

# West Primary School

Bun-sgoil an Iar

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**Head Teacher: Mrs Lynne McGinn**



Director of Children's Services: Steven Quinn

Our Ref: LM/CC

Date: March 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

With the Spring break fast approaching I would like to provide you with an update of events and activities that have taken place during what has been an extremely busy term.

## **Staff Update**

I am pleased to welcome Ms Muir to our team of Support Staff. Ms Muir has replaced Mrs Park. I am delighted to share that Miss Thomson (P2/1) is getting married during the Spring break and she will return to school as Mrs Hutton. I am sure you will join me in wishing Miss Thomson and her fiancé all the very best for their big day. Another lovely piece of news is that Mrs McLean (P4b) is going to have another baby in the Autumn. Mrs McLean will start her maternity leave at the end of the Summer term.

## **Gazebo Update**

As you are aware our gazebo was set on fire by vandals at the end of last session. I am delighted that the loss adjustor has now confirmed that our insurance will cover the claim for the gazebo. A company has now been instructed to replace the gazebo and we hope the new one will be ready some time during the Summer term. Unfortunately, it would appear that the 5 youths who deliberately and wilfully started the fire have not yet been identified. Discussions with the Police are still ongoing.

## **Building Works**

I am also delighted to be able to confirm that the ground level of the school will be repainted. Works will start in the main hall during the Spring break and corridors, classrooms and communal areas will be painted over the next few months. The upstairs of the building will be rewired during the Summer break and upstairs will be painted thereafter. Every classroom has now been refurbished with new tables and chairs for the children and staff, much to the delight of the children. Our Flexible Learning space upstairs will be entirely refurbished next term and I am very grateful to Renfrewshire Council for the financial investment they have made to enhance the learning environment for children and staff.

## **Parent Teacher Meetings**



Following on from the success of September's 'hybrid' approach we are delighted to, once again, offer parents the choice of a school appointment or a telephone call. 93% of our parents/ carers took up this offer and we hope to surpass that figure this term. Following our survey, appointments have been issued for Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Please contact your child's class teacher via Seesaw if you are unsure when your appointment is.

## **Achievements**

It has been an incredibly busy term. Primary 7 started off the term with an excellent Burns Supper, enjoyed by 140 parents and invited guests on the day. The children also took part of their performance to Oakshaw Trinity Church. Children from all stages have also participated in a variety of activities to celebrate Children's Mental Health Week, Languages Week, Safer Internet Week, Scottish Gaelic Week and Science Week. We are extremely proud of our 3 finalists in the Mother Tongue: Other Tongue national poetry competition and we were thrilled when we had a 'West winner' for each category we had entered.

Sofiia P3: P1-3 winner

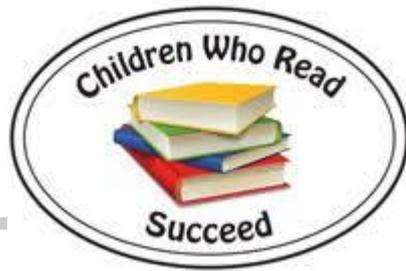
Ariana P5: P4-7 winner

On Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March we had a special assembly to celebrate the school raising £15, 530.21 for Macmillan. This money has been raised over a number of years and Kirsteen from the Macmillan Trust came along to talk to the children about the real and meaningful difference that our fundraising has made. It was a very poignant assembly as cancer has touched the lives of so many of our families. Well done and thank you to everyone who has organised or participated in the events over the years.

## **Curriculum Updates**

### **Literacy**

World Book Day was a huge success this year and congratulations to all the children who completed the 'Rainbow Challenge' of reading a variety of genres in February. A special well done to all the winners and we hope they have enjoyed reading their new book. The popular Skoobmobile continues to be a regular visitor to West. Last term all stages had the opportunity to have time on the bus and borrow books. We welcome them back to West throughout the Summer Term. As well as this the Skoobmobile will be here after school for families to jump on and borrow books. Our recent Book Fair was also very well received by the children and we would like to thank all of the parent volunteers who helped during the course of the week.



Alongside reading and encouraging children to be life-long readers, we have had a huge writing focus from Nursery to Primary 7 since August. All teaching staff have now been fully trained in the Talk for Writing programme. The Talk for Writing approach enables children to read and write independently for a variety of audiences and purposes within different subjects. A key feature is that children internalise the language structures needed to write through 'talking the text', as well as close reading. The approach moves from dependence towards independence, with the teacher using shared and guided teaching to develop the ability in children to write creatively and powerfully. This term our focus has been on non-fiction writing and there has been a lively buzz around the school. We have celebrated writing achievements within our celebration assemblies and the children had the opportunity to walk along the red carpet. Well done to all our Star Writers this term! A Writing Showcase is planned for Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023 from 2pm - 3pm as we want to share with you the fantastic writing work that has been going on within West. Save the date!

**Abair gu bheil sinn air a bhith fìor thrang anns a' Chlas Ghàidhlig is sinn a' dèanamh fiùghar mhòr ri na tha thiginn gu ruige làithean-saora na Càisge.**

The whole school were delighted to take part in "World Gaelic Week". Our Gaelic class welcomed P3a and P3b to hear a Gaelic story and our Gaelic class enjoyed a trip to visit Glendale Gaelic Primary in Glasgow. A whole school Gaelic themed assembly was greatly enjoyed by all and it was lovely to see over 400 children singing in Gaelic together. Mr MacInnes and Ms MacKenzie ensured that all children across our school received a Gaelic lesson during World Gaelic week. Our Gaelic teachers continue to have great fun practising with the children around the school.

The Gaelic class have been very fortunate lately to welcome some very skilled and talented Gaelic speaking visitors. This is so important, as it allows the children to hear Gaelic spoken by a range of speakers and to use the language in interesting new ways. They were visited by Gaelic musical drama group "Hùb-hàb" who taught the children about different kinds of flowers and their Gaelic names. A youth worker from the Gaelic Council (Comunn na Gàidhlig) visited to teach the children some fun group games and musicians from "Fèisean nan Gàidheal" performed at the whole school assembly. They have also been holding a Zoom



Call each week through E-sgoil to help practise conversational Gaelic. Parents (and some grandparents) were welcomed to class to learn how to use the Giglets Gaelic reading software and enjoyed exploring the Gaelic books at the Book Fair. Children and staff are busy preparing for the Drama Festival which is taking place in Greenock at the end of the month and are looking forward to sharing their performance with families!

Gaelic and Italian learners lunchtime clubs have been taking place and the clubs have now passed the 100 hours mark of time spent on lessons through Duolingo for schools. Is math a rinn iad! Well done to everyone taking part!

## Numeracy

This term we have tried hard to engage our parents and carers to share not just **what** children learn in numeracy but **how** children learn. The National Numeracy Parental Engagement Programme has focussed on Primaries 1,3 and 7. Engaging homework activities from the Family Maths Toolkit have been sent home and children and parents are enjoying the tasks set and recording findings in their journals. Iain from National Numeracy was warmly welcomed to the school on 22nd February and he discussed with parents ways to help their child love maths. Parents who attended this session gave very positive feedback and some have taken part in the National Numeracy Challenge on their website.

Mrs Neilson is a Modelling and Coaching Officer for Renfrewshire Council and she continues to work within some stages in the school. The children love Mrs Neilson coming into class and staff have enjoyed the activities too. The Modelling and Coaching Officers from the attainment team have worked with the school to provide some Family Fun Maths sessions. Primary 2 families enjoyed sessions in February and Primary 4-6 families enjoyed a session in March. The sessions were well attended and there was a lovely atmosphere at these events. Parents and children enjoyed the maths games and gave some very positive feedback. Families who attended were gifted a set of playing cards and an activities booklet in order to be able to continue some of the family maths fun at home.

## Raising Attainment

In August 2021, as part of our drive to raise attainment, our Success Squad was formed. The Success Squad Team is funded through our Pupil Equity Funds. (PEF). The Success Squad are based in the Discovery Space in room 18. They continue to focus on raising children's confidence, skills and attainment through small group sessions and individual support in numeracy and literacy activities. They have recently welcomed two new members to the team. Grace, our Reading Gran is enjoying listening to some of our P3 children reading every Tuesday afternoon. Danny, our new Key Worker, is a popular figure in our playground at lunchtimes, ensuring fair play in the football area and supporting children to participate in games with their friends. In the afternoons he works as part of the team to raise attainment through health and wellbeing activities. The Success Squad are available to

support any families who need food parcels or items of school uniform. Any families requiring help should contact them through Seesaw.

## STEM

At West, we are passionate about STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), paving the way for future thinkers and creators. We are keen to let our children experience real-life problems and solutions using hands-on learning that is fun and interesting. P6 pupils have been learning about engineering; they visited Howden in Renfrew, where they were given a site tour and met engineers who spoke to them about their own experiences in STEM. Staff have been offered professional learning to develop their knowledge of coding and fair testing in science, as well as pneumatics and hydraulics and light and sound workshops. Mrs Paterson has been part of a cluster programme that helps to promote and resource STEM activities within the classroom and she has used funding to update our school science resources- all of which have positively impacted learning and attitudes within the school. The children were so enthusiastic and inspired after experiencing the challenges and learning more about how STEM fits into the world around them. We will continue to look for ways to enhance learning opportunities for our pupils through STEM education. It is hoped that we can deliver new and exciting experiences that spark curiosity and build problem-solving skills.

Primary 5a were recently involved in a very exciting opportunity at Paisley Central Library. The children had the opportunity to work with Matt Smith, a digital graphic designer. On the 17th April some of our P6 children will take part in a workshop run by Studio Louter. This workshop will enable the children to make an e-story book for the new Paisley Museum, using an engineering design process. The trainers are coming from the Netherlands to deliver this.

### Information Technology

A much needed investment, in excess of £70,000, has been made in IT over the past 3 years. This has made such a difference to children and staff. iPads are now in use within every classroom and the nursery class. The children are able to share their learning via Seesaw and are continuing to learn to use a range of other apps.

Last month we received another 30 Chromebooks. These Chromebooks were distributed across nursery to Primary 7, further adding to the Chromebooks within each classroom that the children have access to on a daily basis.

We celebrated Safer Internet Day on the 7th of February. As part of this P6 and P7 had a visit from Adrian who is an Ethical Hacking student from Abertay University. Adrian spoke to the children about internet safety, further reinforcing the important ways to protect themselves online.

Some of the P6 Digital Leaders were involved in a digital project with the children from Maxwellton Park Nursery. The Digital Leaders showed them how to use the Chatterkids app to animate their creations and pictures. The Digital Leaders are also planning to use this app to help with P1 transition next term. The Digital Leaders have also been busy with

regular meetings to discuss their digital action plan and also composed a newsletter to offer internet safety advice to families.

As a whole school we have applied for the Digital Schools Award, as recognition for our use of digital technology across the school. We are currently waiting for our accreditation visit and we will let everyone know via Seesaw of the outcome.

Just a reminder that if anyone is experiencing any issues with Seesaw, or needs some advice about using any of its features, then please speak to your child's class teacher and they can offer advice. Miss Hartley is also available at the end of each day at the Primary 1 exit to answer any Seesaw queries.

### **Extra Curricular Activities and Outings**

P7 recently enjoyed their residential trip to Lockerbie Manor and the children who did not attend participated in a full programme of sporting and cooking activities in school. P2, P4 and P5 children have thoroughly enjoyed trips to the Glasgow Science Centre and P3 are looking forward to visiting the Tall Ship at the beginning of next term. P6 participated in a 'Buoyed Up' workshop at the City of Glasgow College and P1 will enjoy a trip in the Summer term. P3 are also going to be involved in a drama workshop and performance with West College Scotland before the end of term.

At West we are proud of the range of extracurricular activities we offer to the children. This term, in addition to right2dance taster sessions for Nursery, P1 and P2, Music sessions for Nursery, P3 and P5 we have offered a host of extra curricular clubs including Dance, Basketball, Multisports, Fun Club, Writing Club, Junior and Senior Choir, Running Club, Netball, Chess Club, boys and girls football and Gaelic and Italian Duolingo Clubs. Alongside friends from Wallace Primary and Glencoats Primary some of our P7 children have taken part in the Evolve programme run by Youth Services. Thank you to volunteer staff, Active Schools, Mr MacQueen and our partner organisations who make this possible.

### **Friends Of The West Parent Council**

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our parent volunteers who run our Friends of the West Parent Council. If you are interested in joining the Parent Council please come along to our next meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> May. Our Parent Council has some exciting plans for the Summer term - please look out for upcoming events.

### **Transition Events**

Mrs Wiszniewski is very busy finalising plans for the nursery children who will be moving on to Primary 1 in August. We are expecting another big year group and can't wait to meet our new children. Mrs Reid is also very busy finalising plans for our P7 children who will be moving on to high school.

### **Support Parcels**

Morrison's in Falside Road have been providing us with weekly boxes of food, toiletries and household products. Thanks to their support, we can provide a large food parcel to around 15 of our families on a weekly basis. The bags contain items like breakfast cereals, tins of soup and meat products, pasta and long-life milk. Please contact the school office if you think we can help with a parcel. This can be a one-off parcel due to unforeseen circumstances, or you may feel you need a bit of help on a regular basis. A text will be sent to you when a parcel is available, and they can usually be collected on a Friday between 2.15 and 2.45 pm.

Finally, next term promises to be just as busy. We look forward to welcoming you to our Writing Showcase, Sports Day and transition events. It has been agreed that all schools and ELCCs will close on Monday 8 May 2023, for King Charles III Coronation. Our school website and the council website have both been updated.

I hope you find this newsletter interesting. Please feel free to contact us via phone or email and suggest any ways in which we can make improvements to our communications with you. If you would like to follow us on Facebook, please search for 'West Primary School' and 'like' our page. Please note that this page is another way for the school to provide you with information on events and successes from the school. However specific questions or enquires should be directed as usual to the school and not through the Facebook page. Please also follow us on Twitter@ELccWest. If you would prefer a paper copy of this newsletter please contact the school office and the staff will be happy to arrange for a copy to be sent home with your child.

I am very much looking forward to the final term and I would like to thank you for your support to date. 'West is definitely Best' and I hope that this newsletter gives you a flavour of the learning opportunities offered to your children. We try our best to work with our families and community partners to provide your children with a wide range of opportunities and learning experiences to enable them to develop and flourish as individuals.

In the meantime have a lovely Spring break when it comes and let's hope the weather is kind to us all.

Kind regards / Le dùrachd

Lynne McGinn

Mrs L McGinn

Head Teacher / Ceannard na Sgoile

31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023	Nursery and school closes for Spring break.
17 <sup>th</sup> April 2023	Nursery and school reopens
1 <sup>st</sup> May 2023	Holiday
8 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	Holiday (King Charles III Coronation)
12 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	Writing Showcase (2 00 pm)
15 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	Friends of the West Parent Council Meeting (6 00 pm)
26 <sup>th</sup> /29 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	Holiday
30 <sup>th</sup> May 20223	In Service Day: School closed
7 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Sports Day
13 <sup>th</sup> - 15 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Castlehead Transition Days for P7
22 <sup>nd</sup> June 2023	P7 'West Fest'
23 <sup>rd</sup> June 2023	P7 Prizegiving Service for Parents (10 00am)
26 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Nursery Graduation
27 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Nursery and school closes at 1.00pm

