



Together Everyone Achieves More

Kerr Mackie Learners...

'Can be, can do, can change, can achieve'

Headteacher Update

Welcome to a special issue of Kerr Mackie 'Magic News' that I am writing with my Head Teachers for the Takeover Day and Children in Need Friday on 18th November 2016. Amalia Djemame (Year 6) and Thomas Horne (Year 1) welcome you also!

We can honestly say that Takeover 2016 was a huge success for everyone involved. Amalia now feels that a Headteacher's job is much harder than she thought and Thomas loved the responsibility that he had! All children and staff rose to the occasion and made it a memorable and rewarding day for everyone. Thank you for your part in the process too and, once again, for your £375.77 towards Children in Need.

As you know, in recognition of Remembrance Day on Friday 11th November, the whole school community came together outside on the playground and were touched by the playing of 'The Last Post' by Derry on his cornet and the reading of poems by some of our talented Year 5 poets. There are eye catching displays in recognition of both events in the entrance which we would love you to come and see.

As part of our continuing focus on 'participation and partnerships', our PSA is working tirelessly to organize exciting events for children, families and staff that bring much needed funds into school to enhance the 'Kerr Mackie experience' for all. The bun sale at the beginning of this half term was a huge success, raising over £300. Please read on to find out more about the continuing work of the PSA and how we can all come together again very soon. Many thanks to everyone involved.

This half term we have also showcased the wonders of Kerr Mackie to prospective parents and carers of children due to start in reception in September 2017. Year 5 were ambassadors for the school and conducted tours that were packed full of all the reasons why Kerr Mackie is the 'best place to be'. Children from Years 2, 4

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and 6 joined in the evening session by showcasing an array of practical activities that gave a real buzz of fun and excitement to the whole event. Children and staff demonstrated such pride in our school, which was definitely noticed by all our visitors. We hope that, by holding these Open Days families, are more informed about the amazing learning and achieving opportunities that their children could have if they joined Kerr Mackie.

Over the remaining few weeks of this term, we hope you will continue to support your child by joining us for the Project Exhibitions and the Sharing Learning Meetings, not forgetting the celebration of Christmas events. Looking forward to seeing you all soon!

Mrs Millington
Headteacher

Governor Update

Since my last update, the Teaching and Learning and Resources sub- committees have met and Governors have had an opportunity to review the school's budget and spending requirements, the curriculum and data outcomes and confirm the school development priorities for the coming year.

The picture is positive but like all schools- we have significant challenges ahead. A key priority for Governors is ensuring that the school is meeting the National Standards for attainment and progress and Mrs Millington and her team are looking in detail at the school's data and developing strategies to ensure that all our children progress and achieve to their full potential. We are keen to partner with parents and carers to support learning in school but recognise that work and family demands can make it difficult to always attend meetings/workshops in school to do this. As such we are looking into developing our own Youtube channel to post videos to support this.

In terms of the need to focus funds on teaching and learning but balance this with the need to maintain the

school building and grounds. A key priority being the intercom system and school toilets. The introduction of Parent Mail is also helping us to rationalise resources and whilst we are aware that there have been some teething problems, Governors were very pleased to learn that 95% of parents/carers have registered and are using successfully.

As I mentioned in my last update, raising the profile of the school as a first choice for local parents is one of our key drivers and the recent Open days were a tremendous success. We had a lot of interest from prospective parents and very positive feedback. I also went along to the Oakwood Christmas lights "Switch On" where Kerr Mackie pupils performed brilliantly, showcasing the school and making us all very proud. A huge thank you to staff and pupils for supporting these activities.

Once again, could I urge you all to complete 'Parent View'. 'Parent View' gives you the chance to tell Ofsted what you think about Kerr Mackie Primary School. It is a simple and quick survey to complete and helps inform school policies and practices.

Veena Murray
Chair of Governors

School Attendance

As a school, we are obliged by law to monitor the attendance of every pupil. Last year the National Average attendance figure was 96% and we fell slightly below that at 95%, as a school.

If your child's attendance has slipped below 92%, you will have received a letter from school. As stated in the letter, 'there may be good reason for this' (e.g. sickness), however, we want to let you know that it has fallen below the acceptable threshold and that we will keep an eye on attendance. For most children, attendance will continue to rise and no further letters will be sent out.

An attendance of 90% is equivalent to being absent for one half day every week.

Over a whole year, 90% attendance is equivalent to missing 4 whole weeks in school. Continuous 90% attendance over 6 years in a primary school is equivalent to missing over half of a school year.

Of course, we understand that children get ill and, indeed, we advise children to stay away from school

48 hours after a bout of sickness or diarrhea. The letters we send just inform parents that we will be monitoring attendance so that, for example, if your child's attendance has slipped this term due to illness, then for the rest of the year, try hard to avoid time off for other reasons e.g. holiday.

There is no magic formula to improving school attendance – the letter system we send out simply informs parents that we are noting where attendance has slipped – due to whatever reason.

Top Attendance Tips for Parents:

Attendance at school is vital to ensure your child achieves their full potential. When children have a lot of absences it can mean they have gaps in their knowledge which can lead to slower progress. At Kerr Mackie, we encourage parents to ensure their children are in school, except for periods of illness.

If you are struggling with your child's attendance at school, here are some tried and tested tips to ensure good school attendance for your child:

1. Talk to your child about how important it is to attend school every day.
2. Show an interest in what your child has done at school each day.
3. If you think your child is trying to avoid school, try to find out why? Ask them, ask their friends, ask their teachers.
4. Help your child to keep to routines, going to bed and getting up at set times, completing homework on the night it is set etc.
5. Unless avoidable, please do not arrange medical or dental appointments during school hours.
6. Encourage after school and extra-curricular activities.
7. Talk to your child's teachers if you notice sudden changes in behaviour.
8. Remember that habits are formed early. It is much more difficult to get your child to school regularly if you have let them stay at home 'just this once'.

Thank you for your understanding,

Helen Crowther
Deputy Headteacher and Attendance Lead

Holiday	School Closes	School Opens
Autumn mid-term	Friday 21st October 2016	Monday 31st October 2016
Christmas	Friday 16th December 2016	Tuesday 3rd January 2017
Spring mid-term	Friday 10th February 2017	Monday 20th February 2017
Easter	Friday 31st March 2017	Tuesday 18th April 2017
May bank holiday	Friday 28th April 2017	Tuesday 2nd May 2017
Summer mid-term	Friday 26th May 2017	Monday 5th June 2017
Summer	Friday 21 st July 2017	Wednesday 6 th September 2017

Upcoming Events		
Month	Date	Event
November	Wednesday 30 th November 2016 1:30pm – 3:00pm	Sharing Learning Meetings for Oak, Maple, Alder, Cedar, Larch and Cherry
December	Thursday 1 st December 2016 1:30pm – 3:00pm	Sharing Learning Meetings for Sycamore, Spruce, Rowan, Lime, Lilac and Holly
	Monday 5 th December 2016	Christmas Lights Switch On – Alder, Cedar, Larch and Cherry
	Monday 6 th December 2016	Christmas Lights Switch On – Rowan, Lime, Lilac and Holly
	Thursday 8 th December 2016 3:30pm – 5:30pm	Winter Fair
	Tuesday 13 th December 2016 9:30am – 10:30am and 6:00pm – 7:00pm	Years 1 & 2 Christmas Celebrations
	Wednesday 14 th December 9:30am – 10:30am and 1:45pm – 2:45pm	Nursery & Reception Celebrations
	Friday 16 th December	School closes for Christmas
January	Tuesday 3 rd January 2017	School opens

Easy Fundraising - Reminder

Did you know that every time you shop online you can raise money for our school? A few years ago the PSA set up an account with Easy Fundraising. It really is very simple to use and we would encourage everyone to try it next time they shop online. With Black Friday offers and Christmas just around the corner, there really is no better time to raise easy money for our school!

Please visit www.easypfundraising.org.uk, click on "support a good cause" and search for Kerr Mackie Primary PSA. Then just follow the simple steps to sign up and start shopping, using the links to over 2,000 retailers including amazon, John Lewis, M&S, Argos, Next and many more. Every time you shop this way you will be earning a donation to the school at no extra cost to yourself!

This is a really easy way to raise extra funds for the school, to help the PSA support projects such as the provision of a new school library and improvements to the children's outdoor play areas. We would like to encourage as many parents, carers and staff as possible to sign up! There really is no downside so please check out the Easy Fundraising website and register today! Don't forget to log in every time you shop!

If you have any questions please speak to Rachel Wilson (mum of Jack in 5 Larch). Thank you in advance for your continuing support.

Match Funding

There are hundreds of organisations in the U.K. offering their employees the chance to boost their fundraising efforts by "matching" the money they raise for their chosen charity (in this case, Kerr Mackie Primary School Parent and Staff Association, registered charity number 1060424!). Some organisations match fund on a pound-for-pound basis, others may stipulate what they are prepared to give.

The PSA would like to explore this exciting and easy way of raising additional funds for our school. As a first step, please check whether your employer operates a match giving scheme and, if they do, please let us know - it will cost you nothing! With the PSA Winter Fair on the horizon, now is an ideal opportunity to maximise our fundraising efforts!

If you think you can help, please speak to the office staff or Rachel Wilson (mum of Jack in 5 Larch) in the first instance.

Kerr Mackie Winter Fair

Our school Winter Fair is rapidly approaching.

Come along and enjoy some tasty food and festive fun! There will be live music to get us in the festive spirit, and a large café where you can enjoy the ever-popular Asian food, try a slice of pizza, or a hot drink and a slice of cake. You can buy gifts in the Secrets Room, or maybe win a giant teddy bear or one of the other fabulous raffle prizes. There will be lots of stalls and games for the children, and of course Santa will pay the school a visit.

To make this a fantastic event, donations of the following are welcome:

- Boxes of chocolates (all sizes) or bottles
- Small gifts for the Secrets Room such as toiletries, jewellery, candles, festive wear etc.
- Wrapping paper & Christmas decorations
- Coloured hairspray (for crazy hair!)
- Good quality second hand toys (no books, thank you)

These items can be placed on a table in the main entrance from Monday.

Food Donations:

- Baked goods – cakes, mince pies, biscuits etc.
- Asian food – we would welcome donations of homemade dishes; please contact Aseia Bibi on 07789 776229 who is co coordinating our food court.

Food donations can be left on the table in the main entrance from 8:00am until 3:30pm on the day of the fair (Thursday 8th December).

Please bring all other donations to the office as soon as possible.

Volunteers:

We also need volunteers to sell tickets, wrap gifts, set up the fair, run stalls, and clear away at the end of the day. How much time can you give?

If you can spare half an hour in the morning or afternoon (08.30am – 3.30pm) to help with this please let Errol Murray know on 07976 224060 or contact the PSA on kerrmackiepsa@gmail.com.

Mathletics

We have had an excellent start to our challenge of achieving 60 gold certificates this year (2016 – 2017) and beating last year's record of 54. So far after only 14 weeks we have 15 gold certificates and some amazing weekly points.

The children enjoy using Mathletics both in school and at home and we would encourage you to talk to your child about Mathletics and allow them, when appropriate, to access this learning resource from home.

By using Mathletics, the children can continue their learning at home.

Any questions with regards to your child using Mathletics, please speak to the class teacher.

Fundraising Forthcoming Events

As in the past, St. Gemma's have asked KMPS to help fundraise for them. From next week there will be a £1 stall set up near to the Office at lunchtimes, selling £1 gifts for children to buy.

All proceeds will go to St. Gemma's Hospice. Also, on Friday 16th December, there will be a festive fun day. Staff and children are to wear something festive. I.e. Christmas, Eid clothes, fancy hats/socks etc. For this pleasure, it will cost £1 and again, all proceeds go to St. Gemma's Hospice.

Thank you for your continued support for this local charity.

School Dinners

Our Food Ambassadors have been speaking to children across school and are happy with the progress of school dinners. On Tuesday 22nd November we had a review meeting with parents to hear any feedback they had regarding the hot dinners. The parent shared positive feedback about her child's experience and as a school we feel that the fourth option of 'jacket potato with filling' is working well.

We have had discussions regarding the packed lunch policy as some children are still bringing in too many sugary snacks and drinks. The school Food Ambassadors will meet to review the policy with two of our parents. Any suggestions or thoughts on this matter are most welcomed.

Remembrance Day

On the 11th of November at 11 o'clock the whole of Kerr Mackie (from Nursery to Year 6) gathered together in KS2 playground. At 11 o'clock Mrs Millington rang the bell and the school fell silent, at 2 minutes past 11 o'clock the bell rang and then Derry Webster, from Year 5, played the Last Post on his cornet. This was followed by some of the Year 5 children reading Remembrance Day poems and poems about Poppies, which they had written themselves.

The Year 5 children had also spent some time learning about Remembrance Day, through Guided Reading activities, Art lessons and Literacy. They produced a variety of poems and some excellent art work, some of these can be seen on display outside Mrs Millington's office.

The staff are so proud at how the children conducted themselves while holding the 2 minutes silence, especially the Nursery, Reception and KS1 children.



Sports Hall Athletics

(1st Round)

Congratulations to the 20 children from Year 5 and 6 who competed in Round 1 of Leeds City Sports Hall Athletics Competition at Roundhay High School. After 2 grueling hours of events including sprinting, hurdles, long jump, triple jump and obstacle relay, we managed to finish 3rd! All of the children represented the school fantastically and showed great respect to other children too!

Football

At Kerr Mackie we believe it is vital to give our children as many opportunities as possible to take part in consistent sporting competition throughout the year. For the first time this year, Kerr Mackie has entered into leagues and competitions at U11, U10 and U9 level.

Leeds U10 Moran Cup

(1st Round)

Kerr Mackie 1 - 2 Immaculate Heart of Mary
On a very cold and wet afternoon, the Year 5 team had a very tough cup match against a very experienced team from IHOM. Kerr Mackie were missing a couple of regulars due to injury but the team grouped together, to give a real gritty display. IHOM took an early 2 goal lead into half time but after the break Kerr Mackie peppered the IHOM goal. Unfortunately, we couldn't find a goal to get us back in the game. Kerr Mackie leave the competition at this stage. It was a great effort in our first game of the season. The team will still be playing in their league competition soon though.

Leeds U9 Datacable Cup

(1st Round)

Kerr Mackie 4 – 2 Our Lady's

This was the first match that this group of pupils had ever played together and they did an amazing job! On a very cold afternoon, the team, which consisted of Year 3 and 4 pupils, took an early 2 goal lead but Our Lady's scored 2 quick goals to equalize before half time. Kerr Mackie then scored two goals in the last minute to secure qualification to the next round. Well done!

Upcoming fixtures:

- Kerr Mackie V Wykebeck
- Kerr Mackie V Ninelands
- Kerr Mackie V St Theresas
- Kerr Mackie V Grimes Dyke

Kerr Mackie Pupils In Action!

Interviewing Teaching Assistants

"For me it was hard but then I learned a tiny bit of place value and it was an amazing time".

-Gopal Cheema, Year 4 Lime Class

"For me it was hard but then I settled in with it. The second task was challenging"

-Amna Ali, Year 4 Lime Class

Open Days

"We all enjoyed taking parents round school, it was great to be an ambassador for the school".

-Ibrahim Kayani, Year 5 Lilac Class

"I really enjoyed it! I was very informative and enjoy explaining things".

-William Graham, Year 5 Lilac Class

Takeover Day

"On Takeover Day, I had the job of Caretaker...It was extremely fun because I got to lock the gates and watch Mr Bramble do some drilling. I was really glad to have this opportunity!"

-Samuel Bennett, Year 3 Alder Class

"What I liked about Takeover Day was when I read the book to the class. I also liked it when I took the class into assembly and made sure that the class was being sensible."

-Luisa Joyce-Hill, Year 4 Cedar Class

Year 3 Dining In The Dark

On Tuesday, 22nd November, the Year 3 classes opened up a very special 'Dine in The Dark' restaurant to celebrate their learning during the 1st term.

The children worked extremely hard preparing food for the exhibition and proved to be great hosts for the visitors, proudly showing off some of their fantastic work.

They had an enormous amount of support from families, carers and friends who bravely agreed to eat a 3 course meal whilst wearing a blindfold!! The feedback was very positive, with a 10/10 rating for the experience given by nearly everyone.

We would like to thank everyone who came for their overwhelming support.

