



# Laurencekirk School Newsletter



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September 2016

OUR BUILD IS UNDER WAY

IN THIS ISSUE

## Spotlight on Mrs Smith

by Mrs Smith



I am absolutely delighted to take up the post of Depute Head Teacher at Laurencekirk School.

Immediately, I was struck by the warm, inclusive ethos and I have been made to feel very welcome by the children, staff and the parents. I am working very hard to learn and remember everyone's names! I can often be found out and about at the beginning and close of the school day sporting a high visibility vest – please do stop and say hello!

Ever since my own primary school days in a small Angus town, I wanted to be a teacher. After a mere 5 years at secondary school, I hot footed it up to Aberdeen to complete my undergraduate degree in Primary Education.

At that time, teaching jobs were few and far between, so, desperate to put all my learning in to practice I decided to 'up sticks' to wherever a permanent post awaited! Full of energy and enthusiasm I began my career in Edinburgh City Council where I had the pleasure of teaching a variety of classes from P1 to P7. Upon the arrival of our first child, Amelie who is now 11, my husband and I

decided to relocate from Edinburgh back to Angus to bring our daughter up in the area I called 'home'. Our son Jackson (10) arrived the following year, completing our family.

Being a mum, I understand that every child I work with means the whole world to someone. Therefore I endeavor to ensure that all children engage in a school experience which meets the high standards I expect for my own children. I have enjoyed many years of teaching in a variety of schools across Angus but have also benefitted from two secondments. I was seconded to the Scottish Parliament to develop political literacy across the North East. I was also seconded to a secondary school where I was responsible for planning and coordinating the transition of all Primary 7 pupils in to S1. In addition to this I taught English and Maths. I am committed to developing my professional skills and in April was awarded "The Standard for Headship." I look forward to working with the dedicated staff, children and parents to help make sure our school continues to be the very best that it can be!



## Feedback from parents on how the school is doing

Feedback is important in all that we do.

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## 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.

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# Feedback

by Mr Boyd

Thank you to all parents/carers that completed our Customer Satisfaction survey in June.

Thirty two responses were received from parents of children in P1-P7. This is over 10% of our school population. Although we like to hear from as many as possible, this is a good reflection. All stages were well represented

On a scale of 1- 10, 78% of parents felt that school made as much contact with home as they would like. This is very well received but we will continue to work at increasing this. One way we will be doing this is to have parents come with their child to the class after the assembly.

Equally 87% of parents enjoyed the class newsletter and found it informative.

The challenge of work was deemed just right in all areas of the curriculum by most

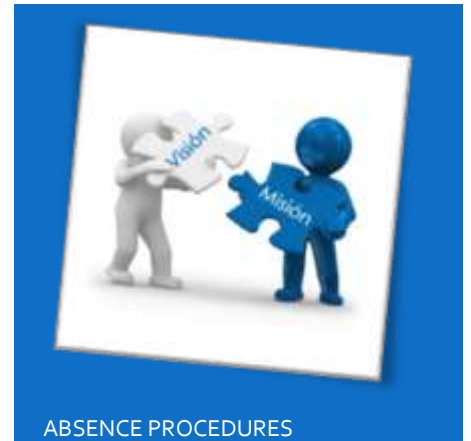
returnees. Homework did have the most variable and we will look to expand this further by asking parents their views in all areas.

The most unfamiliar area of the curriculum by parents/carers is mental health and wellbeing. This will be a focus, as it was last year, for our Meet the Management events where we will explain the ethos, values and resilience we instill in our learning.

**We also asked for some comments that made us good:**

Categories included: Getting it right to include all.

Keeping parents informed.  
Encouraging Interaction between children.



## ABSENCE PROCEDURES

It is important that your child is safe no matter where he/she is. It is your responsibility to contact the school between 8.40 am & 9.10 am if they are not attending school.

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

# Our construction project

by Mr Boyd

There is great excitement in the school with our construction project. The pictures show that the Snug, Wee Snug and learning centre are being transformed into a Sensory Room, Life Skills room and 2-5 year old nursery (using the existing nursery too).

A massive thanks to all our Nursery parents for their patience while we work round this. The children are working hard and planning the playground build too.



At the front of the school, our Community Room and 3 classroom extension is taking shape with the digging and foundations being marked.

We look forward to welcoming the Out of School Club and Lunch Club to our school next year and hope that they will enjoy our exciting new premises.

## Transport

Thank you to all drivers who have avoided the school car park. Most children are able to walk the short distance from the square and surrounding streets. We of course expect that disabled badge holders and some of our additional support needs children will need to use our drop off bay and disabled parking spaces. The bus children will also be using our bus bay.

As the weather turns we would **continue to ask that the car park is not used. Traffic is moving too fast in this area and children are not keeping to the footpaths at all times.**

Most parents/carers are demonstrating safe conduct around our car park area and this will continue to be promoted at all times, whether there is construction or not. We ask that you keep this in mind also when parking around residents driveways.



## HOT TOPICS

**STAFFING**

Miss Honeybone got married over the holidays and has decided to keep her maiden name but adopt Mrs.

Mrs Anderson has joined us in P2 with Mrs Clark to cover Mrs Morrison's Maternity Leave until January.

Mrs Wilson now joins Mrs Irvine in P3 and is enjoying working part time.

Mrs Foster returns to school from nursery and is in P4.

We welcome Mrs Smith, our new DHT to the school.

Mrs Smith & Mrs Allen is in P6.

Miss Wood has been promoted to Lead EYP with Mrs Nicol and Mrs Hillard and Miss Forbes join us to make our full complement of Early Years Practitioners in the nursery.

Mrs Gatherum has recently been appointed as our new Art teacher and we continue to advertise for another visiting specialist.

**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.

# 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 P6s and P7s which is run by volunteers. We are hoping to have enough players to enter the Kincardine League. On a Tuesday lunchtime we have yoga running for our P2s to P5s. As usual we will continue with the Tuesday football after school. I will be running a Play Leaders session on a Wednesday for our P7s, where I will be teaching them how to run play sessions for our younger pupils. We will be continuing to run athletics on a Thursday in two sessions; P3-P4 at 3:30pm and P5-P7 at 4:15pm.



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 Mrs Allen

**Where we are now...**

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

**Bounce Back**

Weekly targets and assemblies have united the whole school in building resilience to situations that can challenge us. Children can earn tokens for their house when they show positive behavior linked to the targets. Children are also awarded certificates at assembly to celebrate their achievements linked to these targets. Please ask your child what the Bounce Back target is so they can share and discuss with you.

**Raising Attainment**

In the last year we have made a focus of looking at how we plan work for the children, how we deliver Maths to all and evaluate the reading resources. This year we will be using an exciting approach to Numeracy which challenges negative attitudes to Maths and improves understanding. We will be looking at skills in maths rather than having only one way to solve a problem.

**Total Communication**

The Nursery have spent the last year embedding Makaton and using signs to enable every child to engage with the curriculum. The whole school will now start to use this throughout the year.

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

All staff will be involved in Visible Learning training, where we will build on the good practice that exists in our school and build on it to raise attainment in all learning areas and enhance the learning journey each child makes.



# Nursery Corner

by The Nursery Team



## Welcome Back

Hello everybody and a very warm welcome to a brand new school year. We love this time of year, there is just so much to look forward to! We have welcomed back some familiar faces to our nursery as well as having the pleasure of meeting many new ones! Our new boys and girls are settling in very well and are lucky to have the support of their more experienced class mates. It is lovely to have our nursery team back together again too. Mrs Smith is new to the school as our Depute Head. She is thrilled to be our new line manager. Her photograph is up in the foyer!

## Working Wall

The children are learning about the seaside at the moment. We would be very grateful if your child could bring in some photos/objects linked in to this for our new working wall. Perhaps they have a memory or story to tell us that links in with this theme? We would love to hear these!



Harvesting our potatoes



Harvesting our potatoes



Parachutes

# 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.

In August all P1 children were given a wrist band to wear at all times in school – this will be part of their uniform. This band will be the colour of their house. The Head of House will also wear the same colour of badge but in the shape of a star.

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!**

# 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
Friday, 30 September	Class photographs	All day
Friday, 7 October	Harvest Service in church	11.00 am
Friday, 7 October	School closes for October Break	3.15 pm
Monday, 24 October	School opens to children	9.00 am
Friday, 4 November	P6/7 assembly and parental visit to class	9.30 am
Wednesday, 9 and Thursday, 10 November	Parents' Evenings	
Friday, 11 November	Primary 4 assembly and parental visit to class	9.30 am
Monday, 14 November	In-service Day (No pupils)	
Tuesday, 15 November	In-service Day (No pupils)	
Friday, 16 December	P1 Nativity	9.30am
Wednesday, 21 December	Christmas Service led by Pupil Council at church	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 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

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Times</b>
<b>Friday, 31 March</b>	<b>Spring holiday</b>	<b>3.15 pm</b>
<b>Tuesday, 18 April</b>	<b>School returns</b>	<b>9.00 am</b>
<b>Monday, 1 May</b>	<b>Public Holiday – School Closed</b>	
<b>Wednesday, 3 May</b>	<b>Nursery Sponsored Walk</b>	<b>Normal nursery sessions.</b>
<b>Thursday, 4 May</b>	<b>Sponsored Walk for P1-7, parents and friends.</b>	<b>1.30 pm</b>
<b>Tuesday, 9 May</b>	<b>Sports Day P1- P7</b>	<b>All day</b>
<b>Wednesday, 10 May</b>	<b>Nursery Sports Day</b>	<b>Normal nursery sessions</b>
<b>Friday, 12 May</b>	<b>Primary 6 assembly and parental visit to class</b>	<b>11.00 am</b>
<b>Friday, 19 May</b>	<b>Primary 3 assembly and parental visit to class.</b>	
<b>Week Beginning 15 May</b>	<b>Parents' Evening (on request)</b>	
<b>Tuesday, 23 May</b>	<b>Sports Day P1 – P7 (back up only)</b>	<b>All day</b>
<b>Wednesday, 24 May</b>	<b>Nursery Sports Day (back up only)</b>	<b>Normal nursery sessions</b>
<b>Friday, 30 June</b>	<b>Primary 7 leavers service at church</b>	<b>10.00 am</b>
<b>Friday, 30 June</b>	<b>Summer holidays -School Closed</b>	<b>3.15pm</b>

Further dates will appear throughout the year.

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