



22 February 2019

DIARY DATES

February Digital Safety P1-P7

Monday 25th Fairtrade Fortnight

Tuesday 26th P4C Thistle and Rose at Scottish National Archives
P3C National Portrait Gallery

Wednesday 27th P3B Portrait Gallery

Thursday 28th P3A Portrait Gallery

THURSDAY 7th MARCH WORLD BOOK DAY

Parent Consultations Tuesday 19th and Thursday 21st March 4pm-7pm

Dear Families

It is a bumper roundup this time to also cover the week before the February break.

4th - 8th February

On Monday our P6 children headed off to Benmore for their first school residential experience. They were accompanied by Ms Gallagher, Ms Anstruther, Ms McGrouther, Mr Hutchison, Mrs Walker and Mrs Ross (formerly Ms Dougal.) The children and the staff had a wonderful time. Our pupils were simply amazing. They set and achieved personal goals, they encouraged each other when things maybe got a bit challenging, their teamwork was excellent and they also had many laughs too. I have also heard their dance moves were pretty good at the disco, unlike some of the teachers! A huge thank you to the staff who gave up their own time to take the children away. We couldn't do this without their support and it was really nice to hear so many parents thanking them when they all arrived home. The children and the staff looked exhausted but very happy!

On Tuesday, I gave a presentation to The Grange Association on Sciennes School: Past, Present and Future. It was an absolute pleasure to do this and the event was very well attended. I was joined by our Gender Equality Pupil Group and they represented an aspect of the future direction of our school. Nina, Ivy, Ben, Sean and Tomos from P7 spoke eloquently about what gender equality meant to them and then spoke briefly about wider equality such as disability, LGBT and animals. I was so proud of them. They spoke with confidence and conviction and the feedback I received from The Grange Association about their contribution was incredibly positive and appreciative. Isobel Miller, who invited us to talk, brought in Grange Association mugs to school for each of the children to say thank you to them. The children and I would be keen to do our talk to parents in school so we shall look into this for the summer term.

On Wednesday and Thursday I, along with two other Head Teachers, Greg Dimeck from Gracemount and Rebecca Annand from Gilmerton interviewed a number of candidates as part of the Edinburgh City Wide Interviews for current probationers and temporary staff applying for a permanent teaching post in Edinburgh. There were a lot of suitable candidates and that is great news for Edinburgh schools!

On Thursday we had our Parent Council meeting. This was another well attended and very positive, productive and engaging meeting. I explained to the Parent Council the work we have been doing in school in relation to our Improvement Plan and I will make this a regular feature in my Head Teacher report.

Monday 18th February - Friday 22nd February

We arrived back to school after the February break and our playground looked a bit different as our Ash Tree had been cut down. We have been left with a part of the tree and we are exploring whether to have it made into a sculpture or whether to plant a new tree. Our parent playground group have written to councillors for some advice on planting a new tree.

The P1 -P3 assembly looked at digital safety and the importance of not giving away any personal information.

On Tuesday, we were joined by Gail Maclean, Head Teacher at Carrick Knowe, James McDevitt, Head Teacher at Holy Cross and Helen Reed, Depute Head Teacher at Gracemount. They paired up with Ms Gallagher, Ms Anstruther and I and we visited every classroom in the school for 30 minutes. Our focus was to observe numeracy/maths teaching and learning across our school. At the end of the day we had some super discussions. There was much to celebrate, including the excellent relationships between children and between staff and children. Our children showed they were very enthusiastic learners and were keen to share their learning. I gave feedback to teachers at our staff meeting today including some areas that we can be even better at. We will discuss this further at future training days.

Mrs Reid attended a Buildings Work meeting on Tuesday. We are very pleased with the progress being made. The children and the staff have just got on with teaching and learning as usual and we often forget the workmen are in our school. Ms McGruther, Mr Hutchison and the children at James Gillespie's are all doing really well. There have been some questions from a few P6 parents so we will do a general update for P6a and P6b parents separately.

Ms Anstruther has been developing a writing strategy for P1-P3 at Sciennes. She visited Council Headquarters on Thursday along with the Depute Head Teacher from Brunstane to share ideas. Ms Anstruther will help to develop this strategy for all schools in Edinburgh.

Today we had a fantastic P4 to P7 Assembly. Jacqueline Lawson and Ollie Snape from The Sick Kids introduced an amazing project that Sciennes will be part of. We are delighted that one of our families has generously donated £500 to sponsor our involvement in the national Oor Wullie Bucket Trail fundraising initiative. Children in P1-P7 will take part in a competition to design our very own Oor Wullie fibreglass sculpture and we will send more details next week. Laura, Mia and Vincent in P4 gave a wonderful presentation on sustainability at Assembly and we look forward to seeing how their campaign develops. This month is LGBT Scotland month so the Assembly ended with a rendition of Gloria Gaynor's "I Am, What I Am."

The next meeting for our new Parent Carer Support Group will be on Tuesday 26th March 5.30 to 6.45pm. Coffee from 5.15pm in the Support for Learning base. Please contact Paula Gilhooly, SFL Teacher, for more information or if you are interested in coming along.

I hope you all have a good weekend. The weather is meant to be mild so I may enjoy having a coffee in the garden with a jumper on! Many years ago I was Depute Head Teacher at Corstorphine Primary

and tonight I am going to meet up with the former Head Teacher and Depute Head of Corstorphine who I haven't seen in over 10 years! They are long retired so will no doubt be full of energy. I haven't told them yet that I need to be in bed by 10pm on a Friday!

Andrew

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