

Neilston Learning Campus

NEWSLETTER



for Neilston Primary & Madras Family Centre

'Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving, Through Excellent Experiences'



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE | Gold



FEBRUARY 2017

Message from the Head Teacher

Now that we have issued our first newsletter of 2017, we have decided to tweak the format a little. This should make it much easier to find the information that you are looking for.

This month we have been busy getting ourselves back into the routine of school. There have been lots of developments during this term. Many of which you will read about further in this newsletter.

I would like to take this opportunity to officially welcome Kirsten Thomson to the Senior Leadership Team as Principal Teacher. Kirsten will have responsibility for Early Level Learning (3yr olds – P1). She is a welcome addition to the campus staff team and we look forward to all the exciting experiences and opportunities that she and our Early Level Team will take forward.

We also welcome three new Child Development Officers: Lauren Lindsay, Tahira Zaheer and Victoria Stevenson.

As always if you wish to discuss your child's progress or have any concerns, please contact me via the school office (call or e-mail).

Contact Us:

Mailing Address:

High Street
Neilston
East Renfrewshire
G78 3HJ

Telephone:

☎ 0141 570 7240 [school]
☎ 0141 570 7540 [centre]

E-mail:

schoolmail@neilston.e-renfrew.sch.uk

www.ea.e-renfrew.sch.uk/neilston

[@neilston_madras](https://twitter.com/neilston_madras)

Primary School News



Information for families of Neilston Primary School

PARENTS' EVENING

Our next Parents' evening appointments will take place during Wednesday 29th March and Thursday 30th March 2017.

Similar to the previous Parents' Evening, appointments will be made on-line via our new booking system – this allows you to choose a time that is suitable to you.

Letters will be distributed with Instructions and Login Details in the next couple of weeks. Parents with siblings can make bookings from 13th March at 5.30pm, where all other parents can make appointments from 15th March at 3.30pm (when login details come home with your child).

All appointments will close on 20th March at 22.55pm so we can collate all information.

From feedback at our last parents' evening this booking system was well received so we have brought it back for a further trial before we commit to buying into the system.

During the course of the evening there will be an opportunity for you to complete a questionnaire about your experience of the school and that of your child's.

All of this information will be used to help us plan our improvement priorities for next session.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

As many of you know there are significant health benefits to children drinking water during the school day. It keeps them hydrated and alert. With this in mind and as a health promoting school we encourage all of our children to sip water through the school day. Class teachers build this into their class routine across the day. I would encourage you all to invest in a small water bottle (the ones with a sports cap are best) and encourage your child to sip this throughout the school day.

This month – all the way up to the Easter holiday we have a focus across the school on mental wellbeing. Working in partnership with Vicky Mulholland from Relax Kids we are learning all about calming and relaxing exercises and how to self-regulate our anxiety or anger. So far the taster sessions have gone down a treat.

WORLD BOOK DAY

World Book Day this year will be on Thursday 2nd March 2017. As part of our celebration children are encouraged to dress up as their favourite character. Children can come dressed in their costume on Friday 3rd March 2017. There will be various other activities across the week as part of our World Book Day celebration. If you would be interested in

coming to read to one of our classes during this week then please let us know (via the school office).

OUTDOOR LEARNING

We are delighted to announce that we have been working closely with Grounds for Learning and ScotPlay on further developing some of our playground areas. Soon you will be able to see the addition of some new play equipment and Outdoor learning resources being added to the school grounds.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

During Winter 2016 our school WiFi was enabled and we have been working hard to develop how we use ICT to enhance learning. In partnership with the SOS group we have purchased a class set of iPads for pupil use across the school. These will hopefully be arriving soon and then we can start using them across the school. We have used some of the school funds to purchase charging/sync trollies for our laptops and iPad so that we can get the best use out of them moving forward. Mr Bonnar will be leading the roll-out of the iPads across the campus with a range of new Apps to support learning.

Keeping with the theme of digital technology: Tuesday 7th February was Safer Internet Day. Activities across the week and also at our weekly assembly supported this and promotes article 17 and article 5 of the children's charter:

Article 17: You have the right to collect information from the media.

Article 5: You have the right to be given guidance by your parents and family.



Enrolling for Primary 1

Our Primary One application process has now concluded. If you applied for a place within the school and you, at the time of enrolment, were not able to provide birth certificates, proof of address etc please present these to the school office as soon as possible.

If you have been successful in your application for a P1 place within our school, you will be notified in April directly from Council Headquarters.

Rights Respecting School - Update

Our Article of the Month for February is:

28 – We have the right to good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.

29 – Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.



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Premiership Experience

A huge thank you to Mr Bonnar and Mr Cuthbert who gave up their own time to take the football team down to Manchester City's training ground for some great experiences and skills development and then on to watch a match at Man City's ground the 'Etihad Stadium'. Reports from the boys were that they had a fantastic time – we will look to identify more opportunities like this across the year.

Developing Literacy Skills

All of our Pupil Support Assistants have been trained in how to use, deliver and support literacy skills using the '5 minute box'. We will shortly begin identifying children who would benefit from this and will put together a programme for this. If you would like to find out more about this please visit: www.fiveminutebox.com

Pupil Council Update

Pupil Council are currently involved in deciding on a fundraising event for Brightest Star which is the local charity we chose to support this session. We are also organising World Book Day and will be leading an assembly about this shortly. Each pupil within the school will be invited to dress up as any book character they wish to on Friday 3rd March 2017. There will be a number of events happening on that day to commemorate World Book Day. Finally we are collecting Sainsbury's Active Kids vouchers – please send these in to the school with your child.

WAR MEMORIAL

For a while now we have been experiencing some water ingress within the main reception area (where the memorials were on display). The memorials have been removed from display temporarily in order that they are not damaged during the repair work. The issue has now been resolved externally we now are waiting to have the internal walls repaired and decorated.

Whilst the memorials are 'off the wall' we plan on having them cleaned and rehung in a new location within the school. We will re locate them to the Assembly hall. The hall is used daily by children at lunch and during their Physical Education lessons. We also chose the hall as this will enable the wider community to see them when the school is used as a polling station or they are attending one of our events.

Once we have relocated them we plan in having a celebration assembly which we hope will be led by members of the Neilston War Memorial Trust.

You will recall back in 2013 the school raised the sum of £500.00 to contribute towards the construction of the War Memorial in the Town Centre. Not only are the war memorials an important part of our community history, they also contribute to and enhance children's learning within social subjects.

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STANDARDISED TESTING

During the month of February our Primary 3,5 and 7 children completed the councils standardised testing programme. Primary 2,4 and 6 participated in progress testing as part of our overall assessment tool kit. All of them put in their very best efforts – well done!

BURNS SUPPER

Well done to Primary 7 who planned, organised and celebrated a wonderful burns supper before the break – photographs and video clips are available from our twitter feed (@neilston_madras). Congratulations to P7 and Miss Crook for this excellent event. Cllr Paul O'Kane and Mrs Natalie MacMillan (Parent Council Chair) joined us in our celebrations.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

This term saw the start of our afterschool club programme.

Monday – There is a Gymnastics Club run by Miss McBride covering all stages from P1 – P7. Aim of club is to participate in 'Schools Gymfest' which is a gymnastics display competition held in Perth in May. Over the period of the club, pupils are trained in a variety of moves and techniques.

Tuesday – Active Schools run a Mini Kickers club for P1 – P3. The aim of the club is to provide pupils with an introduction to football skills and teach them about the basics of the game. The club is always a popular choice with P1 – P3. This particular block ends on the 28th February.

Wednesday – Active Schools also run a Basketball club for P4 – P7. The aim of this club is to provide pupils with an opportunity to develop their basketball skills through a variety of drills and exercises. This particular block ends on the 1st March.

Thursday – There is a Netball club run by Mrs McCabe and Mrs Goudie for those pupils in P6 & P7. The club aims to provide pupils with an opportunity to further develop skills learnt in PE through a variety of drills, exercises and games.

Friday – Sports Development run a Multisports club aimed at pupils in P1 – P3. The aim of the club is to develop a variety of skills which can be adapted to cover many sports. It also helps develop pupil's motor skills. This particular block ends in a few weeks.

Article 3: *The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.*

Article 31: *Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.*



ECO – School (update)

Action Plan

At our recent meeting the committee reviewed our plans for the year. We have decided to focus this term on our litter targets. Therefore, a rota has been established and is already working extremely well with children in P3-7 responsible for litter picking within the school grounds on a rotational basis.

The committee suggested that later in the term we hold an ECO DAY OF ACTION within the village to target littering on main streets, parks and near the train station. More information will be posted in our March newsletter!

Tesco Funding Update

The Eco Committee have already spent £5000 of our TESCO money on playground markings which are enjoyed by pupils at playtimes, lunchtimes and during outdoor PE. The committee worked out we still had about £7000 to spend developing our grounds and that they would like some exciting playground equipment.

Mr Curley agreed new equipment would be fantastic and even found some extra money to help us get even MORE than we had originally planned! We have chosen some fabulous outdoor play equipment which will improve the P3-4 and P1-2 playgrounds. We CANNOT wait for it to arrive so keep your eyes peeled for the new apparatus appearing over the next few weeks!



ECO – School (update)

The Fairtrade branch of the Eco Committee are participating in Fairtrade Fortnight by holding a Fairtrade Break on Wednesday 8th March 2017. This break will be held during interval on the day and there will be Fairtrade fruit, biscuits and juice available to buy. We are encouraging as many pupils as possible to join us for this special break as we try to help pupils understand the importance of having a break. We will also use this break to promote Fairtrade products and why buying Fairtrade is a positive choice.

A note also that next month, during parent/carer meetings, there will be a Fairtrade Stall selling goods on behalf of The Rainbow Turtle.



FAIRTRADE



Family Centre News

Information for families of Madras Family Centre

Outdoor Developments

As I am sure you are aware – developing our outdoor space and the experiences and opportunities that our children have, features on our improvement plan. We have invested a significant amount of money on purchasing equipment for our outdoor area. You will see some of these changes taking place soon.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

As part of our campus wide focus we have invested funds in digital technology for the Family Centre. We have purchased a set of 12 ipads. This will allow learning opportunities to be offered as part of the daily Centre routine.

Congratulations!

I am delighted to inform you that Mrs Julie MacLaren has passed her into headship qualification. Hard work really does pay off! Well done from everyone across the campus.

Woodland Explorers

As part of our on-going developments we will be providing opportunities to be creative , explorative, inquisitive, work as a team and take part in risky play.

This term we are encouraging parental engagement in our outdoor adventures. A rota for this is on the noticeboard at the entrance hallway of the Family Centre. If you would like to participate in this please sign-up. If you would like to find out more about this please speak with Mrs Dowland.

Woodland Explorers Timetable			
AM & PM Sessions	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3
Week Commencing	16 th January 2017 6 th February 2017 27 th February 2017 20 th March 2017	23 rd January 2017 13 th February 2017 6 th March 2017 27 th March 2017	30 th January 2017 20 th February 2017 13 th March 2017 18 th April 2017

Easter Holiday Provision

Letters will be coming home shortly should you require sessions over the holiday period.

Sensory Play

Look out for fliers for our 'Mini Messies' sensory play sessions to be trialed at the start of March.

Early Years Enrolment

Applying for an Early Years place for your 3 or 4 year old child?

Applying for an East Renfrewshire council local authority nursery place

With the introduction of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 all children who are three and four years old are entitled to 600 hours of free early learning and childcare in East Renfrewshire and all other local authorities.

Morning and afternoon sessions are allocated by ballot and this allocation is made for two years. Morning and afternoon sessions are allocated in equal numbers to achieve a balance of 3 and 4 year old children.

You are encouraged to register your child for a place in a local authority establishment when they reach their second birthday.

When your application is received, your child's details will be held on file until places are allocated. Applications should be received no later than the last day in February of the school year in which your child will attend Nursery e.g. applications for children who will start, at some point, in session 2017/2018 should be received by 28 February 2017. Please note, applications for session 2017/2018 which are received after this date will be treated as late and therefore these places will be allocated at a later date.

Applications for session 2017/18:

The closing date for applications for council nurseries is **28 February 2017**

Applications for session 2016/17:

this closing date has now passed and all applications for council nurseries for this session received from 1 March 2016 will be treated as late.

Contexts for Learning

We have been learning all about people who help us in the family centre this block. We have talked about all the jobs people have in our community and have been lucky enough to have had a visit from a parent (Ava Coleman's mum) who is a veterinary nurse and their pet guinea pig Rosie. She talked to us about the different things she does in her job and how to look after animals. We are also learning about the world of work through role play in our construction area, hospital and veterinary surgery.

In language, we have been learning about rhyming and have been enjoying rhyming stories. We listened to Scottish music and learnt some Scottish songs and poems for Burns Day. We also celebrated Chinese New year and sampled some delicious Chinese noodles for snack. In Maths, we have been recognising and sequencing numbers to ten through various practical counting on and back activities.

Next block we will be learning about living things. As the children have been so enthusiastic about our animal visitors, we intend to continue learning about caring for animals and hoping to arrange some more visitors to the centre. Through the context of spring, we will also be learning how to grow and care for plants and plan to start developing the family centre grounds.

Bookbug Update

On the 20th of February (AM and PM) we held our ever popular Family Bookbug sessions in the Community Room. Mums, Dads, Grandparents, siblings and child-minders all attended. Our morning session was particularly busy and afternoon was also very successful. Those in attendance took part in Bookbug sessions within the playrooms. We had a special visitor – 'Bookbug' himself made an appearance. Please see the Family Centre Learning blog for more information and follow-up:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/er/Madras/>.

Many thanks to all those who were able to attend and made the sessions so much fun.

A special thanks to Julie Armstrong and Yvonne Crookshank who organize, lead and manage this hugely successful programme.



Campus News

Information from across the campus for all our families

HEALTH & WELLBEING

Please remember that this is a no-smoking campus and that smoking is not permitted within the perimeter fence of the campus.

I would also like to remind you that dogs are not permitted within the campus grounds.

Parent Support Group

One of our parents has very kindly offered to lead a parent support group for pupils with autism. This would be held in our campus and would provide an informal opportunity to chat to other parents, share experiences and ideas. This will take place at the beginning or end of the school day depending on what suits the users. If you would like to join this group please let us know what your preferred day and time would be and we can then finalise details.

SECURITY

All public access doors are controlled by a secure entry system across the campus. Please ensure that gates/doors are securely closed behind you when you are visiting.

Communicating with YOU

We now have 109 followers on our campus twitter feed. This is a fantastic way to build up a visual day-by-day image of life at Neilston Primary School and Madras Family Centre, we would encourage you to have a look and join our following. The Family Centre will begin 'tweeting' in March. You can click the link to go straight to our twitter feed.

https://twitter.com/neilston_madras

PANTOMIME

No, your eyes are not deceiving you, it is February and already we are beginning to make plans for Christmas 2017. After discussions with the Parent Council and the Fundraising Committee along with the staff we have decided to try something new this year. As part of our Christmas celebrations we are heading off to the King's Theatre in Glasgow to see "Sleeping Beauty". The Pantomime is an excellent experience for the children to share with their peers and to begin getting ourselves in the Christmas spirit.

We will be taking our pre-school children as part of their transition programme who will be buddied up with their transition buddy also. The total ticket cost is £16.00 (including transport). The SOS group, in partnership with the school and Family Centre are able to subsidise this price so that you only require to **pay £6.00 per child**. This is excellent value for

money and an experience that everyone will enjoy. You will be able to begin paying up your £6.00 shortly via Parentpay.

If you would like more information about this then please contact the school office.

Parent Pay

I am delighted to inform you that we are now a Parent Pay campus. As I am sure you are aware the school has been online with Parent Pay since just before Christmas and the Family Centre came on line in January. Please remember that all future payments and trips etc will be required to be paid in this way. More information at www.parentpay.com

Lost Property

With potential for 400 users across the campus it is vital that belongings are clearly marked with your child's name, class/group. Every item should have their name on it. This is especially important for items of uniform which all look the same.

Items of lost property are stored for a short period of time before they are donated to charity. We don't have the capacity to store lost property indefinitely. If your child loses anything please check with the school / Centre administration team as soon as possible so that you can reclaim your items. If items are clearly marked with names and classes, it is much easier for us to track down their owners.

KEEPING SAFE

Please remember that both the school and Centre car parks within the campus are designated for staff only. This includes from 8:15am for those who access the MACS service. Staff arrive between 8:00 – 8:40. Having children being dropped off in the car park and running through the car park is not safe. Please make use of the streets and parking around the campus for this – ensuring that you comply with parking regulations.

Please avoid parking on the zig-zags at all times.

Parent Council & Support Our School – Update

Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday 28th February @ 6:30pm in the school.

Everyone is welcome to come along. We would be delighted to welcome new members from both the school and Family Centre.

SOS are exploring the possibility of a summer fun day to raise funds. This will be discussed further at our next meeting on the 7th March 2017.

Remember all of the money raised goes towards enhancing experiences for all of our children.

FEBRUARY

Thursday 9th – P7 Open Afternoon

Friday 24th P3 Assembly

MARCH

Friday 17th – P6 Open Afternoon

Friday 24th – Jotters Home (Sharing our learning)

29th & 30th – Parents' Evening

30th March – **Family Centre** Fundraising Group (Easter Fun Day)

Friday 31st – Last Day of school

APRIL

Monday 3rd – Spring Break begins

Tuesday 18th – School and Centre resume 'normal' service

Thursday 20th - House Fun Day