



### KEY DATES

1<sup>st</sup> Winter Fair 12pm-2.30pm

6<sup>th</sup> P1 Nativity Dress Rehearsal (siblings invited)

**7<sup>th</sup> P1A and P1B Nativity Performance to Families Doors open 9.40am for 10am -11am**

**7<sup>th</sup> P1C and P1D Nativity Performance to Families Doors open 10.40am for 11.00am-12pm**

7<sup>th</sup> P3-P7 "Peter Pan" at the Lyceum Theatre 9am-12pm

30 November 2018

Dear Families

I was out of school a lot over the past couple of weeks so the weekly roundup didn't quite materialise. For those of you old enough to remember the double bumper issues of comics when we were children, then this is the bumper Roundup!

I would like to start by saying a huge thank you to all the parents and carers who helped make the craft morning a success. A lot of work went in to developing the materials required for this and this is much appreciated. A parent wrote to me to say, "We are very lucky to have parents that dedicate that level of time and care for our children. We had a great morning. Please pass on our thanks!"

World Kindness day was recently celebrated so at the Early Years Assembly kindness was the focus. Many children knocked on my door with a kind word, a chocolate, haribo and even a kindness balloon! That same day we were visited by Therese Laing our Quality Improvement and Education Officer (QIEO.) She popped in for a brief visit and we set up meetings for the remainder of the school session for professional dialogue sessions covering various aspects of school life. We will be joined by Head teachers from other schools, too.

We had our second Parent Council meeting of the session. There were feedback sessions from the various sub groups and the upcoming fair was a hot topic! Everyone is very excited about it. There was also some really good discussion on funding priorities for the coming school year.

Our children have been very busy over the past couple of weeks with the following detailing just some of what the classes have been up to. Primary 1 and Primary 2

have been really busy rehearsing for the Nativity and the Winter Show. Primary 4 had a visit from The Humanist Society last week and this week they visited the Edinburgh Central Mosque where they learned about the 5 Pillars of Islam. Primary 4 are really enjoying their studies in religious and moral education. The P4's have also just completed an 8 week chess workshop run by the Edinburgh Chess Academy. This was funded by the Chess Club Parent Council who have also donated 20 chess sets for the children to use during their Play Right sessions. (They are being well used!) The Edinburgh Chess Academy is hoping to seek further funding so they can run more workshops for other year groups in the future. A special congratulation to the following children who passed an exam and received a Pawn Diploma – Connor Clark, Rayan Ahmed, Gus Falconer, Cason Spires-Jones, Jonathon Baillie and Slesh Duby. Andrew Green reported that every P4 child was playing full chess games last week and that he has seen a tremendous increase in confidence and engagement.

Twenty mathematics students from Edinburgh University have been working with our P6 and P7 classes over the last three weeks, providing engaging and motivating activities looking at parabolas and square numbers. The passion and enthusiasm for their subject have been infectious and we have been delighted to welcome them into school. The students loved working with our children.

On Wednesday 28th November, Laura and Elaine from Fast Forward, a voluntary youth organisation based in Leith, visited each of our three P7 classes to deliver anti-tobacco education as part of their work on a Smoke Free Homes and Zones project. They have invited our pupils to take part in a competition which will see winning entries turned into a professionally produced leaflet for families.

We were delighted that Sciennes was selected to develop a musical science resource with Lewis Hou, of 'Science Ceilidh', based at Summerhall. The resource uses music and dance to explain neuroscience, culminating in a performance piece. Lewis has many strings to his bow and is a talented musician as well as being a neuroscientist. He delivered exciting, inspiring and engaging Science workshops to each of our P6 and P7 classes last week, which also focused on having a Growth Mindset. Our pupils loved getting a chance to see MRI scans and handle a 3D printed model of his brain! Great that so many of our pupils recognised Lewis from attending his many Science Festival sessions. The project is fully funded by the Youth Music Initiative, and will be distributed to each primary and special school in Edinburgh. It has the support of great friend to the school, Pattie Santelices, Principal Officer for Mental Health and Wellbeing. Many thanks to parent and fellow scientist Dr Jay Santhanam for the introduction. Grateful thanks to Lewis Hou and to Frances Rive and Emma Barclay, YMI, Arts & Creative Learning Team, City of Edinburgh Council for this fantastic opportunity for our pupils.

Congratulations to the P7 Sciennes Team who came Second overall in the Sportshall Athletics competition on Monday 26th November, organised for the city by P.E. Specialist Mrs Beth Walker. Very well done to Jack Mackintosh who achieved a Gold medal and smashed the Boys' Chest Push Record by 75cm establishing a new Record with a push of 7.75m! Thank you very much to Ms Gaffney and Miss McAlpine for accompanying and to JoJo Rae and Ben Wilson for captaining the team so well, now through to the Finals on Monday 21st January at the Jack Kane Centre!

I have attended many meetings over the past two weeks including local authority wide Head Teacher events where we looked at curriculum development and saw some presentations from primary and secondary schools covering key aspects of teaching and learning. Mrs Reid and I met with officials from the health and safety team to go look at how we can ensure that our building can be as secure as it can be. It was a really positive meeting with action points to be taken forward for the school and the local authority.

Christmas is now upon us and the school staff are busy decorating our building to make it as magical as possible for our children and visitors. Our Winter Fair is tomorrow so do please come along and support us and join in with the fun. It starts at 12 noon and goes on until 2.30pm. We are all looking forward to welcoming you. Don't forget your purses and wallets! Our Parent Council and band of incredible helpers have worked so hard to put the fair together and we are so grateful for their hard work. Last Saturday, children from The Sciennes A Capella group sang at the Marchmont and Sciennes Community Council event to switch on the Christmas tree lights in Marchmont. It was a very well attended event full of festive singing, mulled wine and mince pies. It was great to see so many Sciennes families supporting this community event.

Finally, today is the last day for two very special members of staff. Helen Wilkins is retiring after sixteen years of dedicated service and moving to sunny Spain and Helen Anderson has secured a permanent position as a Pupil Support Officer at Castleview Primary School. We will miss both Helens very much and we are all looking forward to celebrating their new adventures with them tomorrow evening.

I look forward to seeing you all tomorrow.

Andrew

