



RESPECT INCLUSION TEAMWORK EFFORT

19 March 2021

DIARY DATES

23 and 25 March Parent Consultations
Thurs 1 April Term ends
Tues 20 April All resume

Dear Families

Return to school

We have been so impressed at how well the children have settled back into school routines and it is wonderful to have everyone back at Sciennes.

Staggered Start and Finish

Staggered start and finish times are included below. Again, thank you for your efforts in ensuring physical distancing at drop off and pick up. It is also good to see children arriving at school just before their start time and to see parents and children leaving the school grounds immediately after pick up. This is helping to avoid too much congestion especially on a Friday. Thank you for wearing masks too.

Red Nose Day

We decided not to collect money this year in school but there are many ways that you can opt to donate online to this cause. Great to see so many of the children in red today and wearing a smile and some dodgy noses!

Red Nose Day Assembly

At our P1-7 Assembly we celebrated Red Nose Day by sharing some jokes and funny stories. We didn't manage to fit them all in so asked pupils to keep sharing them with us next week. We really want to hear them! We watched a Comic Relief video and listened to the song "Put A Nose On It!" Great to celebrate the return on P4-7 this week and our whole school being back together with some fun and laughter. The children are really good at telling jokes!

Edinburgh Hill Challenge - Friends of Sciennes School Sponsored Event

Edinburgh has seven fantastic hills, most within easy reach of the Sciennes' community. For this term's sponsored event we're asking Sciennes' pupils and families to stay local and head for the hills over the Easter Holidays!

Pupils will be asked to set their own personal target to complete over the Easter holidays, be it one hill, two hills or all seven, and we need your support to help them meet their target. With the longer evenings and the warmer weather hopefully on its way, this is a great opportunity to explore our wonderful city whilst raising funds to benefit each and every child at Sciennes.

More information to follow next week.

UNCRC Incorporation into Scots' Law

This week we have also been celebrating the incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into Scottish Law. An amazing achievement for Scotland and on Tuesday evening all MSPs voted unanimously to make this happen. There was a Together Scotland Zoom Party celebration on Thursday 18 March and three of our P7 Equalities Advisors were able to attend – Bella, Sofia and Jess. The party was attended by dignitaries and organisations from across Scotland who have worked incredibly hard to make this long held aspiration a reality. Tam Baillie, former Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland, was in a break out party room with our pupils and it was lovely to see him again. He came to one of our Assemblies about five years ago and had a very positive impact on the children, describing the UNCRC as 'promises to children.' Bruce Adamson, current CYCPS, has also inspired our pupils at Assembly and we are grateful to him and to the Children's Parliament for all the tremendous and exciting opportunities they have provided for our pupils. Former pupil Haris Rafiq (now S1 at James Gillespie's) continues in his role as a Member of Children's Parliament (MCP) and earlier this week he met with Nicola Sturgeon (again!) as part of a Cabinet Takeover by young people. We look forward to working with all our Equalities Advisors next term to promote children's rights, reduce inequalities and help develop our Equalities strategy.

Parent Consultations

Parent Consultations will again take place online on TEAMS on Tuesday 23 March and Thursday 25 March. Our admin team has allocated a slot to anyone who was not able to select one before the booking system closed on Wednesday 17 March at 12pm. Teachers are looking forward to meeting with you next week. We really value all families taking part in Parent Consultations.

Farewell Old Friend!

The Sick Kids Hospital and Sciennes have been good neighbours throughout our joint history so although we are very sad to be losing our close friends, we are pleased that the staff can now move into their brand-new facility. Thank you to parent Sarah Alexander who asked us to pass on a message about the move next week:

The Sick Kids Hospital is moving this Tuesday (23rd March). From Tuesday onwards if you need to attend A&E with your child you should go to the new hospital at Little France. The A&E entrance is next to the adult A&E entrance - which is on the opposite side of the building to the new main entrance. There is a drop off point and then you'll be directed to car park 1b. For all other Sick Kids appointments, you can enter the new hospital through the main entrance.

Down Syndrome Awareness Day 21 March

Thank you to parent Aicha Reid for sharing information about the forthcoming Down Syndrome Awareness Day this Sunday. Down syndrome (DS) is a lifelong condition accompanied by learning disability. The development of individuals with DS is delayed and remains incomplete in adulthood. DS is caused by a third, extra, copy of chromosome 21, so it is celebrated on the 21st day of the third month.

People with DS generally have reasonable long-term memory. Their visuo-spatial memory is usually better than their verbal memory. This is the opposite of children who do not have DS. However, children with DS typically have hearing difficulties and impaired auditory discrimination. This negatively effects language acquisition. In addition, short-term memory is typically impaired in children with DS. This includes the phonological loop which is the ability to retain sound patterns including verbal information. Difficulties with the phonological loop make learning language and some thinking skills harder. Research indicates that memory training can be effective in improving short-term memory including the phonological loop.

Things that may help children with DS and/or learning disability:

- explicitly teach rehearsal strategies e.g. repeating information silently or aloud in order to retain it in short-term memory
- learning to read
- reducing background noise
- modifying adult speech; say less, stress, go slow, show
- using visuals to help teach and discriminate between sounds (this capitalises on visuo-spatial strengths)
- reading aloud
- playing "I spy..."
- memory games such as "what's missing from the tray?"
- sequencing songs likes "Old Macdonald" or "Ten green bottles"
- discussing details of a story at the end
- repetitive simple choices e.g. "water or milk?"

Future School Session Dates Consultation

A reminder that the Council would like to gather your views on future school session dates for 2022/23 and beyond. The survey is open until Thursday 1 April 2021. The survey about the timing of school holidays over the next three years should only take a few minutes to complete. Parents and staff groups across the city have contributed to the wording of the questions.

The link to the survey is:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/schsd2022>

Belated Happy St Patrick's Day to families who were celebrating on Wednesday.

We hope the children's fantastic funny stories and jokes continue to spread joy and giggles throughout your weekend.

Andrew



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SUMMARY OF STAGGERED START AND FINISH TIMES AT SCIENNES PRIMARY SCHOOL 15 March 2021

Year Group	Start Time	Mon – Thurs Finish Time	Friday Finish Time	ENTRANCE/EXIT
P1	9.00am	3.00pm	12.10pm	WEST DOOR (Sick Kids Hospital side)
P2A, P2B	9.00am	3.00pm	12.10pm	EAST DOOR (Main Entrance)
P2C	9.00am	3.00pm	12.10pm	Classroom Entrance/Exit from Playground
P3	8.50am	3.20pm	12.05pm	WEST DOOR
P4	8.50am	3.20pm	12.05pm	EAST DOOR
P5	8.40am	3.10pm	11.55am	WEST DOOR
P6	8.40am	3.10pm	11.55am	EAST DOOR
P7	8.40am	3.10pm	11.55am	EAST DOOR

***N.B. PUPILS SHOULD ONLY USE THE ENTRANCE/EXIT STIPULATED**

DROP OFF All pupils can come into school directly without lining up at their designated time. Please observe COVID regulations by wearing a mask and keeping 2m apart.

PICK UP P6 and P7 pupils may only be collected from outside the school gates. P1-P5 Parents, please only enter the playground just before your designated pick up time, ensure 2m distancing and then vacate the playground immediately you have collected your child to avoid congregating. If you have siblings who need collected at different times, please leave the playground, move away from the front of the school and return at the designated time. Thank you.

