



2 November 2018

Dear Families

Somehow, it is now November and we suddenly have much darker afternoons! However, this has not dampened our enthusiasm at Sciennes. I do enjoy sending you my weekly roundup and it has been great to receive many favourable comments by email and in person. However I realise they can be quite lengthy so I will try very hard (from next week!) to reduce them a bit. We just have so much to share!

On Monday, P6 had a great day out at Edinburgh Zoo attending the Cycle of Life workshop. The children learned about how different animals mate and then how they care for their young. They also had some free time to walk around and all particularly enjoyed seeing the monkeys! Primary 5b went on the Old Edinburgh walk with Mr Howie with P5c going on Wednesday. The early years assembly was all about Pumpkins! The children sang songs and listened to a story called Pumpkin Soup, which is about learning to cooperate and work as a team.

Tuesday saw us all out in the cold! We had our second fire drill of the year. This time only the staff knew it was going to happen and all went well. It was very cold though! In the afternoon, Ms Gallagher and I met Cat Perry from Dance Division. Our P3 to P7 children get specialist dance lessons at different points in the year and they are brilliant. We are keen to continue this important part of the curriculum so we will need to explore how we can fund this.

Wednesday was a very busy day. It was Halloween and we had some very scary, very ugly ghoulish people in school but enough about the staff! The children had a great time taking part in Halloween activities across the school. We also had the annual P1 Open Day tours for P1 catchment parents with children starting in August 2019. P6 acted as tour guides and every single evaluation form stated how wonderful they were. Great job P6! It was also an amazing day for P7. The South East Edinburgh Active Schools Neighbourhood invited all three P7 classes to come along to Liberton High School, to be part of their Autumn Games. Pupils had the opportunity to take part in one of six activities – football, volleyball,

rugby, tennis, athletics and dance – where they experienced an element of participation in the morning and a competition in the afternoon. We were delighted to win trophies for mixed Volleyball and Girls' Rugby! The children were incredibly excited and proud to show me the trophies on their return to school. The aim of the event was to inspire children to become more active and motivated by sport in both a participative and competitive environment. This was certainly achieved and many thanks to JGHS Active Schools Coordinator Eliot Ambrose for inviting us. Primary 3 visited Langhill Dairy Farm as part of their food and farming topic. They learned about how milk is produced and even got a chance to milk a cow by hand. Don't worry...she was called Daisy and was of the plastic variety! The children will now be drinking their cartons of milk with renewed interest.

I had a special treat on Thursday. P1 had been investigating pumpkins. They had large pumpkins, small pumpkins and different coloured pumpkins! They felt, measured, drew and chopped pumpkins...but best of all ...they made Pumpkin soup and gave me some. It was DELICIOUS! Masterchef Sciennes!

The upper school assembly on Friday had remembrance as the main theme to coincide with 100 years since the end of World War 1 and Remembrance Sunday. There was also a focus on the football match that may have taken place in the trenches in December 1914 and how even in times of great darkness, friendship is possible.

I really enjoyed working in P4 with the children, Miss Walker and Miss Ferguson this week. Both classes were working on writing a diary from the perspective of a Roman child. The lessons were super and the children were really keen to share their learning with me. I shall be working with Mrs Clark's class next week.

Many thanks to parent Dr Jayanthi Santhanam for introducing us to Lewis Hou, neuroscientist and Director and Founder of the award-winning Science Ceilidh education project exploring Science and traditional Scottish arts. Lewis is based at Summerhall and visited Sciennes on Wednesday to meet with Ms Gallagher and Mr McKenna, accompanied by Frances Rive, Youth Music Initiative Co-ordinator. They offered our three P6 and P7 classes a very exciting opportunity to take part in Science and dance workshops and the chance for some of our pupils to be filmed for a new education resource which will be provided free of charge to all schools. The project has the support of great friend to the school Pattie Santileces, Strategic Development Officer Health and Wellbeing and we are delighted to be invited to take part. Further details to follow!

Some of our pupils with dyslexia in P5 - P7 have been working together this week to get ready to deliver a PowerPoint presentation to their classes/year group as part of Dyslexia Awareness Week 5th - 9th November. The Primary 7 pupils will also be delivering a brief presentation to parents on Wednesday 7 November at 3.30pm in Room 22. As part of this event a 6th year pupil from James Gillespie's who is dyslexic, is going to talk about his experiences in school and strategies that have helped him. We are keen for a good audience and you are very welcome to attend.

Paula Gilhooly, one of our Support for Learner Teachers, is an adoptive parent. She has asked me to share information about Adoption Week Scotland with you:

Adoption Week Scotland runs from 17th - 23rd November this year. There are a number of free events for adopted families, foster families and kinship carers during this week. You do not need to be a member of Adoptionuk to take part. Highlights include a play session at Tumbles in Portobello on Saturday 17th November where Adoptionuk are taking over the soft play for 2 hours and the conference on Monday 19th November where the theme is adopted voices, the year of the young person. Follow the links below for more information and to book:

- <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/adoption-week-scotland-2018-15429477554>

eventbrite

[Adoption Week Scotland
2018](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk)

www.eventbrite.co.uk

-
- <https://www.adoptionuk.org/adoption-week-scotland>



[Adoption UK Charity |
Adoption Week - Scotland](http://www.adoptionuk.org)

www.adoptionuk.org

Adoption Week Scotland (Saturday 17 – Friday 23 November) alongside AFA Scotland once again this year, after being awarded a two-year contract by the Scottish Government to co-ordinate the 2018 and 2019 events.

On Facebook search for Adoption Week Scotland 2018

Paula is also a volunteer for Adoptionuk and would be happy to provide more information on the support groups and events which adoptionuk run throughout the year. There are many family events as well as training days for parents and other professionals working with care experienced children. If you would like any more information, please do not hesitate to contact Paula.

Finally, next week is enrolment week for new catchment P1 children starting in August. We will be enrolling all day on Wednesday 7 November from 9am-12 and 1.30 - 4pm and there is no need to make an appointment. If you can't make Wednesday then you are welcome to come in any day next week. Please remember to bring your most recent council tax letter, a utility bill or similar type of letter and either your child's birth certificate or passport.

Enjoy your weekend but don't forget your umbrella on Saturday as the forecast is not too good. I am off to Aberdeen to celebrate my granny in law's 90th Birthday!

Andrew

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