



RESPECT INCLUSION TEAMWORK EFFORT

Happy Hanukkah to all our families celebrating

3 December 2021

#### DIARY DATES

Week beginning Monday 6 December P5 Enterprise all week

Tuesday 7 December P7 Enterprise Day (P3-P7)

Tuesday 7 December School Christmas Lunch

Friday 7 December Friends of Sciennes School Meeting 7.30pm

Friday 10 December Christmas Jumper Day (wear or decorate a jumper – online donation to Save the Children if you wish)

Monday 13 December Santa Run

Week beg Mon 13 Dec Class Parties

Wednesday 15 December P1 Class Christmas Party

**Friday 17 December End of Term**

Wednesday 5 January Inservice Day

Thursday 6 January Pupils resume

Dear Families

Two staggered times will remain in place for the time being and we will review in the new year. We hope parents and carers of P1 and P2 children are finding helpful the slightly shorter wait time for older siblings at the end of the day.

**P3-P7 8.50am -3.20pm M-Th /12.05pm Friday**

**P1-P2 8.55am -2.55pm M-Th /12.10pm Friday**

Two positive cases were reported this week, making three in total recently, but so far confined to only one of our P4 classes. Regular Lateral Flow testing continues to be recommended as a powerful tool for keeping everyone safe.

We reported last week the significant challenges faced by colleagues, forced to draft in senior leaders and borrow staff from other schools to cover classes. You will be aware that we have faced our own, equally unprecedented, challenges with staff absence. Since August, excluding Andrew's absence, there has been only a handful of days where we have had our full complement of staff. We have managed this by pulling together as a team and employing supply staff, when available. We include you in Team Sciennes and we are indebted to you for your ongoing support in these challenging times. Particular credit is due to our marvellous, exceptional Parent Council who support us tirelessly, giving up so much of their own time despite all the additional demands upon it. Their drive, ambition and commitment to providing the best possible support for all our children is truly humbling.

Thanks also to all the parents and carers who give their time to police the Sciennes Road closure. Please bear in mind that the road closure is still in place along the entire length of Sciennes Road, from Sylvan Place to Livingstone Place, at drop off and pick up times. When the lights flash there is no entry to road traffic (except for blue badge holders). We have been notified that some of our parents are driving up to the fenced area then doing three point turns to exit. This is particularly dangerous opposite the former hospital where the pavement is extremely narrow. Children and families tend to walk in the road, accustomed to the road closure being in place for many years. They do not anticipate traffic, which makes it all the more hazardous. Please keep all our children safe by dropping off safely at distance from the school so all the children will be able to walk or cycle safely when arriving and leaving. Thank you.

There were some adjustments to the fencing in the road on Monday and the children are enjoying using this safe space to play. The planned signage will assist further with identifying it as a segregated play space in school hours. A reminder please to take care not to stand in the cycle lane at drop off and pick up.

On Thursday, Janine Ridley, Parent Council School Clubs Convener, and I met online with Eliot Ambrose, JGHS Cluster Active Schools Co-ordinator. Janine has many creative ideas for restarting additional Active Schools clubs safely and we are grateful to Eliot for his advice on how to progress these. Eliot will also feed into a Cluster Headteacher meeting to support a unified approach to Active Schools clubs within the cluster next term.

Next Friday at 7.30pm, Depute Headteacher John Armstrong will chair a meeting of the Friends of Sciennes School (FSS) which was established in 1999 as a charitable trust to advance the education of pupils at Sciennes School. Over the years, funding has been secured for playground improvements, cultural enrichment activities and visits and most recently for our new interactive Promethean Panels. We greatly appreciate and value the tremendous support and generosity of families and community to enhance and enrich the learning experiences for the children at Sciennes.

Mr Armstrong has been teaching P1B on a Friday but will now support with the management of the school on that day. In the interests of continuity, we have organised the same supply teacher to take the class each Friday until Christmas. After Christmas, we aim to have one teacher in place who will be responsible for teaching and learning until the February holiday, at which point we will re-assess the staffing. Mr Armstrong will continue to oversee the progress of the class on a Friday.

Sciennes Reading Book Amnesty! During both Lockdowns we issued all our pupils with a Learning Pack that included school novels. After two periods of school closure and learning at home, understandably, many of our reading books have not made it back to school. We would be extremely grateful if you could have a rummage at home and hand in any you find to the school office or Class Teachers – no questions asked! Thank you. We would also greatly appreciate donations of books to refresh our Class Libraries. A personal plea from me about something which still keeps me awake at night! A few years ago, I accidentally mixed up some of Ms Anstruther's own personal books with those being donated to a school Fair. If anyone finds any book with her name on the inside cover, please hand it in to the school office and I will personally gladly reimburse!

Primary Seven have been exploring potential risks to their health this term:

*"Last week we had a visitor to talk to us though Teams about cigarettes. Laura told us all about different forms of drugs and about how some are used for medicines, but that some are used illegally. She then moved on to focus on nicotine. I think most of us know how dangerous cigarettes are, but I also think it was very useful to talk to someone who knows a lot about cigarettes. It was very useful and thank you for talking to us about it.*

*On Thursday a Police Officer called P.C McKenzie came into the classroom to talk about cyber bullying and how to stay safe online. It was very interesting, and I think that everyone learned something for example, we now know to report anything we feel uncomfortable about to a trusted adult. A big thank you for coming in to talk to us about how to stay safe online."*

Connor Bell, P7A

Wonderful to welcome back Christopher Bell from NYCoS to Sciennes on Thursday, on this occasion to visit each of our Primary Five classes. This time last year it was particularly sad that we were not allowed to sing at all! Great to hear the children's voices with Mr Bell yesterday and today practising Christmas and Winter songs.

Preparation for Ms Anstruther's 12 Days of Christmas plan is in full swing with activities taking place each day next week including crafts, competitions and story reading. The P1 Christmas Party will be on Wednesday 15 December. Next week, Class Teachers will let families the date for their class party. Please log on to ParentPay to pay £3.00 or £1.50 for families on Income Support. This payment covers all costs for all the activities, including the class parties.

As part of their Enterprise project, next week Primary Seven pupils would like to invite pupils from P3-6 to visit their stalls on **Tuesday 7 December**, with activities and items ranging from 50p to £1.50. Primary Five pupils are running a similar Enterprise project **throughout next week** but on a smaller scale. Each class has a guessing game with a prize and each guess costs 50p.

Ms McGrouther and the P7 Sports Captains are organising a Santa Run on Monday 13 December. Spectators, maintaining distance and mitigations may wish to come and cheer along. Next week, P7 Sports Captains will write the email for families detailing year group times.

Grace, Zara, Stanley, Esme and Adam from P5C went to the City Chambers on Thursday afternoon where they received special certificates at a ceremony for the winners of the CEC and Underbelly Winter Windows competition. Great team effort and we look forward to seeing their winning design in lights!

Well done to P6 pupils Rosemary and Mayada for taking the initiative with fundraising to help others. They would like to thank everyone who supported their recent bake sale, including their own families:

*"Together all of us raised £210.20! The money that was raised will be donated to Cambodian Children's Fund and UNICEF. UNICEF will get £147.10 and Cambodian Children's Fund will get £63.10. Thank you."*

Rosemary Reid and Mayada Alkhamisi

Congratulations to Flossie Reid P4B who did a solo dance performance at the EICC in front of a full house at the Edinburgh Dance Academy show. A great achievement!

On Friday 10 December we will be hosting an awards ceremony to congratulate the winners of our recent Winter Running Series. This will take place in the morning and we will be joined by current 4 x 400m Great British Athlete, Zoey Clarke. Zoey was part of the 4x400m team that competed at Tokyo 2020 and won Silver at the 2017 World Championships. She will be joining us via Teams and was keen to congratulate our young athletes on their recent success. Many thanks to Mr Armstrong for arranging this fantastic opportunity.

Next Friday is also Christmas Jumper Day and pupils are invited to wear or decorate a festive jumper. As a 1 in 5 Child Poverty Aware school we always try to limit and space out across the year the number of times we ask families to donate to charity so will not be taking a collection on the day. There is a [JustGiving page](#) for anyone who would like to donate.

Thank you again to former pupil Millie Stobie-Platts, to P7s Diarmuid and Edward and to everyone who donated so generously to Children in Need. The final total is an incredible **£1,168.50!**

We hope, wherever you are at the weekend and whatever you are doing, you have lots of safe, happy fun.

*Lucy, Carolyn, John, Steve and Jenni*



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