



ST ANDREW'S FOX COVERT R.C. PRIMARY SCHOOL
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Newsletter No. 5

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2020! Although winter is sharing frosty mornings with us and the dark nights will continue for the next few weeks those of us who have been out and about on 'our Hill' have noticed a few tiny signs of Spring!

The Primary 1 and Primary 2 infant **Nativity** was a huge success. Photographs are available for viewing on the school website. Please do not share these on social media. Congratulations to Primary 4 who led us in our Christmas Service. Your acting was amazing!

We are now preparing for our **P5-P7 Spring Production** 'Resurrection Rock'. Rehearsals will take place on Wednesdays after school starting after the February break. Further details and permission slips will be issued shortly.

The **St Andrew's Choir** were very busy in December. They performed at nursing homes, to the school community, at Tesco and Sainsbury's (raising £347.16 for school fund) and at SPIFOX.

Primary 6 have been very busy preparing to go **sledging** (if the snow comes)! After visiting the hill to locate and measure a suitable slope they prepared a risk/benefit analysis. All we need now is some snow! Thank you to our partners in the Outdoor Learning Unit for supporting our work in this area.

Message from Your House Captains

We are delighted to be back from holiday and are ready to push forward with our House Captain tasks as follows:

- complete the vote to rename the 4 Houses after Modern Day Saints
- design and deliver a short presentation on our new Campus Playground Charter
- compile a report on outside wet breaks/ lunch

We also had our first Finance Meeting with Ms Dickson and Mrs Favier to share our view about how the School Fund is used. Very interesting and it is great to see that all the funds are used to support our learning and engagement in school!

Milosz, Matilda, Tara, Grace

Staffing Update

Mrs Linda Boyle (who officially retired some time ago!) will reduce her hours to one morning per week. In her new role, **Mrs Boyle's** will offer bespoke support to our Primary 7 pupils as they prepare to transition to high school. We are delighted to be keeping her for a little longer!

Mrs Rosa Cummings joins us in Primary 4 on a short-term basis until a replacement for Mr Dixon is appointed. **Mrs Cummings** brings with her a wealth of experience and has settled in seamlessly to our team. A class teacher post is currently being advertised and I will of course keep you updated.

After the Christmas Holiday Mrs Kavitha Jayarathinam took up her new post as Dining Room Supervisor. The children have made **Mrs Jayarathinam** feel very welcome and we look forward to working with her.

As part of our commitment to closing to Poverty Related Attainment Gap we are delighted to welcome Ms Julie Richard to the teaching staff team on a temporary basis (until summer initially). **Ms Richard** is a highly experienced teacher with a passion for physical education, orienteering and pupil (and staff) wellbeing. Healthy social and emotional development in childhood has been shown to be positively associated with better educational outcomes; Ms Richard will work across the school to promote all aspects of wellbeing.



SPIFOX REPORT

In October 2019 we were approached by members of the SPIFOX (Scottish Property Index Festival of Christmas) Board inviting us to read and perform at their annual carol concert. As a school we had already been increasing participation in the arts and had established a P4-P7 choir in November 2018 shortly after the new Head Teacher and Principal Teacher were appointed. The SPIFOX Board explained that their 2018 Carol Concert raised £330 000 and, despite the enormity of the event, the staff and choir felt confident we could work hard and rise to the challenge.

Tireless rehearsals followed and pupils were selected to read and perform solos at the event. Simultaneously, the upper school pupils took part in an art competition to design the front and back pages of the 2019 Carol Concert Programme. We were asked to submit photographs and biographies for our artists, readers and soloists to be published along with a picture of our choir and an outline of their story.

St Andrew's Fox Covert RC Primary School Choir gave an initial performance at a school assembly in November 2018. Since then we have grown and developed, performing to audiences big and small at both formal and informal events. Like all choirs we are interested in ensuring a broad repertoire, a fun experience and high quality performances however that's just the surface of what we're about. Our choir is actually all about authentic participation. Participation includes all of the ways in which we engage with our school and wider community to create positive outcomes and changes. Participation means giving each and every one of us an opportunity for personal achievement in an extended curriculum; a chance to be truly involved. Our school values are nurture inspire flourish and our choir embodies these principles. We look forward to 'sharing our shine' with you this morning!



On Wednesday, 18th of December our choir and winning artists travelled to St Cuthbert's Church on Lothian Road and gave the performance of their lives! The event went off without a hitch and the response to our performers was overwhelming. A SPIFOX trustee wrote to congratulate us on 'a truly remarkable performance for which we were received multiple positive comments, the readers too were the subject of much praise for their timing and delivery'. They also shared with us that the original pieces of art designed by our winning pupils sold for £2000 each!

The impact of this outstanding work on our learners and school might best be summed up in three words offered by the choir as they arrived back at school after the performance: thrilling, challenging, belonging.

We really did share our shine!

There have not been many opportunities to be outside at break and lunch '**whatever the weather**' in fact last term there was just 1 chance. **It is essential that your child brings in wet weather gear and wellies to school each day** (or leaves a set here)! **Please name all items.** If you require support to obtain waterproofs or wellies, we have a number of donated boots and jackets here. Simply contact the school office. As we get more experienced and have more wet days, we will explore the best way to store and dry wet weather gear and refine our systems.

The Primary 7 pupils are busy preparing for **Cluster Camp**. Miss Monaghan and Miss Glen will accompany them to the Lake District in February for 4 nights away from home learning in the great outdoors. Watch this space for updates!

The Pupil Parliament organised a fantastic **School Feast Day** in November. Everyone agrees that celebrating our patron Saint is an important part of being a pupil or staff member here at St Andrew's. The ice cream was DELICIOUS and the performances by Tricky Ricky had the whole school, adults included, roaring with laughter. Thank you to the Parent Council for funding the two performances. Wonderful!

We are working with our friends and neighbours from Fox Covert Primary to develop **Loose Parts Play** in our playground. The key characteristics of play include fun, uncertainty, challenge, flexibility and non-productivity. Through accessing loose parts materials our learners can extend their creativity through experimenting, discovering, communicating, inventing and have fun. More details to follow.

Congratulations to the pupils of Primary 3 who made the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** on Wednesday 11th December. Please remember them in your prayers.

Scottish Week is coming up (20-24 January). Our classes are busy planning their learning for the week and are starting to learn their poems. Please join us for our Burns Assembly at 10:45am on Friday 24th January in the school hall.

Our draft **Playground Charter** (shared with our friends and neighbours from Fox Covert Primary School) will be shared with pupils this week. More details to follow in the next newsletter.

I will continue to work with Primary 6 to promote the school's new **anti-bullying procedure**. The full version is available on our website and Primary 6 have made a fantastic display in the centre of our school. They are now working to create a bespoke pupil version that is accessible to all.

We know that 1 in 5 children in our city live in poverty and we are working hard to **poverty proof** our school and **reduce the cost of the school day**. Please remember that we can offer second hand uniform and referrals to the local foodbank should you require. We know how important and valuable **educational excursions** are to our pupils; indeed your children are telling us they would like regular opportunities to learn outside of the classroom. Unfortunately, excursions and events usually incur additional costs which can place financial pressure onto families. Going forward therefore families will be asked for a voluntary contribution for all excursions (other than residential) and events to ensure we are **poverty proofing our school**. We know that families who can pay do pay! Additionally, if you would like to make a higher contribution knowing this would support another pupil, you will be able to do this via the main office.

You can find out all sorts of information about our work along with your child's weekly learning and home learning on our **website**. Please visit regularly.

Please do not **pass on messages or information to teachers or Pupil Support Assistants at the beginning and end of the school day** in the playground. Although this seems like a sensible, quick way to share information, the teachers have a number of duties at these times and are responsible for the safety of pupils and the security of the school. There have been occasions where messages were not passed on/ overlooked and this has caused unnecessary upset. Please pop round to the school office where Miss Tweedale will be happy to help you and ensure your information is shared appropriately. Alternatively, email the school office admin@foxcovert-rc.edin.sch.uk or telephone 0131 339 2383.

If your **child feels unwell** within the school day they will always be seen by a qualified first aider. Often they will be offered a water or some fresh air and then closely monitored in class to ensure they are well enough for school. At other times, we will contact you because we believe your child is not fit for school and you will be asked to collect them. As we are not medical professionals we are unable to undertake any sort of medical assessments; this includes taking your child's temperature. We will ask you to collect them and seek medical advice.

All medication, whether prescribed or non prescribed, must be given/collected via the school office at the start and end of each day. All medication (creams, ointments, anti-biotics, short term medication etc.) requires a form to be completed. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND IN ANY MEDICATION INTO SCHOOL VIA YOUR CHILD.**

The start and end of the school day are busy times on the streets surrounding the school. We have had some reports of poor parking/ congestion (and the associated frustration this brings) at the Rannoch Road/Alan Breck Gardens junction. May I ask that you continue to park as far away as possible and walk in to drop/collect your child; thank you to those that park responsibly. Please do not park on grass verges around the school as this is damaging the local environment. If you do happen to witness **dangerous driving or parking**, please contact Police Scotland on 101 or if urgent 999.

Please remember to telephone (0131 339 2383) or email (admin@foxcovert-rc.edin.sch.uk) the school office if your child is going to be **late/ absent**. This information should be given to the school office rather than the class teacher, head teacher or a Pupil Support Assistant.

Fox Covert Early Years Centre has started a Community Food Bank. We need your donations! Both dry/long life goods and fresh produce are needed. Thank you for your generosity- this is so supportive to many in our community.
Simply hand in your donations to the Centre or our school office.

World Thinking Day is a celebration of ten million girls worldwide that has taken place on every 22 February since 1926. It remains a day for all Guides and Girl Scouts to think of each other and celebrate their sisters all around the world. We would like to mark this event in school on Friday, 21st February by inviting our Rainbows, Guides, Brownies, Scouts, Clubs and Beavers to come to school in their club uniforms. If your child is part of a different club (judo, karate, gymnastics, football etc.) we would also be delighted to see them in their **team uniform** (please note that club team strips such as Hibs/ Hearts/ Celtic etc. are not permitted but Spartan's etc. are permitted; if in doubt contact the school office). We hope that as many of our pupils as possible will join in and showcase the range of activities our community participates in! Please note this is not a dress down day.

We all have a duty to protect children, whether we are professionals or private individuals.

If you think a child is being or is at risk of being abused or neglected, speak to:

- Social Care Direct by calling 0131 200 2324
- the Police by calling 101 or in an emergency 999
- a member of staff at school
- any Health Professional.

I am keen to **speak with you** about any matter- big or small- and will always seek to offer you an appointment quickly. Please do not hesitate to contact me via the school office.

Rebecca Favier
Head Teacher

Provisional Dates

20th -24th January
Friday 24th January
Friday 31st January
10-14th February
17th – 21st February
Friday 21st February
Wednesday 26th February
2nd- 6th March
Friday 6th March
Friday 27th March
Friday 27th March
Thursday 2nd April
Friday 3rd April

Scottish Week
Burns Assembly (10.45 in the school hall)
Primary 5 Led Assembly (P5 parents welcome)
February Holiday
Primary 7 Residential
Thinking Day (see above for details)
Ash Wednesday Service (11.15 in school hall TBC)
Book Week (separate programme to be published shortly)
World Book Day Assembly
Primary 3 Led Assembly (P3 parents welcome)
DRESS DOWN FOR SCIAF (donation optional)
Learn Along 2 (3.30-4pm)
Easter Service (10.45 in the school hall)

4-20th April
21st April

Easter Holiday
All resume

TBC

Class Group Photographs

| SACRAMENTS | St Kentigern's | St John the Baptist's |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| HOLY COMMUNION | | |
| Rehearsal | Thursday 11 th June, 6pm | Thursday 18 th June, 6pm |
| Sacrament | Saturday 13 th June, 11am | Saturday 20 th June, 11am |

| PREPARATORY RITES | St Kentigern's 9.30am | St John the Baptist's 11.30am |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| HOLY COMMUNION | | |
| Presentation of the Scriptures | Sunday 19 th January | |
| Presentation of the Lord's Prayer | Sunday 1 st March | |
| Presentation of the Creed | Sunday 31 st May | |

NURTURE INSPIRE FLOURISH

This newsletter has been proof read and edited by Jakob C P7