



Laxey School, Quarry Road, Laxey, Isle of Man

*Department of Education, Sport and Culture
Rheynn Ynsee, Spoyrt as Cultoor*

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NEWSLETTER (5) FRIDAY 12th JANUARY 2018

Message from Mr Kelly

Can you believe it is now 2018?! Allow me to extend my best wishes for a prosperous, successful and healthy new year to everyone. The children have settled back into school routines quickly and eagerly and there have already been lots of super learning activities taking place in each of our classes. New learning themes are being explored with great enthusiasm and I'm sure you'll hear further details about these from your children in the coming weeks.

It was an incredibly busy and productive end to the last term, and I hope that you all enjoyed our Christmas Concerts. I thought the children were magnificent and it was a real privilege to watch all of the various performances.

School really couldn't do everything it does without the wonderful support of the parent community – and I really must extend a genuine and sincere thank you to the fabulous parents who formed a committee to organize and run our wonderful Christmas fair towards the end of last term. It's a case of watch this space for future plans that this committee has in store for the school, but I'm already hearing that they're in the early throws of arranging a disco for the pupils at the start of March. More details on that to follow as and when they become available. Additionally, I'm hoping that we can draw upon the skills and generosity of parents to assist the committee with plans to redecorate the dining hall to improve the room for the pupils. There is more on this project later in the newsletter, so please do read on!

Don't forget that this newsletter can be accessed on our website, where there is a whole wealth of information and links. The various sections are constantly being updated to include any changes. Policies as they are revised, and key events / information will continue to be uploaded. Please do keep an eye out for our social media presence too – "like" us on Facebook and "follow" us on Twitter! We're just a "google" away.

We are looking forward to what promises to be a positive, happy and busy term at Laxey and thank you all for your continued support.

With best wishes,

Important dates

- 8th January – Hockey club recommences
- 9th January – Swimming lessons re-commence for children in Key Stage 2
- 11th January – MSR Sports Club commences for children in Years 3 and 4 (details below)
- 22nd January – Netball Club commences for children in Years 4, 5 and 6 (details below)
- 22nd January – Year 6 visiting Ramsey Grammar School for "Speed Questions" event (details below)
- 25th January – Y6 Parents Information Evening at Laxey School re St. Ninian's @ 4pm (details below)
- 26th January – MSPCA Dress-Up Day (details below)
- 31st January – Y6 visiting St. Ninian's High School for a demonstration science lesson (details below)
- 1st February – Open Evening at Ramsey grammar School for Y6 pupils and parents (details below)
- w/c 12th February – Half-term
- 22nd February – Information event and workshop for parents re "supporting handwriting" (details below)

School Clubs – Information

Hockey Club continues as normal this half-term and runs after school until 4.30pm on Mondays.

Manx Sport and Recreation (MSR) will hold a Sports Club (a variety of different sports, games and activities will be offered over the weeks) after school on Thursdays. The club will commence on Thursday 11th January 3.30 – 4.30. Last term the club was offered to children in Year Five and Six, so this term we are offering the club to children in Year Three and Year Four only.

Miss Ward is pleased to announce that she is starting a netball club which will commence on Monday 22nd January. Any children from Years 4, 5 and 6 are welcome. The club will run on Mondays from after school until 4.25pm. If you would like your child to attend netball club please complete the slip attached to this newsletter and return to the school office before Monday 22nd January. After returning your slip please assume your child has a place guaranteed at the club unless you hear from us to the contrary.

Spanish Club re-commences on Tuesday 16th January. The club takes place at lunchtimes for Years Three and Four. The club is privately run and there is a charge for attending – spaces have already been allocated but if anyone is interested in finding out more, please contact the school and we can put you in touch with the organisers.

We will advise parents and children of any other clubs that are offered as the school year progresses.

Year Six Transition to Secondary School

There are a number of upcoming special events for children in Year 6 to help them prepare for moving on to secondary school in September. As children have not yet made their choice of secondary school "official" all the transition events listed on this newsletter apply to all children in Y6, and include events with both St. Ninian's High School and Ramsey Grammar School.

On Monday 22nd January the Y6 children will be taken to Ramsey Grammar School for a "Speed Questioning" event. The purpose of the event is to build relationships and enable Year 6's to interact with Year 7's on a 1:1 basis, they can ask questions about transition and secondary school life, in an informal and fun setting. The structure of the event will be in a 'speed dating' style, two students per table, Year 6 students will have a few minutes to speak to a Year 7 and then move on to the next Year 7 when a bell rings. This process will be repeated until they have spoken to all Y7 students. We will work with our pupils so that they go prepared with questions. This event will take place during the school day, and more details will follow from Miss Ward in due course.

On Thursday 25th January there is a parent's information event with regards to St. Ninian's High School. This event takes place at Laxey School from 4pm and will be led by Jo White, the Deputy Headteacher for St. Ninian's High School, and her team. The event is informal and allows you to gain some information about St. Ninian's – busses, lunches, curriculum etc - and provides you with a chance to ask them any questions that you have at the time. It lasts approximately an hour – depending on how many questions they get! There is no need to let us know whether or not you are attending, but I would certainly encourage as many of you as possible to take advantage of this meeting and to make every effort to come along. We'll be meeting in the Year 6 classroom, and obviously it is absolutely fine to bring your child with you!

On Tuesday 30th January the Y6 children will be taken to St. Ninian's High School for a demonstration science lesson. This will introduce children to working in science labs and will give them a flavour of how lessons work in secondary school. This event will take place during the school day, and more details will follow from Miss Ward in due course.

On Thursday 1st February there is an open evening at Ramsey Grammar School for prospective pupils and parents. I would urge as many of you to attend as possible to help you when you make your final choice as to which secondary school to attend. Ramsey Grammar School will be writing to all prospective parents in the coming days with more details.

In addition to all of the above, Laxey school will be working closely with staff from both St. Ninian's and Ramsey Grammar School to make sure that all pupils are carefully catered for during the transition process, and we will be inviting staff from both schools to visit children in Laxey to introduce themselves and begin the familiarization process.

Live at Home "Coins at Christmas Appeal"

I'd like to extend a big "thank you" to everybody who took part in the Coins at Christmas Appeal. With your generosity and help, Laxey School managed to raise in the region of £300 for this very worthwhile cause!

Dining Room

Our school dining hall is in desperate need of an upgrade. It is not a pleasant environment for the children to eat their lunches in. I am going to invest some money in tablecloths, china plates, new cutlery etc and I have had some early conversations with the dinner ladies about serving the food in a more "canteen" style.

But, what the school would really like to do is clear out all the clutter, take down the old curtains and give the room a lick of paint. The green colour is so dated and grubby looking. We are hoping to recruit a small army of volunteers to give up a few hours over a weekend in January or February to come in to school and help paint the hall? School will provide the paint and equipment – we just need manpower to get the painting done.

We'd like to move as quickly as possible on this, and our aim is to have the painting done so that it is ready for the children for the beginning of next half-term (w/c 19th February.)

If you are interested in helping out, please could you get in touch with the parent organizing committee – either in person or through Debbie Boyle via her email laxeyschoolfundraising@gmail.com

Once the committee has a good list of volunteers they can liaise with everyone to find a suitable date and we can press ahead. It really will make a big difference to the children and I thank you in advance for getting involved!

Reception children for September 2018

If you know of any families who have a child due to start at Laxey School next September, please would you ask them to contact the school as soon as possible to register a place with us.

Handwriting

The school staff will be reviewing our approach to teaching handwriting in the coming weeks and months, and our expectations for children's handwriting and presentation of work in their books. I have arranged for high-quality training for all of my staff from a UK organization called "Morrells" who are coming over in February to work with the school and kick-start our review.

I'm also delighted to announce that Morrells will be running a training session / workshop for parents. This will take place on Thursday 22nd February at 9.15am in the dining hall. The session is completely free and will cover everything from the correct approach to teaching handwriting to pencil grips to letter formation to joins to tips as to how you can help and support at home. The session will last approximately one hour – if you'd like to come along, please could you give Mrs Quane a ring /email just so that we have some indication of how many chairs to put out and how many refreshments to provide for.

In the meantime, if you'd like to check out Morrells and see what they have to offer, simply visit <https://morrellshandwriting.co.uk>

MSPCA Dress Down Day – FRIDAY 26th JANURAY 2018

To celebrate 120 years of animal care in the Isle of Man, Laxey School is participating in the island-wide MSPCA Dress Down Day. Children are asked to bring into school an optional donation of £2 and to come dressed in their own clothes, or, better still, dressed as an animal! You can either really go for it with fancy dress costumes, or accessorize you own clothes with a tail, a face-painted nose, an alice-band with ears attached etc.

A representative from MSPCA will be visiting Laxey School during the day to see the children, and we will be delivering some special assemblies about animal welfare, too.

Dropping children off / picking children up by car

I have been asked by residents who neighbour our school to remind parents politely to drive with care when using Menorca Hill and Quarry Road. Some drivers have been observed driving beyond the speed limit and some are observed parking in illegal and / or dangerous positions.

Following on from this, could I just give a timely reminder for everyone about the staff car park. I appreciate that parking can be difficult at the start and end of each school day. This is a common issue across many schools. Unfortunately, I will have to ask that parents /carers /relatives do not make use of the staff car park. There are very real safety reasons for this: reducing traffic congestion in this area is part of how the school manages the risk of on site traffic.

We will be placing barriers across the entrance to the car park to reduce access and would encourage you to make alternative parking arrangements.

I really appreciate your co-operation in these matters.

**** ENDS ****
