



8 November 2019

**Diary dates:**

Tuesday 12/13 November	Tempest photographer in school. Individual and school family groups.
Tuesday 12 November	Fundraising Group Meeting: 7.30pm at No. 1 The Grange, all welcome.
Thursday 14 November	Parent Council meeting 6.30pm – 8.30pm
Saturday 30 November	Winter Fair
Friday 6 December	Primary 1 Nativity Friday 6 December P1a and P1b 9.30am. P1c and P1d 11am. P3 – P7 go to The Lyceum Theatre to see A Christmas Carol.
Tuesday 10 December	P2 Winter Show Tuesday 10 December 11am – 12 o'clock.

Dear Families

It is a bumper issue this week as I did not manage to get one out to you last week. Grab a coffee, have a seat and read all about what has been happening in school over the past two weeks.

**28 October - 1 November**

On Monday, the first of the P5 Edinburgh tours with Mr Howie took place. All Primary 5 classes enjoyed hearing stories about the Old Town on their fantastic historic tour. A strong focus on exploring evidence in the surroundings, using maps and pictures, was a highly engaging way to develop skills and bring history to life. Many thanks to Mr Howie and our parent helpers who supported the trips.

Primary 1-3 enjoyed a Diwali assembly, one of the Festivals of Light that will be covered this term. The children heard the story of Rama and Sita and learned about some of the customs associated with this festival.

On Tuesday, I met with Ms Kennedy, Ms Anstruther and Mrs Ross to discuss the additional support for learning needs for children from P1-P4.

Wednesday was a very busy day at Sciennes. The Primary 1 Open Day for parents and catchment children due to start at Sciennes in August 2021 took place. This is a very informal event and was led by P7 and P6 children. They gave tours and were on hand to tell the guests about their experience at Sciennes and to answer questions. Miss McGrouther and I were on hand to answer general questions and one of our great P1 teachers was available to answer any specific questions about learning in P1. It was incredibly busy all day and our pupil guides were outstanding. Well done to them all!

Primary 3 pupils spent a very enjoyable and informative morning at Langhill Dairy Farm, as part of their studies on Food and Farming. As well as finding out about the milking process, the pupils were also given the chance to make their own butter. Abby and Ellie from P3B wrote:

"The P3's went on a trip to Langhill Dairy Farm. We saw a calf and we learned how a baby calf came out! We also learned how the milking process worked. We milked a cow the old-fashioned way by pressing on its udders. We had lots of fun and saw how a dairy farm worked!"

Primary 7 had their first rehearsal of the songs for the James Gillespie's High School Christmas concert today. It was an enjoyable experience and the year group are looking forward to the concert at The Usher Hall in December.

We welcomed coaches from Blaze Basketball and Badminton Scotland who worked with PE specialist Mrs Cynthia Berry and class teachers to support PE lessons in basketball and badminton.

We finished Wednesday with a parent evening for the forthcoming Primary 6 Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) study. Ms Gallagher and the P6 team were extremely grateful for the parental support and engagement. Please feel welcome to contact Ms Gallagher with any questions or comments or if you were unable to attend the meeting and require further information.

Thursday saw the school take a spooky turn with lots of super scary Halloween outfits as well as ghoulish guffaws!

I was joined by Aileen Smart (Head Teacher, Gylemuir Primary) and Laura Inglis (Principal Teacher, Carrick Knowe Primary) to help me interview candidates for the Principal Teacher posts at Sciennes. I am now able to tell you that John Armstrong from Davidson's Mains Primary was successful in securing the permanent post and Jenni McGrouther from Sciennes secured the temporary post until June 2021. We are all very excited by our expanded leadership team and we are looking forward to working with them in their new roles. Jenni will start on 11 November and John will start on 9 December.

The P4-P7 assembly on Friday was led by Mr Howie. He looked at the recent All Blacks defeat to find out why the coach and captain have been praised as showing the world you can be magnanimous in defeat and be humble and dignified even when things do not go your way.

#### **4 November - 8 November**

The week started with enrolment for our new P1 children. Monday was a particularly busy day for this, but we have also had families enrolling all week. Our photocopiers decided not to cooperate at critical times, but Mr Reid came to the rescue and got them going again!

Primary 5A and P5C (P5B go this coming Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November) visited Gladstone's Land to find out how people lived in Edinburgh in the 1600's. Walking in the footsteps of people from the past was a real privilege and looking at objects and even handling some artefacts really brought the historic stories to life.

The P1-P3 assembly had a focus on anti-bullying.

I met with members of the Parent Council on Monday to discuss the forthcoming meeting on 14 November and to discuss spending requests from the school.

On Tuesday, we welcomed 22 Edinburgh University Mathematics students who will be working with our P6 and P7 classes over the next few weeks.

I enjoyed visiting a P3 and a P7 class on Wednesday to take part in some of the learning with them. Every Wednesday morning, I hope to be able to walk around the school and just pop in to classes and take part or help with the children's learning. I will try wherever possible to protect time for this. The numeracy lesson in P7 really made me have to think quite hard! The children were great at working out and explaining some complex concepts to me!

Kirstin Unger (a Sciennes parent) read a story to P1 children all about planting and growing. The children then went in to the playground in small groups to plant crocus bulbs in the planters. We are all looking forward to seeing the lovely flowers in the spring. P1B and some children from P1A have still to plant and hopefully will do it next week. Thank you to Kirstin for giving up her time to do this. We are really grateful.

On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November, P7 pupils Haris Rafiq, Jennifer Robertson and Rory McIntosh attended the 5<sup>th</sup> National Sitting of the Children's Parliament at the Hub with Ms Gallagher. This very special event, attended by senior leaders and delegates from across the city, as well as children from Fife, Inverness, Aberdeen and Perth, celebrated 30 Years of the UNCRC and the status of Children's Rights in Scotland. Haris did a wonderful job of introducing special guest speaker Kate Gilmore, the UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, who praised the excellent leadership of Cathy McCulloch, Rona Blackwood and their team at Children's Parliament in taking forward children's rights in Scotland. Rory, Jennifer and Haris led workshops for the delegates on their 'What Kind of Edinburgh?' project and created placards, joining Maree Todd (Minister for Children and Young People) and Bruce Adamson (Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland) in a colourful march to Parliament. Happy birthday UNCRC cupcakes for everyone and the day was a wonderful celebration of everyone's hard work in promoting Children's Rights, seeking incorporation of the UNCRC to Scots' law.

Thank you very much to Mr and Mrs Khadse for arranging a special visit from Pudsey the bear who managed to call in on our three P3 classes, P4C, P6A and P6C on Thursday. We will have collection buckets next Friday 15<sup>th</sup> November for Children in Need for optional donations at the school gates at drop off. Pupils will also call in to classes in the morning.

On Thursday, I met with pupils from P5-P7 to start discussions to draw up a playground charter. We are going to be looking at how we can organise our playground to maximise enjoyment and manage the huge number of activities that take place in our space.

Our UNICEF Outright campaign this year celebrates the UNRC at 30 so we were delighted to welcome Bruce Adamson (Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland) to speak at Assembly on Friday about his role and help us continue to think about how we can respect each other's rights, at school and beyond. Pupils were able to demonstrate their very good understanding of rights in discussion with Bruce and he has invited everyone to take part in his 'describe rights in seven words' challenge.

Congratulations to P7 pupils, Seren Fothergill, Cara Harkins, Isla Newman and Ailsa Smith who won the Girls' Federation Cup Tennis tournament on Thursday. Thank you to Miss Lavery for escorting and to Alex Harkins and Jonathan Wallace for organising.

I am really pleased to tell you that we received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Edinburgh Foodbank to let us know that we contributed 614.1kg of food from our harvest festival. Thank you to all families for your support with this.

I hope you have a good weekend. Some of the staff are heading out for a retirement lunch for Mrs Walker. It will be a lovely way to finish off a very busy and enjoyable week in school.

Andrew

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