**Head Teacher Report**

The past year has been unprecedented in terms of change to all aspects of our lives due to the global pandemic of Covid 19 and in particular has forced great changes to Education and life at school. There have been huge challenges, most notably an extended period of school closure from March 23rd until August 11th. For many of our families there have been health, social and economic pressures as well as the challenges of home schooling during this time.

However I would like to focus on the positives which emerged from this situation. I am extremely proud of our school staff who adapted to a completely new way of working, literally over the course of a weekend. Teachers planned interactive and engaging lessons for their classes and provided feedback daily to motivate and sustain learners using Google Classroom and the G suite range of tools. We communicated initially as a staff and then with classes using online videos/video calls. We continued with virtual assemblies and whole school events as much as possible to promote and strengthen our school community at a time when it was most needed. Our children responded well to the change and shared their learning with us enthusiastically and our parents took on the role of teachers; juggling childcare and education with working from home or fulfilling keyworker duties in many cases. We were really proud of how our school community came together and engaged in activities such as ‘Illustrations of Hope’ to support the wider local community.

Prior to this we enjoyed lots of successes in school session 2019/20.

The three priorities in our School Improvement Plan last session were:

· Raising attainment in writing

· Building positive relationships

· Digital Learning

We engaged in staff training in Wraparound Spelling, Talk for Writing and Story Kitchen as well as Pivotal Positive Relationships to support these developments.

In literacy we celebrated Roald Dahl Day and World Book Day. We celebrated Book Week Scotland and distributed Bookbug gift bags to infant pupils. We also had author visits from Barbara Henderson and Nancy Chambers and started our own Authors lunchtime club.

We welcomed visits from Academy 9, Scottish Ballet and Roots and Shoots.

We celebrated Climate Change Day, Outdoor Classroom Day and received our Eco Flag.

Our four Houses continued with their Enterprises; Shoebox Appeal, Harvest Foodbank Collection, Children in Need and Red Nose Day. We also had a whole school Enterprise topic where classes planned and implemented different enterprise projects from a cafe at our open event to Christmas Crafts at our Fayre.

In nursery we started our outdoor learning journey with weekly trips to Milton woods for all children as well as starting an inter-generational project where our children visited the Glen Centre weekly to interact with the older members of our community. This was hugely beneficial for both groups. We also developed our STEM sacks to encourage children to participate in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths activities at home. At the other end of the school in P7 we continued both of these endeavours; our STEM journey learning how to create and broadcast a radio show in conjunction with Speysound Radio and strengthening our inter-generational links interviewing clients from the Glen Centre.

We had sporting successes from various pupils including silver medals for 4 children at SSSA Skiing Scottish Schools Finals in Glasgow and one of our pupils participating in the Ice Skating Brittania Cup as well as successes for our gymnasts, cheerleaders, dancers, running club and football and shinty teams.

We celebrated Christmas with a nursery performance of Christmas Eve and an infant performance of the Snow Queen supported by Drama specialist Lorraine Hemming. Later in the year P6/7 pupils entertained us by showing off their skills in Aviemore’s Got Talent. In March we were fortunate before school closed to be able to take part in the Music Festival with three classes and our choir competing and again bringing the Molyneux trophy back to school.

Returning to school in August was something we all looked forward to, although approached with apprehension. Extensive risk assessments took place as well as planning for a full time and part time return to school. Our first term back has seen many changes to how we usually operate. Children are largely confined to their class bubbles for work and play and we have not been able to welcome in visitors, neither parents/carers for assemblies/open events or specialists to enhance our learning and teaching. We have continued with online assemblies as we are not able to gather in large groups but without the singing as this is also not allowed in the present climate. However we have enjoyed being back together

as a school community. Our focus for term 1 has been rebuilding relationships and establishing new ones in our new classes as well as Health and Wellbeing for all. Our nursery has moved to a full outdoor provision which has been hugely successful and we have been so pleased to see how quickly children have made progress and how much they have learned in the natural environment. Feedback from staff and parents/carers has been fantastic and we are hopeful that we will be able to continue this approach, albeit to a lesser degree, when we move to an 1140 hours provision next term.

This session we have two simple priorities:

· Recovery from Covid closure (an improvement agenda item shared across Highland Council in all schools.)

· Raising attainment in literacy

Over the last year we have seen some staff changes. Mrs McMaster began her first year as our Depute Headteacher and has driven forward initiatives such as STEM, DYW, Rights Respecting School, ‘Swim the Water’ fundraiser and has now taken on the leadership of the nursery. Our new Principal Teachers Ms Eilidh Ross and Mrs Jess Creber also took on their new roles with enthusiasm leading Literacy development in school and nursery. Eilidh also supported learning and transition in our nursery and Jess took the lead on digital learning. Our long serving Clerical Assistant Jean Gordon retired in August and we have welcomed Clare Johnston to the post. With her previous training as Parent Council treasurer we know she will be well suited to the role! She is being supported by our nursery Clerical Kenny Rogan, who himself took up post in January. We have also welcomed a new teacher this session Ms Mhairi Martin replacing Mrs Jess Creber for her maternity leave. We have said goodbye to teachers Brian Lawrence, Kirsty Dudgeon, EYPS Sas Roberts, Sharon Curran and Maggie Carswell as well as PT ASN Sherrilee Kinsella and Childcare Manager Caroline Green. We wish them all well in their new posts.

I’d like to conclude by thanking the Parent Council for all the support given to school and nursery over the last year. Thank you for the fundraising that took place in the first part of the year before we were restricted in our event planning by Covid and thank you for all of your support in process of planning to reopen school. We are very lucky to have such a committed group of parents/carers on our Committee leading an increasingly larger group of parents/carers willing to devote their time to supporting our school and nursery

**Headteacher Update**

* **Staffing**

We have welcomed Clare Johnston as our new Clerical Assistant.

Our PT ASN post (previously Sherrilee Kinsella) is to be replaced by an 0.8 ASN teacher to be advertised soon.

Our PSA Nicola Beattie is leaving to take up new post, this vacancy will hopefully to be advertised soon.

OOSC posts still to be advertised so that we can move to 1140 in nursery.

* **School Improvement Plan/PEF**

Our priorities this session are:

Recovery from Covid – Lit/Num/HWB

Raising attainment in Literacy – continuation of Talk for Writing and Wraparound Spelling and introducing reading comprehension.

PEF or Pupil Equity Funding is given to us by the government to close the poverty related attainment gap.

Our PEF for 2020/21 is £36,000 plus carry forward from last year of £2000

We have spent this on:

0.5 (2.5 days) Teacher – Joseph Wilkins – Maths to do 1:1 daily interventions using Plus 1 and Power of 2 books.

11 PSA hours – 5.5 numeracy and 5.5 literacy (Talkboost)

Talk for Writing teacher guides 2 for each class – fiction and non-fiction.

Early Numeracy Play Resources and Nursery Numeracy Home Learning Sacks

Tree of Knowledge Treehouse Resource for children N-P7 and staff focusing on HWB.

* **Covid Guidance**

Ventilation guidance altered for Winter term – HC has advised staff that doors can be closed and windows open on a 20 minute rotation.

P.E – can now be indoors with appropriate safeguards in place. Each class will have one indoor session from next week. However there are several safety considerations we need to take into account including ventilation of our hall, the dual use for lunches and cleaning of changing rooms and equipment.

Singing is still not allowed.

Face coverings for parents/carers when dropping off and collecting.

No non-essential visitors

* **Events this term**

Nov

5th Outdoor Classroom Day

5th Last day for Shoeboxes to be handed in

13th Children in Need

28th Alternative Parent/Carer Consultations

Dec

9th School Christmas lunch

11th Christmas Performance Shared Digitally

11th Christmas Jumper Day

We have been given the opportunity to support elderly members of the community through designing Christmas cards/poems and gift tags.