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MASTERTON NEWS

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After creating this newsletter it came to me that it may be the longest newsletter I've ever produced.

Hopefully there is something in it for everyone. Thanks to all the different people who have contributed towards it.

InService Day

On the InService day on Friday 14th November our focus was on the 'Transforming Learning' project being rolled out across Fife. All primary teachers from across the Dunfermline High School cluster were here at Masterton as well as the 'Transforming Learning' team. We undertook a full day's worth of training on the iPad before receiving our iPads.



To be honest I personally found it quite difficult to keep up with everything that was going on as the pace of the day was so quick. However, on reflection this was a good thing as it reminded me of when children find something difficult and the extra support they may need. I currently fall into that category.



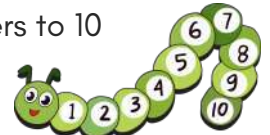
In the School - Classes

A big thank you to Brooke Conner and Abbie Innes (both P.7b) for writing this part of the newsletter about what the classes have been learning.

Primary 1a have been learning their sounds and how to blend these sounds together. They have also been learning how to form their letters correctly. Their topic is 'Celebrations Around the World'. They have been learning how to count in French as well as learning the songs for the Christmas show. In Number they have been learning how to count as well as their number bonds.

Primary 1b have been working on their phonics as well as blending their sounds. In Maths they have been learning about time. Also in Maths, they are learning which numbers are bigger and which numbers are smaller as well as their number bonds to 10. Their topic is also 'Celebrations Around the World' and they have learned about celebrations like **HALLOWEEN**

In P.1/2 class the children have been busy developing their skills in literacy. They have also been drawing and writing about different animals using different describing words. In Art they have followed instructions to create different pieces of work including hats, frogs and bugs. Each one was more complicated than the last. In Number P1 have been working on numbers to 10 while in P2 they have been working on place value.



Primary 2a have been exploring the topic of 'Transportation', learning about how different vehicles move, the various types of transport, and how they are used around the world. In Maths, they have been developing their understanding of place value, and in Writing they have been working hard on using clear finger spaces and placing capital letters correctly.

In Number, **P2b** have been developing their mental Maths skills in addition and subtraction by using 10 as an anchor and counting jumps on a number line. They have also been identifying 2D shapes. In Literacy they are working on comprehension. In RME, they have been learning about religious celebrations involving gifts and giving, including the Christian story of the Nativity.

Primary 3a they have been drawing pictures of Matilda and learning about the Matilda story by Roald Dahl. In Maths they have been learning about place value. In their Writing they have worked on character description and using adjectives. They have been also been learning about the Arctic for their topic.

Last term in **Primary 3b** they learned about Space for their project. In Maths they have been focussing upon money and the value of different coins as well as change. In Literacy they have been writing acrostic poems. They have also been working hard on the songs for the Christmas show.



In the School (Cont'd)



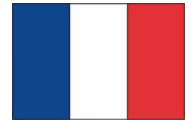
This term **Primary 4a's** are reading 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. They have been doing tasks in ICT about Charlie who is in the book. In Maths they have been learning about grid references and are focused on addition strategies to help in future. P.4a have also been trying Quentin Blake's style of artwork. In PE they have been practising for the athletics tournament.

This term **P.4b's** topic is Enterprise. This is linked to the upcoming Christmas Fayre. They also wrote fabulous fire work pieces. In Maths they have been working on addition and subtraction as well as learning about data. In ICT they have been learning about computer algorithms.

P.5a have been developing their multiplication facts. They have also recently learned about homophones and how to use them correctly. In Literacy they have been learning great comprehension skills as they find evidence in texts to support their responses. Their project has been a comparative study 'Scotland vs France' where they have learned a lot.



Last term, **P.5b's** topic was also Scotland vs France where they looked at the differences and similarities between the countries. In Maths they have been learning to add and subtract numbers. In Art they have been drawing amazing graffiti pictures on paper.



P.6a's topic was World War 1. They have learned about the horrible trenches and food they were forced to eat. In Literacy they have been pretending to be soldiers and writing letters to their family while they were at war. In ICT they have been programming micro bits. They have also started doing the Bikeability course.



Last term **P.6b** were also learning about World War 1. As part of this they learned about the food they had to eat. They also listened to a poppy story book series. In Maths they have been doing addition and subtraction of increasingly large numbers. They have also been learning about Rights Respecting School.



P.7a & b have been learning about World War II as our topic. They have learned about Anderson Shelters, The Rise of Hitler, Evacuation and Propaganda posters. They have been working on subtraction strategies and measure. In Literacy they have been doing the 'daily write' on various topics, improving their ambitious vocabulary and using a range of openers.



In the School – Activities

The P.7 classes had a visit from PARS school engagement team for their 'PARS tackle health' programme. The afternoon went very well with a visit from a couple of the PARS players as well. Following the visit we received an email containing the following comment:

“All the children were immaculately behaved and fully focussed throughout the afternoon.”

Well done to all the P.7 pupils. You should be proud of yourselves for receiving such praise!

Well done!

We also had a visit from the Scottish Woman's Football Team head coach, Melissa Andreatta. She came in and spoke to the girls' football team. We were very lucky to have a visit and I'd like to thank Mrs Hendry (mother of Liv in P.7b) for organising this. I've always encouraged girls to play football and it is great that so many play football now.

I should also note that the head coach was 'blown away' by the good manners shown by all the pupils. To hear that kind of thing really makes me so proud of the pupils at Masterton PS.



We recently had 2 teams taking part in a hockey tournament in Pitreavie. All went well and the pupils seemed to have had a good day. On the way back as I was driving some of the girls, there was an almighty scream from the back of the car and panic. I stopped the car only to be told that 'a giant spider hanging from a piece of string' had emerged. I opened the door expecting to see something like a tennis ball with pencils sticking out of it running around the back. Instead I was confronted with a tiny spider which I promptly removed. There were further rumours of spiders in the back of the car but we made it safely back without further incident.

P.4/5 took part in the 'Fun in Athletics' event at the Carnegie Centre. Out of 18 teams they finished a very respectable 7th. Well done to all the P.4 and 5 pupils who took part!



Basketball



The Masterton Primary School Basketball team were competing in the Fife Basketball finals this month and took 1st place in the Shield competition. 🏀

We are absolutely delighted with this result as the team have worked very hard over the past few years to train and develop their skills in basketball. It was clearly evident at the event that the team played with passion and dedication and strived to be their very best.

We are very proud of our pupils as they portray the Masterton School values in all they do!

Mrs Mohammed



Congratulations

Ardroy 2025

After P.7 had visited Ardroy Outdoor Education I asked Miss English for a 'couple of paragraphs' about Ardroy for the newsletter. Below are the 'couple of paragraphs'....

44 very excited pupils and 4 (almost) equally excited teachers boarded the bus on Monday and started the journey to Ardroy, leaving behind a few anxious parents (and maybe just a few who were looking forward to a few nights of peace). As the Rest and Be Thankful was closed, we had to go on the old Military Road. This proved to be quite an experience as we watched Chinook helicopters manoeuvre boulders and other equipment across the mountainside. The pupils were very impressed with the bus driver's skills in negotiating the tight corners and even gave him a round of applause on arrival to Ardroy. Both the driver and I were amused at overhearing one pupil on several occasions using the word 'nonchalant' to describe his calmness and driving ability.



As well as all the activities, Ardroy focuses on sustainability and teaches the pupils where their food comes from and the importance of reducing food waste. Each evening, before dinner, the pupils met to watch and discuss videos on Global Goals. This was followed up in the dinner hall. Food was put on each table but the pupils were given the opportunity to help themselves to as much or as little as they wanted. If they were still hungry, they could ask for more, (and many of them did!), but encouragement was given to take smaller amounts and to finish what was on their plates, before taking more. Pupils took it in turn to be 'Waste Warriors' for each meal. Their job was to clear all the plates and to scrape any food waste into a specific bucket, which was then weighed at the end of the meal and then turned into compost on the site. This was repeated during breakfast and dinner. The pupils were delighted to get 0% waste on Thursday morning and very close to it on a couple of other occasions.



Each group had opportunities to do a 'Woodland Walk', which consisted of learning about different flora and fauna in the forest, learning how to make fire using a flint and steel with cotton wool and learning how to splinter wood for a fire. This was followed by toasting marshmallows and smores... it's hungry work making a fire! My group were lucky to see a beautiful red squirrel feeding from one of the many nut stores in the forest.



Jacob's Ladder was one of the most popular activities. This is where the pupils are attached to a rope and have to haul themselves up a ladder, consisting of thick wooden horizontal poles, quite some distance apart. It is a daunting experience but all the pupils managed to get at least part of the way up, with many reaching the very top. It was great to see the encouragement the pupils gave to one another, the resilience of initially being terrified and then the elation of trying again and accomplishing something they thought impossible. Some pupils even did it blindfolded, which was very brave!

Despite the daily rain and windy weather, all groups had the chance to get out on the water in a rafted canoe on the one calm day we had. This involved two or three canoes being attached together with pupils each having one paddle. The pupils had to work together as a team to row across the loch. Some groups were lucky enough to be joined by seals on their trip, whilst others stopped off at a beach for a stone skipping session and played games in the canoes.



Ardroy 2025 (Cont'd)

In addition to the onsite activities, pupils went out for one full day, taking a packed lunch and returning in the afternoon. Different groups went to different places, depending on their instructor and the choice of the group. Some combined their whole day out with abseiling and canoeing, whilst others took the opportunity to go for a walk to see a beautiful waterfall, work together to make a den or to climb a hill. One thing that linked all the activities was the desire of all the pupils to get as wet as possible. It was guaranteed that if there was a puddle of any size, or a stream, the pupils would jump in. I believe that Mrs Wilson joined in very enthusiastically with her group (by choice!), whilst Mrs Mitchell caused great hilarity by slipping over in the mud (but was thankfully unhurt). There were some interesting discussions about where and how to wild wee and about how sphagnum moss could be used as an alternative to toilet paper, although I'm not sure that many were keen to try it out!

Once back at Ardroy, pupils had the chance to reflect on their day's activities with their instructors and write in their diaries, before meeting for dinner. Following this and dorm inspection, (along with entertainment for the staff for additional points), the instructors organised evening activities. These consisted of a quiz, with clues dotted around the grounds, a 'team challenge', the 'night line', (where pupils guide each other through obstacles with one person blindfolded), and the labyrinth. As it was Mrs Mohammed's first time at Ardroy, I persuaded her to do this. There was much hilarity as we both tried to wriggle our way through a series of enclosed tunnels, (not very easy when you're 6ft 2!), head first and wearing full waterproofs. One of the highlights of the games evening was watching the pupils, (and Mrs Wilson!), play 'human hungry hippos.' It was very funny to watch the four teams pushing out their 'hippo' to collect balls and bring them back to their team.

The only other thing left to do was to get the pupils to sleep. After the initial excitement of the first night sleeping in a dorm and being away from home, the pupils settled down quickly each evening. I was with the boys and, by Tuesday night, they were all so exhausted I didn't hear a peep from them after 10pm.

So much learning took place during the week - from facts about how to know if water is clean enough to drink, learning about invasive and native plant species and the components of how to make a fire, to learning how to work as a team, going out of your comfort zone when things are quite challenging, overcoming fears, making their own beds, eating and sleeping together and being away from home for a few days. The behaviour was superb throughout the week and it was a real pleasure to have spent some quality time with the young individuals. They did themselves, you as parents and the school very proud and I hope they remember their week at Ardroy for many years to come. My thanks to all the staff who gave up their time to accompany the pupils.

Miss English

Thank you



Book Week Scotland

The Reading Ambassadors were very excited to welcome some special guests into our assemblies during Book Week Scotland. Representatives from the On Fife Libraries team brought local author Alistair Chisholm into school who delivered an exciting and interactive presentation to P4-7 about his new book called Blitzers. He told us all about how he became an author and about the many different types of books he writes. The most popular part of his presentation was about the characters from his new book and he invited us to create some of our own. The event was very well received by the pupils and Waterstones received so many orders for the signed copies of Alistair's book, that they ran out of stock! After the event, even more pupils decided to order the book and Waterstones have kindly organised to have more copies sent to Alistair for signing and are delivering them into school very soon. During his visit, Mrs Stirling asked Alistair if we could 'adopt' him as our school author so we could exchange letters and stories, and he was delighted to accept the invitation! He wrote to the librarian after his visit to say that he'd had a fantastic day and that ***"Masterton was brilliant, one of the most fun visits I've done. The kids and teachers were all really engaged and positive and I know it will be one of my highlights of this year's Book Week Scotland."***

Alistair's Dragonstorm series of books were the inspiration for our story and artwork competition. The ambassadors were swamped with fantastic entries and after much deliberation, they chose 4 winners who received a £10 Book Token. Well done everyone and thank you for all your hard work.

The ambassadors visited Duloch library and made a wish list of books to help keep our library stock up to date. Our volunteer helper Mrs Swanson was very impressed by the behaviour of the ambassadors and praised the older members for supporting the infants by reading to them and helping them to choose books.

Many thanks to Mrs Dargie, our staff member and professional storyteller for entertaining the pupils during assembly with tales about dragons and hedgehogs. The children (and staff) are always enthralled by her stories! Look out for an invite to her Storytelling afternoon for P1 families very soon.

Our first ever Book Cafe break time was really well attended and we are now looking to repeat this. We're very grateful to the staff who helped supervise our readers during this event.

Finally, many thanks to all the families who came along to Shared Start for our book bag gifting and other literacy themed class activities. Your positive feedback was very welcome.

Mrs Stirling





Parent Council

The Halloween Disco went very well. The children were decked out in their finest scary outfits and looked great. They all seemed to have a fantastic time.

As the majority of the P.7s were at Ardroy and unable to attend, the pupils who were away were given a gift of some Halloween goodies on the Monday after their return. My thanks to the Parent Council for organising this.

Thank You

Dates to Remember

Just a quick reminder of some important dates for December:



Thursday 4th December	Christmas Fayre	3.15 - 4.00pm / 4.15 - 5.00pm
Thursday 11th December	Christmas Lunch	
Monday 15th December	P.1-3 'Knock Knock: The Nativity'	9.30 - 10.30am / 1.45 - 2.45pm
Monday 15th December	P.7 Christmas Carols & Café	11.00am - 12.00pm
Tuesday 16th December	P.4-6 'What Christmas Means to Me'	9.30 - 10.30am / 1.45 - 2.45pm



And finally.....

With Christmas just around the corner I am hoping that everyone will be able to enjoy the different activities which will be taking place in the school over the next few weeks.

I look forward to seeing you there.

S Humphries
Headmaster

