



RESPECT INCLUSION TEAMWORK EFFORT

24 June 2022

DIARY DATES

Monday 27 June P4 at Scottish Parliament
Tuesday 28 June Moving classrooms and Meet the New Teacher
Wednesday 29 June P7 Leavers' Dance 6.30-8.30pm
Thursday 30 June P7 Big Day Out
Friday 1 July **TERM ENDS AT NOON**
Wednesday 17 August Pupils resume

Dear Families

The end of term is rapidly approaching and although the last few weeks have been increasingly hectic in school, in the main our chock a block days have been filled to the brim with lots of exciting and fun events for the children. Apologies that as a result it has been a few weeks since the last newsletter! Thank you to those who came along to Sports Days on the Meadows and we hope you enjoyed the Jubilee Holiday. Congratulations to Grange who won the House Cup this year! Thank you to Mrs Berry, our PE Specialist and Ms Anstruther for organising the Sports Days and to Mr Hutchison for supporting.

STAFFING

Staffing is always a complicated and complex process which we begin in March. We peruse all manner of permutations, ultimately aiming to meet the needs of the children as best we possibly can. It is a lengthy procedure undertaken by the entire Senior Leadership Team, including Andrew, and we were pleased to be able to announce Class Teachers earlier than usual, last week. This has given us a longer period to help pupils transition and allow handover, which will continue next term. Change can be difficult and we appreciate your support in reassuring pupils throughout transition.

Last week we were delighted to be able to interview and appoint two new Pupil Support Assistants to the team. Congratulations to Radka Borodonva and King Tai Leung. Pupil Support Assistant Mrs Halyna Kancir has secured a teaching position and although we are disappointed she will not be returning, we are delighted to hear of her success and wish her well.

HEADTEACHER JAMES GILLSEPIE'S HIGH SCHOOL

Donald MacDonald, who has been Head Teacher at James Gillespie's High School since 2012, is retiring at the end of this session and we hope you will join us in wishing him well. Neil McCallum, currently Head Teacher of Balerno High School, will be Acting Head Teacher from August to December 2022 while the recruitment process for a permanent Head Teacher is undertaken.

JAMES GILLSEPIE'S PRIMARY HEADTEACHER

Colin Maclean accepted a new educational appointment after Easter and since then Ben Horsburgh, former Head Teacher at Prestonfield, has become the new Head Teacher at James Gillespie's Primary School. We wish him a warm welcome him to the Cluster team.

JAMES GILLSEPIE'S CLUSTER NEWS

In other Cluster news, this term we have welcomed Lorraine Woodford, JGHS Cluster Counsellor and Anita Sharkey, JGHS Cluster Transition Teacher. Both recently appointed and welcome additions to the team. We benefit from close working relationships with Rob Cockroft, JGHS Support for Learning Specialist, and Pamela Foster, Educational Psychologist. We look forward to working with them as they establish and develop their new JGHS Wellbeing Hub. JGHS Enhanced Transition, as well as our own enhanced transition programme developed by Paula Gilhooly has been underway throughout the term for those pupils who benefit from additional support in adjusting to the move to high school. We continue to receive sterling support from the Additional Support for Learning Service (ASLS) and would like to thank Fiona Bogie, John Hannan and Jodie Morrison for their ongoing advice and input with pupils and staff. Marie Lyon is Quality Improvement Education Officer (QIEO) for JGHS Cluster. Marie has provided us with sterling support, particularly in Andrew's absence, and it is great that she will remain a link person for many of our P7 families and pupils next year at JGHS.

ATTENDANCE

Over the last two years we are very conscious that there have been many significant disruptions to school attendance, mostly entirely beyond people's control: illness, self-isolation requirements and being unable to spend time with families for an extended period due to the pandemic leading to requests to make trips in term time. It is protocol in city of Edinburgh to submit a request in writing for leave of absence to the Head Teacher. This year, where there have been extenuating circumstances, in many cases we have been able to grant 'authorised leave.' However, please note that from August there will be a drive in every city school to bring pupil attendance levels back to full normality of 100% wherever possible. Attendance below 85% is deemed a significant cause for concern so next year please be aware that we will contact families well before levels reach that. Thank you in advance for your support in this.

INTERSCHOLASTICS

Mr Armstrong accompanied the P7 team on Monday 6 June.

Primary 7 pupils made their way on public transport to Saughton Sports Complex to compete in the Interscholastic track and field competition on Monday. Having worked hard over the past few weeks, the group was hopeful of securing some silverware and they did not disappoint. Stella Crawford was first up in the 600m heats. She ran a very composed race and saved her best until the home straight where she qualified for the Final with a sprint finish. In the Boys' 80m sprint, Ty O'Connor cruised through his heat and qualified for the semi-finals. Next up were the relay teams. Our Boys,' Girls' and Mixed Teams all showed how hard they had been practising by easing through their heats into the semi-finals.

Ty O'Connor was on top form and repeated his heat performance with an equally blistering run in the semi-final of the Boys' 80m. He was now in the Final. Similarly, the Relay teams worked well together and the Boys' and Girls' teams both qualified for their respective finals. Unfortunately, the Mixed team just missed out on a Final place. As the day neared its conclusion the 600m Final was first in the schedule. Stella Crawford found some additional strength and secured herself and Sciennes a Bronze medal with some incredible running. In the Boys' 80m Final Ty narrowly missed out on a medal, finishing Fourth overall. In the Girls' relay it was a similar story and all four team members pushed as hard as they could but again, narrowly missed out on a medal and ended Fourth overall. The Boys' relay was Sciennes' last Final and the team saved their best until last. Well behind until the third changeover, Moses Rowe started the comeback and passed the baton to Ty O'Connor, who, fresh from his 80m disappointment blasted past two opposition runners in the final straight and secured a bronze medal for the team. Overall, the team performed incredibly well and demonstrated teamwork and determination throughout the day. Well done!

60m Girls – Mya Yang

60m Boys – Ty O'Connor

600m Girls – Stella Crawford (Bronze medal)

600m Boys – Finlay Glass

Boys' relay - Moses Rowe, Ty O'Connor, Rory Smith and Finlay Glass (Bronze medals)

Girls' relay – Stella Crawford, Mya Yang, Amy Yang and Amy Deighton

Mixed relay – Moses Bindia, Bridget Mitchell, Lauren Redman and Hugo Kagunglia.

John Armstrong, DHT

NEURODIVERSITY

Our Support for Learning Specialist Paula Gilhooly began releasing exceptional, thought provoking and inspirational video clips she created with experts – pupils, parents and staff - earlier this month to raise greater awareness of neurodiversity within our community and you can view one of these here:

<https://vimeo.com/718053341>

P1 TRANSITION

Ms Anstruther and her P1 team, supported by the Parent Council, ran a very successful afternoon on Friday 10 June. The format for welcoming new families was very well received, with Ms Anstruther providing her usual information session the previous evening via Teams, instead of on the day itself. This meant there was more time on Friday for socialising and spending time in class with the children. Great that so many new families were brought into the Parent Council fold, too! Please see Imogen's wonderful drawing below. We hope everyone also felt welcome, Imogen!

P7 TRANSITION

P7 JGHS pupils had a fantastic day of Transition activities at Meggetland on Monday 13 June and other P7 pupils took part in visits to various high schools in the city that week as well. It can be an anxious time and it has been great to see how they are supporting one another, getting ready for change. Thank you to P7 families for supporting, too.

P4 WORLD OF WORK

This term we have had an amazing array of presentations by parents to the children in each of our P4 classes about their occupations. Thank you for all the preparation and thought which has gone into the interactive presentations and opened up a world of possibilities for future careers! A wonderful way to develop the young workforce and a great way to welcome parents back into the building. Most recently, Pela Jordan's mum's flower arranging class filled the school with beautiful perfume all day!

TRUE COLOURS DAY

Well done to P7 pupils Alexa Norrie and Chloe Yelland for initiating a 'True Colours' Day on Thursday 9 June to celebrate diversity and inclusion and to mark Pride month. The girls' idea was to invite everyone to dress in colours which reflected their personality or wear rainbow colours in support of the LGBT community. Lovely to see so many vibrant colours in school and thank you for supporting their initiative.

PARENT COUNCIL

The Parent Council AGM on Wednesday 15 June was our first meeting in the school building for over two years! Chair Caroline McKellar thanked all the sub-group leaders and the Class Reps for their outstanding contribution to the life of the school for the benefit of all our children. We were joined by Councillor Pauline Flannery and each of our four neighbourhood councillors will attend future meetings in rotation. It was an opportunity for Sciennes staff to thank everyone too, particularly Caroline who has devoted so much of her time and indefatigable energy, as well as Vice Chair Leda Uberbacher and everyone involved. In total the Parent Council, with your generous support, has managed to raise over £25 000 which is truly astonishing and deeply appreciated.

FRIENDS OF SCIENNES SCHOOL TRUST

The Friends of Sciennes School (FSS) met on Tuesday evening 22 June. FSS is a charitable trust run by parents and Chaired by Depute Headteacher John Armstrong in Andrew's absence. FSS has recently funded an astonishing £27 000 of new Promethean Panels and Apple TVs in every teaching space! The trust facilitates fundraising and donations received from the parent body and has a Just Giving page for charitable donations to the school:

<https://www.justgiving.com/friendsofscienneschool>

P1 VOGRIE VISIT

On Thursday 16 June P1 enjoyed a wonderful day out at Vogrie Country Park. We did some pond dipping and we went on a mini beast hunt. We found lots of cool creatures! We also played in the play park (the big slide was awesome!) and we had a picnic lunch with our friends.

Cassie: "We had to use a net to catch creatures in the water. We caught lots of tadpoles and put them back in the water afterwards. Some of the tadpoles had already started to grow legs!"

Hamish: "I loved the big swings at the play park and I liked having lunch together under the trees."

Miss Aisling Rogerson, P1 Class Teacher

P2 BEACH OUTING

On Thursday 16 June, Primary 2 enjoyed their first ever trip! We spent the day at Longniddry beach to end our seashore topic. We were lucky to go on a lovely warm and sunny day and had so much fun. We explored the rockpools with the seaside rangers and had lots of fun playing in the sand. Here are some of our highlights:

'I enjoyed building sandcastles' (Angus 2A)

'I liked when we saw a starfish - it was small and one of its legs was twisted' (Emilie 2A)

'It was fun when me and Isla found a crab and made a habitat for it' (Kinan 2B)

'My favourite bit was making sandcastles and finding shells' (Zara 2B)

'I liked looking in the rockpools - I found a starfish and a sea anemone' (Sophie 2C)

'I made my own rockpool with my friends' (Isaac 2C)

The children were an absolute joy to spend time with. All were interested and eager to learn from the rangers and everyone played so nicely together. Well done Primary 2!

The P2 Team

P3 HERMITAGE OF BRAID

On Wednesday 15 June, P3s had a really enjoyable day at the Hermitage of Braid.

P5 USHER HALL

On Thursday 16 June, P5 pupils loved taking part in Love Music's 'This School's Got Soul' celebratory singing workshop and concert at the Usher Hall with live band and song leader, Lea Cornthwaite. Great enthusiasm belting out classics such as "We Are Family" and "Sunny" alongside the more recent KSI's "Holiday." Fun times! P5 were off out again on Wednesday 22 June; this time to the Zoo!

P7 JUNIOR NBA

On Friday 17 June the P7 Junior NBA team continued their unbeaten route to the Final - and won! It's the first time we have won the event and the trophy is magnificent! It is currently adorning the trophy cabinet outside Mr Hunter's room alongside Grange's House Cup trophy. Many thanks to Miss McGrouther for superb coaching and for fostering great teamwork and a sense of fair play. Well done to our P7 players who worked so hard for this tremendous achievement. We are grateful to Louise Mayes, Chemistry teacher at Tynecastle High School, for organising and hosting the event.

P5 CHILDREN'S PARLIAMENT

Maddy Bell, Krithi Subr, Toby Clements and Gordon Jones, P5 project leaders for [Children's Parliament](#), Sustainability project had their final weekly meeting on Tuesday 21 June and produced 'Calls to Action' that will be presented to the Scottish Government. As an aside, the pupils wanted to replicate and some of the Children's Parliament missions they had led with fellow P5 Learning for Sustainability Investigators. A Legacy Project! On one piece of A4 paper we now have a very clever handwritten Sustainability curriculum for the whole school linked to the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030! That's what happens when young people have opportunities to share their views and take the lead!

CLEAN AIR DAY

Thursday 16 June was Clean Air Day, which this year aimed to raise awareness of the negative impact air pollution can have on health. Our four Members of Children's Parliament (MCPs Maddy, Krithi, Toby and Gordon) and P3 pupil Sarah Gueddana (who initiated a 'Close the Road' petition) made their own Clean Air Day pledges. They were joined by Cllr Scott Arthur, Transport and Environment Convener, John Bynorth Policy and Communications Officer at Environmental Protection Scotland and Parent Council representatives Slim Gueddana and Caroline McKellar to share ideas about cleaner air, including the longstanding campaign for permanent road closure outside the school.

P6/7 GIRLS FOOTBALL SUMMER CUP

Congratulations to the Sciennes P6/7 Girls Football Club who were Runners Up in the Summer Cup on Saturday 18 June! Well done to P7 players Bea Edgar, Elsie Gavin-Daunt, Esme Bain, Lori McBain and Hanah Reid and to P6 players Penny Leitch and Isla Alexander. Fantastic! Many thanks to all the coaches who devote their time to supporting the club every week and to all the families who cheer them on.

P6 GAMES AT THE HUB AND BLAZE BASKETBALL

On Tues 21 June two of our P6 classes took part in 'Games at the Hub' - a variety of sporting activities organised by Active Schools – and one class had a great session at the Craggs Sports Centre with Blaze Basketball. Wonderful that so much of the traditional menu of competitive and taster sports has come back onstream in the city.

JUDO

Well done to P3A pupil Aiisha Smith-Meer who received a junior grade brown belt and has offered to give a demonstration at a future Assembly when she gains her black belt! Well done. Aiisha!

ASSEMBLIES

On Friday 10 June we shared photographs from True Colours Day. It was also a day for celebrating many achievements! We congratulated the young athletes who took part in Interscholastics as well as P5 pupils Emily Jobson and Krithi Subr who won singles and doubles Badminton competitions! We also celebrated presenting our greatest ever haul of gold, silver and bronze awards from the Scottish Mathematical Challenge! An extremely taxing challenge, involving successful completion of three written problem solving tasks, submitted throughout P7. This year our P7 pupils achieved five gold, four silver and two Bronze awards! A tremendous achievement!

On Friday 17 June we looked back at six years of annually supporting Clean Air Day. Flossie and Eilidh helped us sign 'Clean' and 'Air.' P3A pupils came along to the upper school Assembly to share their recent achievements – Sophie won a Second place medal in a four mile run, Martha gained first place in a Ballet competition and Veda won a Gold medal for Gaelic singing at the Mod! P5C pupil Stanley Grant thanked everyone for supporting his fossil sale and it has been so successful that he has decided to donate half of the proceeds to charity, and still fund a new 'epic' fossil for himself! Great entrepreneurship and benevolence, Stanley! Well done to P7C pupil Zach Thomson who was runner up in a recent Tennis competition.

P7 'SHAKESPEARE ROCKS SHOW

What a fantastic P7 show today! A huge co-ordinated effort of dedication and love went into the preparation by our excellent P7 teachers Charlotte Kuhlwilm, Jane Maguire and Daryl Gladstone, ably led by Acting Depute Headteacher Jenni McGruther. The pupils rose to the challenge magnificently and were word perfect. Curriculum for Excellence was writ large on the stage and it was a perfect showcase for the talents of our amazing young people. Their confidence shone brightly and it truly was a joy on so many levels. We said there would not be a dry eye in the house and we were certainly feeling emotional (in a good way!) welcoming families back into the building to celebrate with them - particularly those families who will be leaving us this year. 'Shakespeare Rocks' and so does Primary Seven! We know they – and you – will rock on in their new schools.

Not many more sleeps and we are all working really hard to make next week as smooth as we can in terms of transition. We also want to make it a fun and celebratory end to the year for the children for all their hard work and resilience. Thank you very much for all your ongoing support.

Lucy, Carolyn, John, Jenni and Steve

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A message from Imogen, one of our new intake of P1 pupils.

Year Group	Start	Mon–Thurs Finish	Friday Finish	ENTRANCE / EXIT
P1	8.50am	2.50pm	12.05pm	WEST DOOR
P2	8.50am	2.50pm	12.05pm	EAST DOOR
P3	8.50am	3.20pm	12.05pm	WEST DOOR
P4	8.50am	3.20pm	12.05pm	EAST DOOR
P5	8.50am	3.20pm	12.05pm	WEST DOOR
P6	8.50am	3.20pm	12.05pm	EAST DOOR
P7	8.50am	3.20pm	12.05pm	EAST DOOR