



St Mary's RC Primary School

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School Newsletter December 2021

'Forward Together In Christ; we can, we will , together

#Growth #Resilience #Community

Mission Statement: At St Mary's we are dedicated to educating our young people in an inclusive, stimulating and challenging environment preparing them for life-long learning.

Ethos & Values: We will provide this in a secure, happy and welcoming environment where Christian and Catholic values are cherished and where staff, pupils and parents work in partnership to achieve common goals.

Ethos & Wider Life of the School

Pupil Christmas Fair

Huge thanks to all for helping to make this such a successful event –thank you for all the toy donations and to all those pupils who ran their own stalls. It really was a lovely morning and the only items left are some books that children now have the opportunity to look through and choose to take home if they wish. The total raised was £1916.29! Thanks to those who purchased the SCIAF Real Gifts too. The children were happy to split the money between charity and the school.



Curriculum



'Christmas', as you can imagine, has been very much the theme to much of the learning in school over the past weeks from Christmas maths puzzles, letter writing to Santa and Art & Craft activities. The P1 and P2 Nativity Play although 'virtual' was still great fun for the children and we were able to share the video with parents on learning journals— the P7s helped in the making too! Our Christmas parties were also great fun !



Wider Achievement



Congratulations to Estrella and Cloe, Sunaina and Anjana in P6 whose Winter Window entries were chosen to be displayed in the Gilmerton area of the city. Lulubelle in P7 and two of her co-actors received an International Film Festival award for "Best Acting Ensemble" in a film. Alfie and Cloe in P6 were in the top 20 finalists for the Green Pencil Writing Competition. Lila in P5 took part in the recent Liz Atkinson Talent Games as part of Edinburgh Diving Club at the Commonwealth Pool representing St Mary's and won silver in the under 10 category!



Star writers: well done to Greta & Abraham P7, Agnes P3, Estrella and Ava McM in P6 for their star writing! We have also been awarded our 5th Green Flag for our Eco activity and have been acknowledged for our Bronze medal stage in our Rights work now progressing onto Silver level.

Stars of the Month—each month pupils are nominated for giving that extra effort relating to their work, being a good friend, being a good member of their community, an act of charity—anything where they are displaying that extra effort. The children meet with me and have some hot chocolate and a treat.

November Stars of the Month: Well done Klaudia, Elizabeth, Ethan M, Ishaq, Ayaan, Alfie, Elena, Alice, Emma, Mila, Eliza, James, and Alex!



December Stars of the Month:

Well done Isobel, Jess, Esme, Alex, Evan, Pola, Agnes, Maria, Cloe, Kiefer, Emily & Anna.



Winning House of the Term: St Margaret's

St Margaret's were the winning house this term — well done St Margaret's! The pupils enjoyed their extra break and a treat yesterday in the playground.



The Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Legacy Review

What is the Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Review?

Following the Black Lives Matter protests of summer 2020, City of Edinburgh Council agreed a set of actions to address historic racial injustice and stem modern day discrimination.

Its report stated: "Committee recognises... that cities, including Edinburgh, should acknowledge and address their roles in perpetuating racism and oppression in the past as part of the process of challenging it in the present."

One of the actions agreed was the establishment of an independent Review to consider and make recommendations on Edinburgh's slavery and colonialism legacy in the civic realm. Human rights activist Sir Geoff Palmer was appointed as Chair, and a Review Group was set up of people living and working in Edinburgh and from a range of different backgrounds to support this work.

Why participate in the public consultation?

The Review Group wants to hear from Edinburgh residents about the most constructive ways that their city could address issues of historic racial injustice and make Edinburgh a fair and welcoming place for everyone.

It is also seeking views about a selection of prominent public features including monuments, street names and buildings, which it considers illustrative of the many aspects of Edinburgh life and society shaped by the city's legacy of slavery and colonialism.

The findings from the consultation will inform the Review Group's recommendations and will feature in a report to be brought to Council committee for consideration in 2022. This will help the Council decide which actions it will progress, and what the priorities for change might be.

How to get involved:

The online consultation is hosted on the Council's website at: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/slaverycolonialism. It is open until 19 January 2022.

Background information about the Review can be found at: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/edinburghslaverycolonialism

The authority have also been working on resources to engage children and young people in the public consultation on Edinburgh's links to slavery and colonialism.

The aim is for as many children and young people from P5 to S6 to learn about some of Edinburgh's links to slavery and colonialism and to take part in the consultation through one or more lessons and a pupil-friendly version of the public consultation (on MS Forms).

There will also be an opportunity for pupils to take part in focus groups. Some of these groups are being facilitated by ELREC (Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equalities Council); others by Schools and Lifelong Learning.

It is hoped this can be progressed in the new term. If you haven't yet had completed our survey we'd really appreciate you taking 5 minutes to do so. Thank you.

<https://forms.office.com/r/rYrnTTcws>

Covid 19:

Just a reminder of the recent advice issued:

Household Close Contacts

Must complete 10-day isolation (this includes under 18s) and is irrespective of vaccination status/negative test

Non-Household Close Contacts who are adults (over 18)

Can end self-isolation if all of the following apply:

- you're fully vaccinated
- you receive a negative PCR test result
- you do not have, or develop, symptoms

If you're a close contact (non-household) and you've tested positive for coronavirus in the last 90 days, you do not have to self-isolate or book a test if you're fully vaccinated unless you develop new symptoms.

Isolation advice for under-18s (including under-5s) from Health Protection Scotland

All those under the age of 18, should isolate in line with the high risk/low risk advice in place before the emergence of omicron.

High risk contacts (for example, household resident, household non-resident, intimate, intense social care) should isolate for 10 days even if the PCR/LFD test is negative. This also applies to under 5s.

Low risk contacts (for example, classmates, car shares) **will receive a warn and inform letter but will not be required to isolate or do a PCR test**

Please find below link to information:

<https://publichealthscotland.scot/our-areas-of-work/covid-19/covid-19-health-protection-guidance/latest-updates/>

For those who may be travelling abroad please check the latest guidance.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-quarantine/pages/regulations/>

Should there be any further guidance issued to schools that needs to be shared before the pupils return on Thursday 6th January, we will of course do that. There is so much uncertainty at the moment we know but we shall do our best as always to deal with whatever we have to! This term has certainly felt the most, 'normal' for some time which we are very thankful for and thanks to all of you in the community for helping us over the term in following guidance and for your support and understanding when things have had to change.

School Life

With rules and routines well embedded this term school life has been carrying on as best we can! As shared at November's PFC meeting, pupils want to retain Golden Time and you'll know we have now introduced, 'Stars of the Month' for pupils making that extra effort for work, promoting a good cause, being a good citizen, or a good friend.

Children in P1 have loved the play resources purchased from the £500 donated by PFC – Mrs McLeish purchased resources from pupil requests e.g. small world items, a fire station, medical cart, supermarket, pets (wooden), a pirate ship, buggies, trolleys and loose parts items.

Children would also like large play items – e.g. chess sets, giant Jenga and they would like the decking area to continue to be a, 'calm' area with books, paper, pens, games etc. So we are looking to order some large playground items in line with pupil requests.

Staff have reviewed their class environments with pupils and are looking to make a, 'cosy' area if they can – just some items to make the rooms more comfortable looking such as bean bags or cushions and plants.

We have a, 'you asked' 'we did' display in school to show pupils their views are valued and acted on.

As you know we started some clubs this term with staff leading choir, hockey, guitar and girls football, clubs and a lunchtime French club. Active schools are leading mixed football and a multi sports club with one of our P6 pupils leading a chess club. As you'll know these clubs can be cancelled at short notice so many thanks for your understanding and patience. We are unsure as to what the circumstances will be as we go into the new year and a new term but we shall be ready whatever that may be!

Attached with today's newsletter is information on workshops and resources from the CAMHS Team for supporting children with anxiety that you may find useful.

Staffing:

As you know we were recruiting for a permanent class teacher. Mr Mikulin, who is currently teaching in P2a, was successful in being appointed as a permanent member of staff to St Mary's and we are delighted that Mr Gonzalez will remain teaching in P7b until the end of the session.

Thank You

On a personal note, I would like to thank all staff, pupils and parents for their continued support. I say it every year but it really is a privilege to work with such a dedicated staff, parent body and motivated pupils. Thanks especially to Sev and Hilary and Felicity for their fantastic work on our school website and to Kate for organising the Christmas Cards this term. And to our chair and vice chair of our PFC— Laeeq and Cristina and to all those who have helped in various ways this term so far!



Thank you so much for the cards and gifts too. We're always very touched..thank you. The staff and I would like to wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas and every best wish for the New Year.

Nicola Kehoe