



18 January 2019

Dear Families

We have had a busy first full week back since the holidays. There is lots of good learning taking place especially within the context of our Scots study.

On Monday we had our first House Assembly. We all met up in our houses with our House Leaders - Tantallon (Mr Hunter), Lauder (Ms Gallagher), Grange (Ms Anstruther) and Scienna (Ms Permain). We discussed goals, perseverance and New Year Resolutions and sang a few songs. The Sports and House Captains also introduced themselves to their House.

In the afternoon we had our weekly Senior Leadership Meeting and kept to one of our goals to finish by 6pm!

On Tuesday I spent the day at the Edinburgh Primary Head Teacher Association (EPHTA) meeting. We heard presentations from Andy Gray, Head of Schools as well as from other Senior Education Managers covering areas including Inclusion, Early Years and Digital Technology. There was also an opportunity for Head Teachers to discuss and comment on new council policies and procedures.

Primary 7 attended a screening of 'Inside Hana's Suitcase' at the Filmhouse on Tuesday to mark Holocaust Memorial Day, which is coming up on 27 January. The documentary film combined photos, interviews and reconstructions to share the story of how an old suitcase, delivered to a museum in Japan in the year 2000, led to the telling of the incredible true story a girl's life and her untimely death in Auschwitz. The children were sensitive, thoughtful and respectful throughout the screening and in class discussions afterwards. Despite the very difficult subject matter and the unfathomable truths of this part of history, the film managed to tell the story of Hana Brady with warmth and hope. The Primary 7 team all felt very privileged to have seen this brilliant film.

Wednesday kicked off with a Friends of Sciennes School (FSS) meeting. We discussed fundraising and spending. Fran Armour, the Chair of The Events and Fundraising Group, is happy to help organise a sponsored event and we are looking at Swimathon (P1 - P4) and Meadows Mayhem (P5-P7) again. More details out soon!

Robbie Crockatt and Julie Kelly from The School Estate Planning team visited our playground. We discussed maintenance and options to further improve our facility. We will now discuss this with the Parent Council representatives, as well as the children and staff.

P6 pupils Jennifer, Haris and Rory took part in another of the fantastic and innovative Children's Parliament sessions as part of their *What Kind of Edinburgh?* project. During the latest session they were working with pupils from eight other schools on the theme of 'Achievement and Attendance' in preparation for the next Big Workshop on Wednesday 23rd January, where top level council leaders will listen to their views and ideas for improving Edinburgh for young people.

Exciting news! Haris in P6B has been selected for another amazing opportunity with the Children's Parliament! Over the next couple of years he has been invited to take part in the 2020 and 2021 Cabinet Meetings with children and young people. Since 2017, there has been a meeting between the First Minister and her Cabinet and children and young people from the Children's Parliament and the Scottish Youth Parliament. As far as we know, Scotland is the only country where an annual meeting like this happens!

On Thursday, Ms Gallagher, Ms Anstruther, Ms Gilhooly, Ms Kennedy and I met. We spent an afternoon looking at the support we offer to children across the school from P4 - P7 and discussed the impact this is having. We have a superb Additional Support for Learning team at Sciennes and Ms Kennedy and Ms Gilhooly are supported very well with our super Pupil Support Assistants.

We had our staff meeting this morning. At that meeting we talked about asking the children from P3 - P7 to give us their views on what they would like Edinburgh to be like in 2050. This will be introduced to the children at assembly this morning and the task will be carried out next week. It will be really interesting to see what they come up with. The information will then be sent to the team in the council who are leading on this.

Our Gender Equality Pupil Group have been interviewing over the past two weeks to recruit two more P7 members. Ivy and Sean from P7B and P7C will join Nina P7B, Natalia P7A, Ben P7B and Tomos P7C to make up this extended group. They are keen to start tackling gender equality and wider equality issues. I was incredibly impressed by their knowledge in the area of equality and their determination to improve this for generations to come.

Our Parent Council run many fund raising events for us and the children help raise funds through their Swimathon and Meadows Mayhem events. I thought another way that we could raise funds as well as getting fit and having fun together is to organise some staff/parent teams to run the Edinburgh Marathon Festival relay. We did this last year at my previous school and we had a ball as well as raising lots of money for the school.

Ms Gallagher, P1B Class Teacher, is happy to help me organise this. The event is on Sunday 26 May. You do not have to be a good runner to take part. I managed it! I will send out a single email next week with more details. I will also start training!

I hope you all have a good weekend. I am off to Aberdeen to spend the weekend with my mother in law. She lives in Shetland so it is a good meeting point. I am hoping there is no snow!

Andrew

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