



Echt School



Newsletter
February 2013

**Echt
Westhill
Aberdeenshire
AB32 6UL**

Ph: 01330 860510

Email: echt.sch@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

School Website : <http://echt.aberdeenshire.sch.uk>

School information line for snow closures:0870 054 4999 PIN 021650

or on website: www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/closures

Staffing

Janice Geddes is leaving us this week to take up a new post as Support for Learning teacher in the Aboyne Cluster. We wish Janice all the best in her new post. Janice and Diana's post has been advertised as a full-time permanent position. We should have a new teacher in place by the Easter holidays.

Cecilia Taylor, our school cleaner and caretaker, has also finished working at the school after 13 years in the job. We wish Cecilia all the best for the future.

It is with great delight that we can tell you that Lesley Thornton, Alford Cluster Music specialist, had a baby boy at the end of January. Hopefully Lesley will be in to visit us before too long!

Glow

Could all parents who cannot access Echt School Glow site, please contact the school office. Please could you let the office know if your child/ren are unable to access Glow at home. If the school is closed due to adverse

weather, work will be posted on Glow for the children to access from home.

Parent Helpers

We are always looking out for parents to come into school to support us in all the activities we offer the children. Please contact your child/ren's teacher directly if you are able to offer some of your time. This applies to both Nursery and School.

Holidays Outwith Term Time

If you intend taking your child/ren out of school during term time, please let Mrs MacDonald know in advance, in writing. Thankyou.

Television at the Front Door

Does anyone have an old laptop that they no longer use?

We are looking for an old laptop that we can attach to the TV at the front door so that we can upload powerpoints, showcasing the learning taking place in the Nursery and School.

Please contact the school office if you can help!



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Adverse Weather

Please see the attached sheet at the end of the newsletter for all information on what to do during adverse weather. Please make sure you are contactable during the school day in case we have to close the school in an emergency.

School Hens

If anyone is able to look after the 'girls' during the Easter holidays, please contact the School Office. We still have eggs for sale @ £1 per box of four eggs. Eggs are for sale each Tuesday and Thursday.

Nursery News

Please ensure your child/ren come to Nursery suitably dressed to go outdoors each day. The outdoor environment is a stimulating and motivating place to learn and we are out in all weathers!

We have been taking the children to the gym hall recently which has caused great excitement. We had been unable to use the gym hall up till the Christmas Holidays as all the furniture taken out of classrooms, because of the refurbishment, was piled up there! As with the school children, P.E. had been taking place outside, with the children learning ball skills such as rolling, throwing and catching. We were also able to run, jump and hop outside!

Our Talking and Thinking Floorbooks are available in Nursery for you to look in each day with your child/ren. Please don't hesitate to spend some time at the start or the end of a Nursery session, looking in the books

with your child and adding comments/drawings as and when you wish! All our planning with the children is encompassed within the floorbook. We are hoping to arrange a training day with Claire Warden - <http://www.claire-warden.com/> next session for all the teaching staff from our feeder schools to attend. The staff at Echt enjoyed an inspirational day with Claire at the end of January, receiving training on the floorbooks.

We are looking forward to our visit from Mr Bill Sutherland and his husky dogs, sled and rig, tomorrow! Log in to Glow and find out how the visit went, on the Nursery Blog.

I am aware that the way Curriculum for Excellence has impacted on children's learning in Nursery and School is perhaps foreign to many parents as it is very different to the way in which you were perhaps taught when you were in school.

Ed Harris, Aberdeenshire Early Years Manager, and **Moira Lawson**, Curriculum for Excellence Development Officer, have agreed to come to school after the Easter holidays to speak to parents, along with myself, about the new curriculum – what it looks like and how it impacts on learning at **Early Level**. The Head Teachers and Early Years staff from Cluny, Dunecht and Midmar will also be in attendance. All Nursery parents are invited to attend along with primary 1 parents and next year's cohort of Nursery parents. Hopefully this will give everyone a clearer insight into what learning at Early Level should look like. Date and time of the meeting will be issued as soon as I hear from Mr Harris and Mrs Lawson.



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PTCA NEWS

Rag Bag Bin

The Rag Bag Bin in the playground has already been emptied twice since it arrived and is half full again! We receive 50 pence for every kilo of weight that goes into the bin. So far the rag bag bin has raised £162 for school funds.

Dates For Your Diary

Eco Week: Feb 25th – Mar 1st

Forest School: P3-7 Feb 22nd

Parent Council: Feb 26th 7pm

Nursery Open Sessions: Feb 27th and 28th, both sessions

PTCA: Mar 5th 7.30pm

Forest School: P3-7 Mar 8th

Singing Workshop at Drum Castle: P4-7 Mar 15th

Reports Issued: P3-7 class Mar

Parent Interviews: P3-7 class Mar

Easter Service: Mar 28th Echt Church 2pm

Holiday dates for 2013-2014 are available on the Aberdeenshire Council website

Illness

Colds and tummy bugs are prevalent at this time of year and spread very easily in an establishment such as a school. If your child is at all unwell, please do not send him/her to nursery or school. If a child is vomiting, Aberdeenshire Policy states that your child must be kept off nursery/school for **48 hours after** the last time he/she vomits or has diarrhoea.

Communication

If you wish to talk to your child/ren's teacher about their progress, you are welcome to do so at any time during

the school session, but please do so through the correct channels. We would appreciate if you could contact the school office in the first instance and they will arrange a time that is suitable for both parent and teacher.

Staff Development

The Nursery staff have been getting to grips with a new **e-profiling app** on the iPad. We are trying out this app for Aberdeenshire Council and sent out the first lot of profile reports to parent this weekend. The e-profile replaces the paper-based profiles of the past. Not only can we email reports to parents on a fortnightly basis showing photographs of what the children have been doing in Nursery along with text stating what they were doing and the next steps in learning, but following on from discussions with Head Teachers at the feeder schools, we will be emailing these profile reports on a regular basis to the children's next destination.

Trim Trail

We received a donation of £250 last week from Subsea 7, to go towards our Trim Trail for the park. We are creeping towards our total slowly but surely!

First Thing Friday!

Please do come in if you have half an hour to spare on Friday mornings!

In order to encourage active partnerships with parents in **Nursery** and **School**, we would like to invite you into school on Friday mornings for the first half hour when the children come into school. Your child/ren will be able to show you around their classroom and talk to you about their floorbook (we would like to encourage parents/carers to write/draw in the floorbooks also!)



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March 28th – Easter Service
(Echt Church)
All welcome

Twitter

We now have a school Twitter account. The children and Miss Lytton set it up during School Bird Watch week and tweeted about the birds they saw in the school garden. Cameron, Jamie and Megan went to the Apple Store last Friday with Miss Lytton and Mrs Shearer and they tweeted about their visit while they were in the store! They were able to speak to one of the store assistants about Apple products and he was amazed at how knowledgeable they were. We now have 2 Apple TVs that will allow us to connect our iPads to the Smartboard. Our iPads are also now online which is great! We have waited 18 months for this to happen.

Scrapstore

We are still on the look out for old car/bike tyres, any kind of tubing, guttering, carpet tubes, cable reels, plastic crates etc for our Scrapstore. If you have something we could use, please contact the school. We can even arrange to pick the scrap up.

Assemblies

Parents are invited to join us on the last Friday morning of each month for assembly. These assemblies are followed by a Parent Café.

Assemblies this term:

- Jan 25th – Scots Verse Celebration (Parents)
- Feb 1st – Reverend Murray
- Feb 22nd - All about Chickens (Parent Café)
- March 1st – Eco Week
- March 8th – School Groups
- March 15th – Masterclass
- March 22nd – Engineering Week

After-School Club

Please remember that you can put your child/ren's names down for the After-School club at any time. The club runs 5 days a week at Dunecht School and the children travel across there by taxi. Contact the school for more information.

Behaviour

We have had a few incidents recently where children are being excessively rough at playtime and lunchtime, even to the extent that a child's hood was ripped off his new jacket. It is often difficult for staff to get to the bottom of what exactly happened outside as the children involved will all give a different response. Alford cluster schools are taking on board a restorative approach to behavioural problems and we will be compiling a parent leaflet on restorative practice to give out to parents. What is Restorative Practice?

It is a process that puts repairing harm done to relationships and people over and above assigning blame and dispensing punishment. It shifts the emphasis from managing behaviour to focussing on building, nurturing and repairing relationships.

Staff have received some training in this approach and there will be a meeting for all interested parents shortly at Alford Academy. Date to follow.



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Mrs Freer and Mrs Shearer are currently out in the playground at break and lunchtime to support the children with their playtime games etc. This means that the children will lose some support time in the classroom but we feel that it is necessary to have our PSA's outside at the moment. We will review the situation at the Easter holidays.

Links with the Community and Beyond

Totally Tatties!

Our tatties are now chitting! A local farmer will be visiting us this term to talk to the children about growing tatties.

Blogs

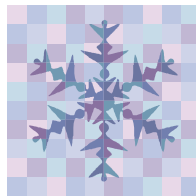
We are continuing to keep parents up to date with what is happening in Nursery and School classes through Glow and our Glow blogs. Please try to login to Glow as often as you can to see what your child/ren are up to.

Eco Week

We have altered the date of Eco Week because of the change in our staffing situation. This will now take place week beginning Feb 25th.

We have put together a timetable of events and experiences for the children from Nursery to P7 in the hope that together, we will raise our awareness for the need to respect our environment and live more in a more sustainable way.

PLEASE SEE BELOW FOR INFORMATION



ADVERSE WEATHER

Adverse Weather Website Parental/Carer Information

The Adverse weather website has been revised in light of recent experience. The key changes have been to reassign the categories to provide parents, carers, pupils and staff with appropriate information relating to their school.

Parents/Carers will still have the option to use the School Information telephone Line.

When accessing the website <http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/closures/> a familiar screen will be seen

Quick search facility

Summary of schools affected by weather

Closure status colour coded

School	Children's Services Status	Closure Date	Status	Detail	Amendment Date
Inverurie Academy	Inverurie	08/12/2012	School Closed to Public Only	Due to fire road conditions caused by adverse weather. Staff should report to school when it is safe for them to do so. Staff not going to attending school should contact the Headteacher by 8:00 am. Please do not log into Gator and undertake the activities.	08/12/2012 08:30:28

There have been a number of changes to enable you to access information quickly.

Summary of School Status across Aberdeenshire:

The Closure status has been broken down into three main categories which are colour coded

- School open – including partial openings Green
- School closed – to everyone or to pupils only Red



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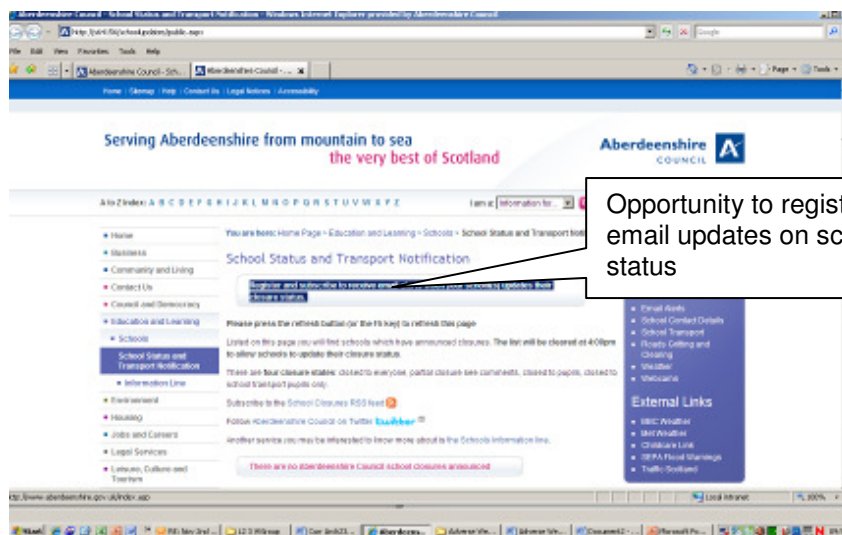
- Disruption to transport

Blue

You also have the facility to search for your school(s) by clicking on the appropriate letter in the alphabet bar.

Below the list of schools affected by adverse weather there is a list of the unaffected schools.

[Register and subscribe](#) to receive email alerts when your school(s) updates their closure status.



Parents are advised to use the facility to receive information and updates about school closures etc by registering to receive emails. Emails will be sent automatically to your email address. If you wish emails to be forwarded to a number of email addresses you will require to register each one individually.

By clicking on the Register and subscribe you will be able to have an email sent to you automatically updating you of any changes to the schools' status. You will be able to register for updates from a number of schools by following the prompts on the screen.



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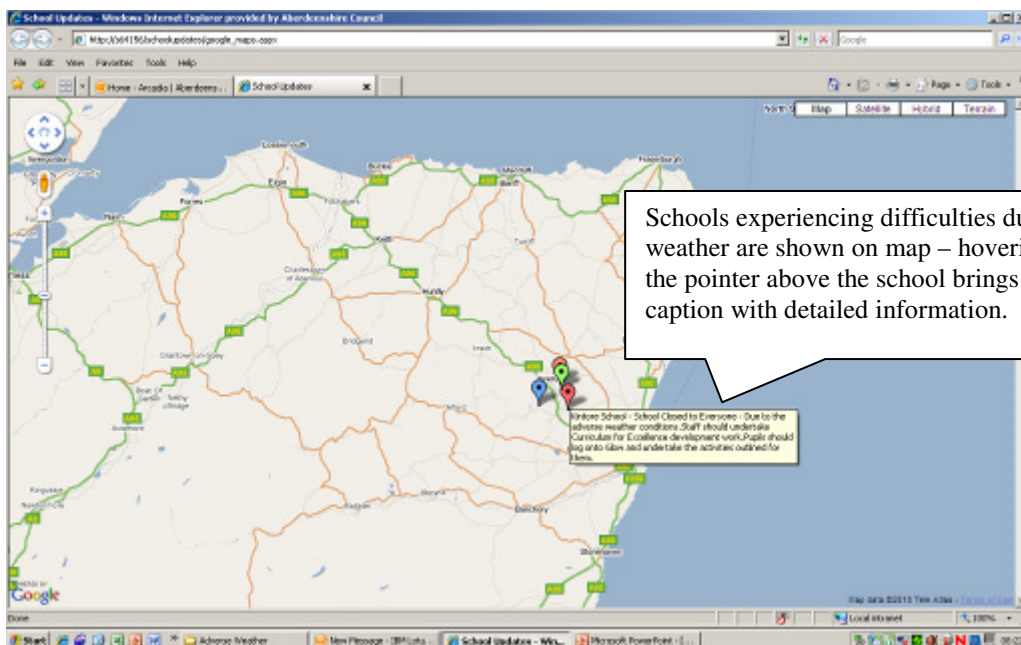


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Aberdeenshire Summary Map

Another option which has been made available is accessing Google maps

http://s64156/schoolupdates/google_maps.aspx



Schools experiencing difficulties due to weather are shown on map – hovering the pointer above the school brings up a caption with detailed information.

School Name: Echt School

1. Phone Line Number: **0870 054 4999** **PIN Number: 021650**
2. Access the **Aberdeenshire Council website:**
<http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/closures/>
3. Listen to bulletins on **Northsound Radio** on FM 96.9



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4. Aberdeenshire **Summary Map**
http://s64156/schoolupdates/google_maps.aspx