



9 November 2018

Dear Families

This morning I was feeling a bit miserable as I have a bit of a cold and my voice is coming and going. I said good morning to the children as I normally do and one little boy came up and said it is indeed a good morning as you are so happy even though your voice is funny and I am so happy because I love Sciennes. Sometimes these little moments make a huge difference.

We have had lots of trips on this week to further enrich the children's learning experiences. Primary 5 all visited the Georgian House on Charlotte Square. The children dressed up in Georgian clothing and toured the house. It was a fabulous school trip. Primary 7b visited Edinburgh Castle as part of their studies of World War 1 and the other P7 classes will be going next week. They took part in a poetry workshop there called Ghosts of War and they are now starting to write some really interesting and sombre poems. They will be on the website once finished. Primary 7 have also all taken part in Diwali mask making workshops. On Monday, the early year's assembly had a focus on Diwali, the first festival of light and the children heard the story of Rama and Sita.

On Tuesday Ms Gladstone, Ms Dougal and Ms Gilhooley visited Carrick Knowe Primary to discuss pupil equity funding. This type of professional dialogue is really useful and it is great that we can share as well as learn from other schools. I thoroughly enjoyed sharing in some learning in P4c and was impressed with the children's enthusiasm and their writing about A Secret Room! The teachers had a learning session after school and the focus was doing some more work on moderating standards of writing and taking forward priorities in the various improvement groups.

Wednesday was a big day for us as it was Primary 1 registration day. It was just great to see so many keen (and at times a tad nervous) parents filling out the enrolment forms. It is such a milestone to reach even if it is not your first child! It was also great to hear how much they are looking forward to their child starting at Sciennes.

On Thursday Mrs Reid and I attended Essential Resilience training at Drummond Community High School. There was a lot to take in and we will now get together with the leadership team in the school, draw up, and revise procedures should a significant incident happen in school.

Today was one of those very special days in school. I got to enjoy the amazing P3 dance show along with a hall full of parents and grandparents. It was an absolute joy! It centred around the theme of Dances Around the World. The children danced brilliantly, with great confidence to a variety of dances including Flamenco, African, Indian, Chinese, Greek, Scottish and the Haka. Many thanks to Aimee from Dance Division, the P3 teachers, Mrs Mehmood and Ms Anstruther for all their hard work too. However, a HUGE thanks to children in P3!

This week we also trialled the first of our learning sessions in P1 where we welcomed parents into the classes to see the children working on their numeracy skills. This was a popular, well attended event and we look forward to seeing P1b and P1c families next Thursday.

Primary 2 children designed some amazing gardens for their street study. This was a good move as the alternative was a polluting factory. I loved going in to P2 to see the gardens and hear the children tell me all about them.

Some other great pupil news. The Sciennes chess club teams did really well last weekend at the Lothian Team Championships, playing against other schools from the region. The P5 team (Clara, Angharad, Atreya and Hugo) came top of their age group and the P6/7 team (Jonathan, Jennifer, Tomos and Oshi) came second. The P6/7 B team (Aiden, Eva, Daniel and Lingyun also did very well and came 6th. Well done to team Chess at Sciennes.

Support for Learning Specialist, Rhona Kennedy, worked with groups of P6 and P7 pupils to raise awareness of Dyslexia as part of Dyslexia Awareness Week. The pupils then delivered presentations to P6 classes and to P7 as a year group. They also presented to a large turnout of families on Wednesday after school and all who attended agreed the children spoke superbly. This year, Ms Kennedy invited a former Sciennes pupil to give a presentation. Sixth year JGHS pupil Paul Tiplady spoke powerfully of his own experiences of Dyslexia to P7 pupils and at the parent information session. Paul was very complimentary and appreciative of Sciennes staff support, particularly Mrs Carol Brechin, and his main message was to be self confident in acknowledging challenges and accepting support. What an impressive role model for our young people and we congratulate and wish Paul continued success as he moves on to Oxford or Cambridge University next year.

Finally, please see below some details for an exciting event happening tomorrow in school.

Come crafting for the Winter Fair - 10th Nov

Activities suitable for all ages - come along to make pinecone ornaments, tree hangings, pom-pom Santa & elves, bookmarks and many more to sell at the Winter Fair. No pre-booking necessary, and you can stay for as long as you wish.

Children will be able to buy some of the crafts on the day too. The rest will be sold at the fair.

On from 9am – 2pm in the school hall.

Have a good weekend. I am off to recover from my man flu!

Andrew

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