



Mid-Term Newsletter

25th February 2025

As Spring approaches, we are experiencing a period of change in our school community and are grateful to our staff for supporting our pupils, families and colleagues as we move through this. One of the strengths of our Orchard Brae community is in coming together at times of challenge. Thank you all for your support.

INSET Days: Makaton and other training

We hope that you had a good long weekend when we had our INSET days. Staff were busy, our EYPs and PSAs working hard on how best to support pupils through the effective use of our learning and care plans, while many of our teachers completed their Makaton Level 1 & 2 course. Many thanks to Amanda Murray, our in-house Makaton trainer for providing this.

Amanda's training was kindly funded by AABi charitable initiative. Although our teachers have been using Makaton as part of our Total Communication approach, it's good to have the formal recognition for this and we hope to build on this, upskilling all staff in school. Other who have done this training went to visit a specialist provision in Dundee.

Makaton for Families

Amanda has been offering some Makaton sessions for families and these are set to continue so please look out for them and sign up if you can. We are very happy to be able to offer the sessions for free.

Special Yoga Training

Many of our pupils enjoy yoga sessions with Hannah and trying to build on this



working through their training online, good foundation, we currently have six staff hoping to complete ahead of summer. This will allow us to increase our wellbeing offer in school. Again, this has been funded by AABi charitable initiative and we are very grateful!

We have also received a grant from the Aberdeen Endowments Trust and this is being used to fund Hannah's ongoing support from January—July.

A New 'Welcome Mat'

Ahead of going on secondment, Mrs T (aka Elaine) arranged some school improvements. I'm sure you'll agree, our new logo at the front door looks great! Please come in and have a look anytime.

Hellos & Goodbyes

We have had a few changes this term with a couple of our friends moving away from Aberdeen. We have also had a few teacher changes with Asia joining us in Room 8 and Heather in Room 16, and some changes in Senior Phase as Beth H moves on. We are grateful to our support staff who assist in

keeping things running smoothly during periods of change.

Minibus

We've been out and about locally as usual and Room 17 have been using their bus passes to go further afield. Our blue bus has been in the garage and we are very appreciative of the support of the Friends of Orchard Brae in hiring a bus to support in the interim.

Dates for your diary

School photographer—11th-13th March for class photos / 18th-20th March for individual photos

Last day of term—Friday 28th March

Term starts—Monday 14th April

Photographer

We'll keep you updated on the progress of the photographer. Zita (The Images) is working with us for the first time so dates may be fluid.

Kindest wishes,

Clare Russell

(Acting Executive Head Teacher)

