



# Laurencekirk School Newsletter



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<http://laurencekirk.aberdeenshire.sch.uk>

December 2016

OUR BUILD IS UNDER WAY

IN THIS ISSUE

## Communication

by Mr Boyd

A massive thank you to all parents/carers who have taken the many many e-mails, Xpressions Apps and Text messages whilst we have been moving over from our old paper based communication system to the new high-tech instant communication.

To date over 60% of the school has registered for the Xpression App (available from the Windows, Google Play and App stores of all devices. This not only means we can communicate with you at no cost, but that you can communicate with us if the message is an open message.

To find out, just click on the message- if it opens up, you will then see a "type here" bar on the top of it. Simply type in your reply and then press the Return button (not the done button!).

As we now have completed phase 1 by having all first contacts enrolled, it is time to enroll all other contacts that wish to be part of our communication revolution.

If you are not receiving our e-mails from Laurencekirk\_school with the address [14EC085@groupcallalert.com](mailto:14EC085@groupcallalert.com) please email the school at [Laurencekirk.sch@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:Laurencekirk.sch@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) with your child's name and your contact details. From January other contacts will be able to enroll in our Xpressions app and

for e-mail- please get your details to us without delay.

Mearns Academy will also be coming on board soon so it is a perfect opportunity to have P7 parents on board now.

Many parents have been asking why the excitement of pushing the app. Simply put, it saves money. We have a very limited budget and each time we text parents it costs us. Sending to the App does not. All we need is for you to keep the notification on in the App and keep checking it.

Aberdeenshire Council is also asking its parents to leave feedback about the app at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/AberdeenshireSchools>

Have your say!



## . 4x5x26x3

### Numbertalk- the new way to teach maths

Feedback is important in all that we do.

Page 2



### Building a school for our children

Building blocks are only one part of making our learners learning fit for purpose, but it is an important part.

Page 3



### Growing our brains

We are not born fixed in our intelligence. We need strategies to grow!

Page 3

# Pudsey

by Pupil Council

We had a great time raising £641.20 for Pudsey. The Pupil Council organised a range of activities to raise funds for Children in Need.

Our activities included guessing the spots on the cake, dress in spotty clothes and face painting.

Three people won some Pudsey prizes for dressing up in spots.

We would like to thank the staff for supporting our idea, Mrs Cuthill and our cake bakers, Mrs Irvine for coming in on her day off to paint faces and all the parents for helping their children in dressing in spots and the pupils for dressing up on the day.



# Our construction project

by Mr Boyd

The construction project is now in full swing with entry to our new Nursery, life skills room and sensory room imminent. We can't wait to get in and start using it.

The school's new extension, which the Out of School Club, Lunch Club and Coffee Morning will let the General Purpose Room from us is developing with the outer shell almost complete.

## Transport

**A massive thank you to all drivers.** The car park is now safer than it has ever been before and the children feel that their school is a safe place not only to be in but also to be around. Please continue to keep to this arrangement. It should be noted that the car park is not part of the winter clearing programme for our janitorial staff and that icy conditions may make the roads unsuitable for children and cars. The pavement around the car park will be gritted. This gives even more reason for the area to be avoided by cars at pick up and drop off times.

**Please be respectful towards our neighbours and ensure that a safe distance is kept from driveways and turning points.**

**Thanks for helping in this matter.**



## WATER BOTTLES

We promote hydration in our classrooms but this should be through water and not juice. Juice has stained our carpets and marked the children's valuable work. We ask for your support in this matter.

Children with juice will be asked to put it in their bag and take home. They will then be offered the use of our water fountain for the rest of the day.

## OUTSIDE PLAYTIMES

Fresh air is good for all children. Therefore, we will send children out in almost all weathers. Please ensure they have appropriate outer and foot wear.

If they want to play football on the field they **must** have a change of footwear and school uniform. Some children are very disappointed when they do not get a chance to play due to forgetting their change of clothing.

P1-3 football should begin when we get our new playground.

## WINTER WEATHER

The staff are dedicated to educating your child/ren during all times of the year. We have plans in place to provide a service in most weathers but respect your decision to send or not send your child to school if you deem their safety is at risk when travelling.

The school will contact parents via Text Message if the normal day will be interrupted. This includes before or during a school day. **It is important that telephone numbers are kept up to date.**

Information will also be available on Aberdeenshire Council's Website, <https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/Apps/schools-closures/> The School Emergency Closure Line 0870 054 4999, PIN- 022060) and via our Parent Council Face Book site.

It is always our priority to stay open and we will use a variety of methods to ensure this can happen:

1. Liaising with Mearns Academy
2. Making decisions to open later in the day, allowing the school and its local area to be cleared and assessed.

## HOT TOPICS

**STAFFING**

Mrs Dayal one of our dedicated PSAs who has been on a temporary contract has been successful in obtaining a job in Bervie School – we wish her well.

Mrs Keith, a teacher is at the school since her graduation, and even as a student teacher, has moved to St Cyrus in order that both her teaching days are at one school.

We have attempted over 13 weeks to recruit a visiting specialist in French & PE. Like many other Local Authorities recruitment is proving a challenge and we have to become creative in our approach to ensure all learners receive a balanced curriculum. It is with this in mind that Mrs Anderson (currently in P2) has been successful in recruitment to full time and for consistency will take P2 Monday to Friday.

One of our recently appointed staff, Mrs Smith, has experience in teaching French in class and she will support teachers and children in developing this. Mrs Allen will teach PE.

Mrs Clark will become responsible for the development of children in P6. She is a very enthusiastic and experienced teacher in all stages of the school.

Whilst this appears very unsettling, I am sure you will agree that we have tried to avoid this by reaching out through recruitment. As this has been unsuccessful we have been left with no choice but to look at the talents within our existing staff to meet the needs of all learners.

**CLASS STRUCTURE**

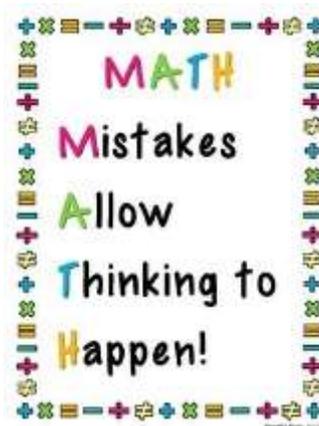
Laurencekirk is a very popular school and it is a requirement to be able to educate children in the catchment area. This can mean that classes may have to be restructured. This is always a last option but parents should be aware of this throughout the year.

# Developing Number Sense

by Mrs Millard

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our teaching and learning in school. Recently we embarked on a project called Developing Number Sense where we develop children's understanding of mathematics and numeracy by looking at different strategies.

We have started by incorporating Number Talks in our lessons. This is where a teacher writes a problem on the board and the children mentally find a solution. During this time we encourage our learners to listen to the strategies that have been used to find the answer. By sharing ideas and talking about them we clarify our own thinking, build up a range of strategies and investigate mathematical relationships.



If an incorrect answer is given then this gives us an opportunity to learn why the solution is incorrect and how we can put it right. Quite often the children realise their error and correct it themselves during a number talk.



## Growth Mindset

by Mrs Allen

*Growth Mindset, "...people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work – brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment." Carol Dweck, (29 Aug 2013)*

Since the In-Service training all staff have been very busy encouraging everyone in the school to develop a growth mindset.

Our goal is to enable every child to feel motivated to strive harder and to understand that mistakes made in their learning is an excellent opportunity to learn at a deeper level.

Growth mindset language and activities will help build children's confidence in their learning across the whole of the curriculum and we really hope you will talk to your children about this. You may hear in the coming weeks discussion about Learning Pits, and the different types of mistakes that we make.

You may already have heard your child saying "I can't do it...yet!" This language and thinking has been promoted throughout our Bounce Back assemblies over the past 18 months and we are very proud that the children of Laurencekirk School are promoting this to each other throughout the day.

## Nursery Corner

by The Nursery Team

December is officially the most exciting time of the year in Laurencekirk Nursery! The children's enthusiasm is infectious and all staff are now firmly in the festive spirit! As always, we are exploiting this enthusiasm by planning lots of creative learning opportunities around it! In literacy, the children have been listening to stories and talking about the characters. They really loved the nativity story and (with a wee bit of help!!) have been able to use their knowledge of this to create their own version called.... BethleMayhem! It looks great and we are so excited to share this learning with you all. The children have worked hard to learn their songs and this is a great way of supporting them to develop their vocabulary. Our recent cold snap, provided a great context for learning in literacy as the children transferred their writing skills from paper to frost! The road safety walks this term, have supported our children to develop important life skills and we will create further opportunities to go out in to our community to reinforce these next term. Finally, over the Christmas break please continue to enjoy sharing and talking about books together, perfect for a chilly day!



The build!



Forest Schools



## Parent Council

by Nicola Campbell

What an amazing year it has been! There are so many people we need to thank, to start we want to thank the new intake of parents/carers who have joined the Parent Council.

We are only as effective as the people who get involved, you make a huge difference to what is achievable! The parents who took the time to teach Bikeability. It was a lot of fun this year and the kids did really well.

So many of you use the clothes bin at the school that this has been a huge source of fundraising for us this year. Some of the money has been reinvested in the school- a new shed to store the children's toys.

The local businesses have all been so generous to our raffle that it was the best we have ever had!! We are so grateful to you all.

To everyone who helped, donated & attended the Christmas Fayre. It's our biggest event of the year and so much work & love was invested in it. We are delighted to announce that this year we raised £2575.26. However, watch this space,,, as exciting changes are ahead, to be part of it all. Have your voice heard, please come along to our monthly meetings, you are very welcome.

May we take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and an exciting New Year.



## Festivities

by Mr Boyd



### Parties

You should now have received your advent calendar of dates for Christmas. This includes the Christmas Parties. For convenience they are also included on the next page.

Please note that organizing these parties is a rather big task and we try to keep routines to normal on the day. Lunches will be at the normal time and home lunches will be dismissed into the playground. The children should also come in at 1.15pm through these doors.

### Christmas Lunch- Thursday 15 Dec

#### RED

Turkey Roast with gravy

Mealie

Chipolata

Potatoes, carrots, sweetcorn, sprouts

#### BLUE

Quorn Roast

Mealie

Chipolata

Potatoes, carrots, sweetcorn, sprouts

Dessert

Sticky Toffee pudding with Vanilla Cream

No other menus (except special diets) will run on the day.

**Orders will be taken as normal on the day**

### Christmas Service

The Pupil Council will host our annual Christmas Service in the church at 11.00am on 21 December. Please come and join us. Collection will go to UNICEF

### Festive Friday

Children can wear a Christmas jumper with their school uniform on Friday, 14 December and bring a donation towards UNICEF.

## Diary Dates

Subject to change, addition and cancellation.

| Date                         | Event   | Times          |
|------------------------------|---|----------------|
| Thursday, 15 December        | Christmas School Lunch  |                |
| <b>Thursday, 15 December</b> | <b>P5, P5/6 and P6 of P6/7 Party</b>                            | <b>1.15 pm</b> |
| Friday, 16 December          | P1 Nativity for parents/carers                                  | 9.30 am        |
| <b>Friday, 16 December</b>   | <b>P1, P2, P2 of P2/3 Party</b>                                 | <b>1.15pm</b>  |
| Friday, 16 December 2016     | Festive Friday – wear Christmas Jumpers and donate to UNICEF    | All day        |
| Monday, 19 December          | P3 of P2/3, P3, P3/4 and P4 Party                               | Afternoon      |
| Tuesday, 20 December         | P6, P7 of P6/7 & 7 Party  | Afternoon      |
| Wednesday, 21 December       | Christmas Service led by Pupil Council at church (NO TUCK SHOP) | 11.00 am       |
| Wednesday, 21 December       | School closes for Christmas                                     | 3.15 pm        |
| Thursday, 5 January 2017     | School open to children   | 9.00 am        |
| Friday, 20 January 2017      | Primary 5 Assembly and parental visit to class.                 | 9.30 am        |
| Friday, 27 January 2017      | Burns Assembly in school.                                       | 9.30 am        |
| Thursday, 9 February         | Occasional Holiday – School closed                              |                |
| Friday, 10 February          | Occasional Holiday – School closed                              |                |
| Monday, 13 February          | Mid Term – School closed  |                |
| Tuesday, 14 February         | In-service Day (No pupils)                                      |                |
| Wednesday, 15 February       | In-service Day (No pupils)                                      |                |
| Friday, 24 February          | Primary 2/3 assembly and parental visit to class.               | 9.30 am        |
| Friday, 3 March              | Primary 5/6 assembly and parental visit to class                | 9.30 am        |
| Friday, 10 March             | Primary 2 assembly and parental visit to class                  | 9.30 am        |
| Friday, 17 March             | Primary 7 assembly and parental visit to class                  | 9.30 am        |
| Friday, 24 March             | Primary 3/4 assembly and parental visit to class.               | 9.30 am        |
| Friday, 31 March             | Easter service at church, led by Pupil Council.                 | 11.00 am       |
| Friday, 31 March             | Spring holiday  | 3.15 pm        |
| Tuesday, 18 April            | School returns  | 9.00 am        |
| Monday, 1 May                | Public Holiday – School Closed                                  |                |

| <b>Date</b>           | <b>Event</b>                                    | <b>Times</b>             |
|-----------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Wednesday, 3 May      | Nursery Sponsored Walk                          | Normal nursery sessions. |
| Thursday, 4 May       | Sponsored Walk for P1-7, parents and friends.   | 1.30 pm                  |
| Tuesday, 9 May        | Sports Day P1- P7                               | All day                  |
| Wednesday, 10 May     | Nursery Sports Day                              | Normal nursery sessions  |
| Friday, 12 May        | Primary 6 assembly and parental visit to class  | 11.00 am                 |
| Friday, 19 May        | Primary 3 assembly and parental visit to class. |                          |
| Week Beginning 15 May | Parents' Evening (on request)                   |                          |
| Tuesday, 23 May       | Sports Day P1 – P7 (back up only)               | All day                  |
| Wednesday, 24 May     | Nursery Sports Day (back up only)               | Normal nursery sessions  |
| Friday, 30 June       | Primary 7 leavers service at church             | 10.00 am                 |
| Friday, 30 June       | Summer holidays -School Closed                  | 3.15pm                   |

Further dates will appear throughout the year.

Please also see your child's class newsletter for dates pertinent to their class.