



31 May 2019

Dear Families

A double issue this week!

I would like to start by saying a huge thank you to Conrad and Euan who along with the coaches and many helpers organised the Sciennes Spring Tournament on Saturday 18 May. This is a football tournament for girls split into age groups P2/3, P4/5 and P6/7. Teams across the city from the state and independent sector are invited by Sciennes to attend. It was a fantastic event and the girls played very well. Their teamwork skills were very much in evidence as was great respect for opposing teams. The girls were amazing and had a great time even though the weather was very wet! A P6/7 team from Sciennes narrowly lost out in the final to Mary Erskines. I am looking forward to next year already!

On Tuesday 21st May, we were delighted to welcome a delegation from Unicef in recognition of our Gold Award and campaigning on Clean Air. P7 pupils Hannah Chow, Carys Gillespie, Daniel Earnshaw, Oscar Griffin, Essie MacLeod and Ben Wilson capably introduced each of our special visitors: Anna Kettley (Director of Programmes, Unicef UK), David Duke MBE (founder of Street Soccer Scotland), Lucinda Rivers (Head of Unicef Scotland), author Alexander McCall Smith, The Right Honourable Mr Douglas Alexander (Head of Unicef UK and former Secretary of State for Scotland and Secretary of State for International Development)

P4-7 pupils welcomed the delegation and Parent Council representatives Emma Kirk (Communications), Laura Bird (Playground and ECO) and Gordon Stove (Chair of Sciennes School Football team) with a selection of rights based songs in the Hall. We were hard pressed to select pupils to meet with the group because we have so many examples of young people taking the lead on issues that matter to them but we tried to involve as many pupils as possible in the short visit. The delegation heard from P1 Sam Buchanan about his concerns for polar bears, P3 and P7 Foodbank appeal organisers, P4 Climate Striker Stella Crawford, P5 and P6 Child Labour and Homeslessness campaigners, Juline O'Connell and P7 pupils who took part in a single use plastic themed Model UN Conference at City Chambers, P6 Children's Parliament reps, P7 Gender Equality ambassadors and P7 pupils who have taken the lead on the Unicef Outright Toxic Air and Clean Air Day campaigns. It was a privilege and a pleasure to welcome our guests and we were very proud of our pupils' confidence and conviction in respecting children's rights.

Member of Children's Parliament P6 pupil Rory McIntosh was invited to present to City of Edinburgh Council's Education Committee on the outcomes of the innovative 'What Kind of Edinburgh?' project. You can watch the meeting using the link below. Also at the meeting was former pupil Esther Silverton, now in S3 at James Gillespie's High School, who gave a convincing account of reasons to request authorised permission to attend at the Youth Climate Strike on Friday 24th May. Several of our pupils also attended the march.

https://edinburgh.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/368123

On Wednesday 22nd May, we were host to yet another exciting visit when we welcomed Mr John Swinney, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills. Mr Swinney was capably introduced by P7 pupil Hannah Chow and then announced the launch of the consultation of the UNCRC to Scots' law to assembled P6 and P7 pupils.

<https://consult.gov.scot/children-and-families/uncrc/>

Mr Swinney was joined by Lucinda Rivers, Chair of Unicef Scotland and Councillor Alison Dickie. We were delighted to share the occasion with our good friends from the Children's Parliament, including Head of Programmes Rona Blackwood and P6 pupils from Stenhouse and Sighthill Primary schools who joined our Members of Children's Parliament (MCPs.) Jennifer Robertson, Haris Rafiq and Rory McIntosh have been working together on the 'What Kind of Edinburgh?' project throughout this year (see link).

<https://www.childrensparliament.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/What-Kind-of-Edinburgh-OnlinePub2019.pdf>

Mr Swinney was generous with his time in speaking with pupils. He was very impressed with P7 pupil Charlie MacSween's 'Oor Wurd' sculpture design for the Oor Wullie Bucket Trail, which also features elements of P7 pupil Isla Robertson's design. Mr Swinney spent time listening to P7 pupils Carys Gillespie, Natalia Spadavecchia, Daniel Earnshaw and Hannah Chow about their air quality campaign as well as meeting with the Children's Parliament MCPs. Thank you very much to Ms McGrouther for assisting with the visit and for sharing the school's active travel programmes. Although the visit was not broadcast, members of the Scottish Government recorded the event and also filmed interviews, We will share footage when this is finalised.

<https://twitter.com/voicesofyouth/status/1131922850644996097>
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On Wednesday I was at The Gaelic School. I was there to help validate their self-evaluation work and was privileged to be able to share in lessons with the children. It was also quite an emotional day for me. My first head teacher post was at Bonnington Primary which is now The Gaelic School. I had not been in the school building since I left in 2008 and happy memories came flooding back.

Thank you very much to Mr Hutchison, Mrs Barton and parent Mrs Tai for accompanying thirty of our P6 pupils to Active Schools Games at the Hub event on Wednesday 22nd May, Great fun participating in our allocated Dance, Swimming and Ultimate Frizbee events at Forrester High School in this annual event.

P5 Cycle Training has been a great success and thank you to Ms McGrouther, Mr Robertson, P5 teachers and all our cycle trainers for arranging,

On Friday 24th May, P5 pupils and P7 Captains led the Assembly focus on our upcoming Year of Green Action Summer Fair. So many exciting and fun events are planned for Saturday 1st June 12pm-2.30pm! All donations gratefully received and thank you to all who have volunteered their time to support.

Sunday saw the arrival of the Edinburgh Marathon day. Our 6 teams of staff and parents all had great fun competing in the race. It was a brilliant way to get fitter, build positive relationships and raise money for the school. We will post some photos of us in our finisher tops in the near future! The fund-raising page is still open if you would like to donate. I would also like to say well done to Dylan Daunt who was the 3rd place boy in the 8-12-year 2km race. Well done Dylan and what a great trophy!

<https://mydonate.bt.com/events/sciennesemf2019/492573>

I also want to give well-deserved – belated! - recognition to P7 pupils Katharine McMurdo who gained a Gold medal for Diving at the Edinburgh Primary Schools Sports Association (EPSSA) Swim and Dive Gala held before the Easter holiday in the Royal Commonwealth Pool.

You may have noticed some lovely new plants in our playground. Hildegard Wylezalek (one of our PSA's) and Caroline McKellor (a parent) spent time adding some beautiful plants for our children to enjoy. We are all very grateful to them for this.

This week P1 classes have enjoyed having parents in to share their literacy learning. We had a great turn out and the children loved parents joining in with their writing lesson. The feedback from parents has been very positive and we will look at taking this approach forward into P2 and further up the school.

Primary 6 had a super day out this week at Jupiter Artland, where they took inspiration from the work of Andy Goldsworthy to create their art work using foraged materials, before exploring the grounds and the sculptures within them. Our children displayed creativity and teamwork skills with great enthusiasm. Thank you to the parent helpers who helped make this visit possible. We just couldn't go on these trips without your support.

Our Bike to School day today was another great success. The weather remained dry and we even got a police escort! Thanks to all pupils, parents and staff who took part and to Miss McGrouther for organising.

A few reminders for you.

The musical showcase is this coming Thursday 6 June from 6.30-7.30pm in the School Hall. This will involve Orchestra, Acappella, P5 Violins, Woodwind and a guitar group. Parents of children involved in the show can apply for 2 tickets per child and this is on ParentPay. P1-P3 upcoming trips are also on ParentPay. Thank you to Mrs Samantha Campbell for organising this lovely opportunity for the children to perform to an audience.

Sports Day is scheduled for Thursday 6 June and will take place in The Meadows from 9.15am to 10.30am. The weather forecast is not good but we will keep our fingers crossed. The alternative date is Tuesday 11 June.

Finally, our Year of Green Action School Fair is tomorrow Saturday 1 June. The excitement is rising in the school and we look forward to welcoming you. It takes place from 12-2.30pm. Donations and home baking are still welcome. I look forward to seeing you there!

Andrew

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