



# Laurencekirk School Newsletter



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

September 2017

## IN THIS ISSUE

## Spotlight on Reporting

by Mr Boyd



We have spent the last year consulting with parents, staff and researching the benefits to school reports. It was very clear that there was little benefit to receiving an end of year progress report when the information for helping your child was too late to do anything about.

Taking this onboard and the Government's latest information on Family Learning, we want to work with you to better understand and engage in the learning process. With this in mind we have revamped our reporting structure.

Reports will be issued throughout the year, focusing on one particular area, showing evidence of your child's input to their learning but just as importantly giving next steps that you can do to give your child an advantage over their learning.

When reports are given out they will be in a folder that **should be returned to school** promptly. These folders will be accessible to the children regularly and we would welcome feedback on your child's learning each term.

We want to get your child's learning right and we can only do this with your help.

Reporting should be seen as more than just a formal written report and open day/evenings are shown at the back of this newsletter. As well as these more casual days, we will of course offer you a Parents Evening. This will be offered through our Groupcall system meaning you can book out times that you can make.

There is also an opportunity to have a say in what you want to see at the end of assembly when you return back to class. Assembly is another opportunity to report. We will offer a choice of foci via our Xpressions App. Out of 300+ children only 75 parents have not enrolled. Are you missing out on having your say? Visit your app store on your phone to download the app.

As with anything new, we will make mistakes and things may seem a little rushed to start. We promote stretch mistakes in our school – we are only trying to make things better.



## Success and planning report

Planning the way to excellence.

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## School Uniform

We are proud to be at Laurencekirk.

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# School Uniform

by Mr Boyd

A massive thank you to all parents who have embraced the new school uniform. We understand that your child may still fit the clothes from the previous year and we would not expect you to purchase because of the changeover. We fully anticipate the full change from old PE kit to new and indoor shoes of various colours to predominately black will take the best part of a year.

However, the outcome of the consultation from parents, children and staff and the result of so many children wearing the new uniform shows that we did get it right.

Children are extremely proud of their school and the house they are in within the school. Most children are able to articulate what house they are in and we regularly have discussions around earning tokens and representing each other. The PE t-shirts help massively with this. Not only does it allow fellow housemates to cheer for people in their house, it also helps create friendly rivalry and competition.



## Our New School

by Mr Boyd

With a lot of patience and a few snagging issues, we have our brilliant new extension in the Nursery and school. Children have commented on how light it is and how the doors help to cut down on noise in the rest of the building.

We also welcome some of our community agencies into the building and are building a positive relationship with Laurencekirk Out of School Club and the Friday Pensioner's Club. We hope to be able to offer activities between the pensioners and the school children in the future but will allow settling down time first.

Around 50 children go to the Out of School Club each day and we have worked hard to

We have also seen a marked reduction in the "high end" jackets, bags and shoes in our lost property- never claimed.

School is a place where we learn, get messy and on occasion might get our uniforms a little damaged. It is not a place for high end clothing that causes great upset when gone missing or damaged.

If you wish to find out more about the school uniform and the competitive prices, please visit <http://laurencekirk.aberdeenshire.sch.uk>



ensure that there is a robust, risk assessed procedure in place to ensure that the children are dropped off in the morning into the care of the team and are collected in the playground at the end of the day. With this many children moving, along with the extra-curricular activities run in the hall and the bus children leaving by the front door, there would be too much foot traffic to allow us to continue to have LOOSC meet in our hall or walk through the building. Looking at it in more detail, the children would have spent more time walking to the community centre than we are asking of them to wait at the LOOSC stop. We have recently purchased, and soon to be installed, LOOSC bus stop signs to make it clearer.

We hope to be able to show all parents around our fabulous school at the next open evening.



Please see the back page for the dates.

## ABSENCE PROCEDURES



It is important that your child is safe no matter where he/she is. It is your responsibility to contact the school before 9.00am if they are not attending school. Please remember you can report absence 24 hours a day. Don't forget to call LOOSC as well, if you have an out of school place.

Text messages will be sent out to alert you if your child has not come to school and you have not informed us.

## Primary Ones

by Mrs Smith

The Primary Ones have made a fantastic start to their primary school journey. On our first day, it was amazing to visit the classrooms and see all the boys and girls busy: learning happily with their friends. The children have been learning their letter sounds using Jolly Phonics songs, rhymes and actions and enjoying lots of different stories to develop a love of reading. They are also learning to read some of the most common words in the English language. These are all important skills which will help them to become competent readers. Continuing to share lots of stories at home, pointing to the words and talking about the plot and pictures will be so beneficial to your child's progress. The children have been involved in many fun activities to develop their fine motor skills. This will help them to control their pencil and form their letters correctly. Encouraging colouring in, cutting out and doing up zips and buttons will support this work further. In number work we have been busy counting and writing numbers and any games at home involving a dice and counting on will really help with this. Well done to all!

## HOT TOPICS

**STAFFING**

We welcome four new members of staff: Mr Steer (P1/2) and Miss Brown (P7A), Mrs Smith, (Nursery), Ms Kevan (Early Intervention) and Miss Murdoch (Nursery).

Sadly, Miss Moore, our very experienced IPT teacher and Miss Robertson, our Music Specialist are leaving. Miss Moore to a job closer to home and Miss Robertson is retiring. We wish them well. Ms Montgomery, one of our PSAs, has also relocated and we continue to advertise for a new PSA and Ms Dyson's post came to an end.

As always, we prioritise advertising and filling vacancies and this is already well underway.

**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.

**FLU VACCINES**

An important part of keeping our community safe is the opportunity for your child (in P1-P7) to have a Flu Vaccine. This painless procedure involves a nasal spray and will take place on 2 November 2017. Parents do not have to be present and our caring staff and parent volunteers will be there to support any children who need it.

Children in Nursery should contact their GP to have this administered.

# Extra Curricular Clubs

by Mrs Millard

**Extra Curricular**

This term we have been busy organising clubs with Mark McConnachie, the Active Schools coordinator. Currently we have netball after school on a Monday for P5-7s which is run by volunteers. The Links football will be continuing on a Tuesday with the first session for P4 to P7 with the P1 to P3 session following. We are excited to be hosting yoga on a Wednesday with the school session first followed by a cluster session second allowing all primary school children in our area to take advantage of this opportunity. Also on a Wednesday at lunchtime we have our rehearsals for the junior choir. Athletics will continue to run this term on a Thursday with the help of our volunteers. Mr Steer has volunteered to run a school football session for P6 and P7 on a Friday.



All places at our clubs are limited and we do operate a waiting list system. If you would like more information about this or any of our clubs then please do not hesitate to contact me.

If you would like to set up a club or to volunteer to help then please contact me at school.

**Zone Leaders**

We are delighted that our Primary 7 pupils have taken on the responsibility of running our Zone Leaders program, where they help our younger children at lunch times.

**Cheery Chums**

Our Primary 6 pupils are helping in the P1-P3 playground by encouraging positive play. The children are doing a great job.



## Improvement Planning

by Mr Boyd

**Where we are now...**

This year saw the school move ahead in the following areas.

**Growth Mindset.**

Failure is always an option! Have you had your child state that you should find your brain growing if you make a mistake? We have been working hard to promote stretch mistakes- mistakes that are made because we are trying that little bit harder.

**Raising Attainment**

We are proud to say that we have significantly raised attainment in nearly all levels within Reading, Writing and Numeracy. We continue to monitor this and try to get even better.

**Total Communication**

We have recently been awarded our Bronze Award for Total Communication. We are aware that all learners communicate in a different way and we now have visual timetables, visual key chains and visual signs around the school. Almost 90% of our staff are trained in Makaton and we will not stop until we reach 100%.

The Nursery continue to teach all children in the school the Makaton sign of the week.

**Where we are going next....?**

We continue our journey on Maths and will look at more resources to engage learners. A big focus will be on effective reporting to parents as well as looking at Homework through previews.

## Nursery Corner

by The Nursery Team

Hello everyone! Welcome back to our familiar faces and a big hello to all the new ones! What a brilliant start to a new school year. We are delighted to welcome Mrs Fiona Smith to our team as our new temporary Early Years Lead Practitioner. Mrs Smith is a very experienced practitioner who joins us from another local nursery. She has really enjoyed getting to know everyone. We also welcome Miss Heather Murdoch (EYP) to Laurencekirk Nursery. Miss Murdoch was our student last year and we are absolutely thrilled that she has joined us as a permanent staff member.

### Profiles

Each term you will be emailed an electronic profile which shares information about your child's learning in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. There will be an option on this email for you to provide us with your feedback and we would really appreciate it if you could do so. This helps us to improve our service.

### Home Achievement Sheets/Working Wall

We really enjoy hearing about our children's achievements beyond nursery. Each term your child will bring home a Home Achievement Sheet for you to fill in. We would appreciate your support with this. We also have a Working Wall. If your child has any photos, drawings etc from home which is linked to their nursery learning, we would love to display these.

### Our term so far...

We have had our Forest Schools this term. This is an opportunity for us to develop our key skills in an alternative/outdoors environment. A great time was had by all! We have been learning about growing and looking after plants and have made our own rain catchers which are in our garden. We have also visited Mearns Library and we are looking forward to reading the book we have borrowed – "Jack and the Beanstalk." There is a super story sack which matches it, full of exciting games and puppets which will help bring the story to life. We have also welcomed three new additions to our nursery: Bob, Sprinkle and Sunshine. These are our new pet fish! They have also settled in well to their new environment! They will help us learn to care for living things.

On Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September we are holding a coffee and cake event in aid of MacMillan. Friends and families of Nursery 1 are welcome from 11am and Nursery 2 from 2:15pm. We hope to see lots of you there!



## Head of House

by Mr Boyd

We pride ourselves in having a community of learners, not only academically but in life skills and social & emotional development, including resilience.

### **What is resilience?**

Resilience or growth mindset focuses on the development of a "can-do" attitude. Carol Dweck has written a book on Mindset that helps all adults to understand how creating an over protective environment where children cannot learn from their mistakes can not only make them insecure at learning new things but can restrict their learning. Please help us to help your child "stretch" their brain by trying harder things and learn from their mistakes.

### **Head of House**

Green House- Mr Boyd  
Blue House- Mrs Allen  
Yellow House- Mrs Smith  
Red House- Mrs Millard

### **So who do I contact if I have a worry?**

Your child's class teacher is always the first point of contact but if a meeting is arranged, please don't be surprised if your Head of House attends. If you feel that you want to speak to a member of the management team, please speak to your Head of House who will be able to help you.

### **I don't know what house my child is in?**

All children in the same family are in the same house.

Finally, we are proud to say that all our staff are part of a house, helping to promote the community spirit.

### **Promoting the house community**

Token points will be given for showing resilience, sports day, bringing in achievements (these can be for achievements outwith clubs too, like tying shoelaces). **We are all in it together!**

## Photographs

By: Mr Boyd  
Individual and Family Photos will take place for P2-P7 on Friday 29 September.

## Child Protection

by Mrs Allen



**Child Protection Officer – Mr Boyd**  
**Depute Protection Officer – Mrs Allen**

Keeping our children safe continues to be a priority for Laurencekirk School.

Using the Getting It Right For Every Child approach to Child Protection promotes action to improve the well-being of all children in 8 areas;

**Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included.**

Parents/carers have the ultimate responsibility in safeguarding, supporting and promoting the well-being of their child.

All staff that work with children have a role to play in ensuring that a child's needs are met, and work in partnership with other agencies to ensure the protection of children.

If you have any concerns regarding the safety and well-being of a child please contact myself, Mr Boyd or the local Social Work office.

Please refer to the school handbook and website or Aberdeenshire Council website for more details about Child Protection in Aberdeenshire.

At Laurencekirk we will always put the child first and would ask for your support if we have to verify situations that have been disclosed to us, no matter how sensitive.

### **Attendance issues**

Part of our responsibility is also to ensure children attend school. We will be adopting a text and letter service if children's attendance becomes a cause for concern and inviting parents to meetings to support them in increasing their child's attendance. Any attendance that is below 90% needs to be reported to the Education Department.

## Diary Dates

Subject to change, addition and cancellation.

Date	Event	Times
29 September	Individual and Family Photos – P2-P7	All day
2 October	Open Afternoon – all parents welcome to see the school	3.30-4.30 pm
6 October	P5 Assembly & class visit	9.30 am
13 October	Learning Journey Reports (1)- Focus- Health.	
14 -29 October	October Holidays	
2 November	Flu Vaccine Day P1-P7	
8-9 November	Parents Evenings	3.30pm -5.30 pm 4.00pm – 7.00 pm
10 November	P1/2 Assembly and Class visit	9.30am
13-14 November	Inservice Days 2 & 3 – Staff Only	
17 November	P2 Assembly and Class Visit	9.30am
24 November	P4/5 Assembly and Class visit	9.30am
14 December	P1 Nativity for P1 parents (by invitation)	9.30am
15 December	Learning Journey Reports (2) – Learning Across the Curriculum	
22 December	Church Service	11.00am
23 December- 7 January	Christmas Holidays	
19 January 2018	P6 Assembly and Class visit	9.30 am
2 February	Burns' Assembly (by invitation)	9.30 am
8-12 February	Mid Term Holidays	
13-14 February	Inservice Day (4 & 5) Staff only	
26 February	Open Afternoon	2.30-3.15 pm
9 March	P3/4 Assembly and class visit	9.30am
16 March	Learning Journey Reports (3)- Numeracy	
23 March	P3 Assembly and class visit	9.30 am
29 March	Church Service	11.00 am
30 March – 15 April	Easter Holidays	
27 April	P4 Assembly and class visit	9.30am

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Times</b>
<b>3 May</b>	<b>Sponsored Walk</b>	
<b>4 May</b>	<b>Reports to Parents (4)- Literacy, Pastoral Comments and Levels</b>	
<b>7 May</b>	<b>May Day Holiday</b>	
<b>8 May</b>	<b>Sports Day (School) – (Back up 22<sup>nd</sup> May)</b>	
<b>14-18 May</b>	<b>Health Week</b>	
<b>23 May</b>	<b>Nursery Sports Day – (Back up 30<sup>th</sup> May)</b>	
<b>23-24 May</b>	<b>Parents Evenings</b>	<b>TBD</b>
<b>5 – 8 June</b>	<b>P7 to Glenshee</b>	
<b>15 June</b>	<b>P5/6 Assembly and class visit</b>	<b>9.30 am</b>
<b>28 June</b>	<b>Meet my new teacher. Children only.</b>	<b>2.00 pm</b>
<b>6 July</b>	<b>P7 Leavers Assembly and class visit</b>	<b>9.30 am</b>
<b>7 July – 19 August</b>	<b>Summer Holidays</b>	
<b>20 August</b>	<b>InService Day 1- Staff Only</b>	
<b>21 August</b>	<b>Children back at school</b>	<b>9.00 am</b>

Further dates will appear throughout the year.

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