiday (Occasional Day)
Friday 5th July 2024	School closes

Should you have any queries, please, as always, do not hesitate to contact the school.

Kind regards,

Mrs Jill Moir
Head Teacher