



Newsletter September 2020

Welcome

We have many new families who have joined us recently, and more joining us in October. We welcome the children and their families to our school/nursery community. This is not the easiest time to join a new school, however all of the children are settling in well and starting to make new friendships.

Nursery Extension

Nursery and P1 children are now settled into the mobile nursery classroom and will be there until the nursery building works are completed. You will recall that the first building firm appointed went into liquidation prior to starting work and then everything was put on hold due to lockdown. Unfortunately costs have risen since lockdown and building quotes have been too high therefore further quotes have been sought. This will take some time but as soon as the project is allocated I will be able to share the dates when work will start.

Nursery Hours

Our Nursery Class now provides extended hours. It is open 8am-6pm and is now open all year.

Nursery Caretaker/Cleaner

We welcome Mr Simon Gelston as our new Nursery caretaker/cleaner. He has been appointed to the Nursery for one hour am and two hours pm.

Nursery Class

Our returning children are settling well into our new nursery and we have been welcoming some new friends. Most of the children are adjusting well to the longer days and are becoming more aware of the new daily routine. Our focus at the moment is on the children's health and wellbeing, and our learning intentions for the children are: 'I value the opportunities I am given to make friends and be part of a group', 'I can express my thoughts and feelings', and 'I know and can demonstrate how to keep myself and others safe'. The children have been practising hand washing, watching the Handy Andy video, demonstrating good listening skills and following instructions with our fire alarm tests and have been building relationships with peers and staff, playing cooperatively and taking turns. The nursery has a new work bench that the children have been exploring, building their listening skills, taking turns, developing their skills for life and practising independence.



Primary 1

Primary 1 are settling really well into the classroom routine. Normally going from nursery to Primary 1 involves a lot of organised transition activities over the last couple of months in school, visits by parents to information sessions and lunch experience and for some children an enhanced transition is planned. Unfortunately lockdown meant that this was not possible and that coupled with several months at home full time has made the transition challenging for a few. Despite that the children have done brilliantly and with some gentle persuasion the few tears at the line are usually gone by the time they reach the classroom.

P1 have been reading the Colour Monster and have created some lovely poetry to go alongside their cooperative collage artwork. We are using it to discuss our feelings in class.



We have also been investigating the types of rock in the playground. We've been sorting the rocks we've found using different descriptions such as based on colours, size, hard/ soft, texture and patterns.



Primary 2

Mrs Findlay and Mrs Dolan are delighted to be back in school working with the boys and girls. The children have settled in beautifully and it has been a pleasure to welcome the new members of the class. There are lots of new routines and procedures to remember but as you would expect P2 are already experts in all the new things we have to remember to do, we are quick learners!

Unfortunately Polly Parrot is being a bit of a nuisance, Mr Bendermacher thinks she has been hiding the soap and a few things have gone missing. She is looking a bit guilty. There was also an incident when she tried to bite Mrs Findlay. P2 will be keeping an eye on her and trying to teach her some manners and better behaviour!



Our topic is Under the Sea and we have already read several books as a class including; Tiddler, Sharing a Shell, The Snail and the Whale, Rainbow Fish, Steve the Terror of the Seas and The Big Book of the Blue. The children have created some fabulous art work, been acting out 'Sharing a Shell', finding out about Oceans of the World and marking out the length of sea creatures on the

ground outside. We also wrote wonderful descriptions of a naughty octopus that sneaked into the sink.



In literacy we have been revising our sounds and our letter formation. We will begin learning new sounds and looking at reading books next week. We have set ourselves a tricky word class challenge – so far we have coloured in three scales on the fish.

In numeracy we have been working on our counting, addition and subtraction as well as the formation of our numbers.

Primary 3

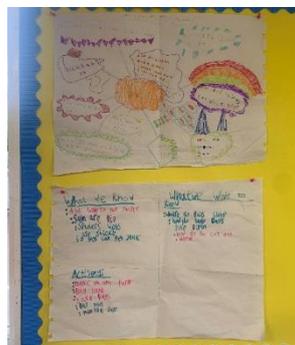
We are very pleased to be back at school and the class have settled in beautifully! The class have adjusted really well to the new routines and we have been enjoying getting to know each other. There have been lots of discussions about what we want to learn in Primary 3 and how we can achieve our targets.



Primary 3 have been learning about creative literacy. They started off with a simple dot which turned into beautiful artwork. They then used their art as their inspiration to write about what their dot became.



We have started our mini-beasts topic which has sparked lots of discussion and curiosity. We were able to explore our school grounds for a mini-beast hunt which was very exciting! We are growing caterpillars in school to study their life cycle up to when they become butterflies, which is fascinating. P3 have been taking excellent care of them.



Our topic allows exciting opportunities for creative writing, art and drama and best of all - lots of outdoor learning!

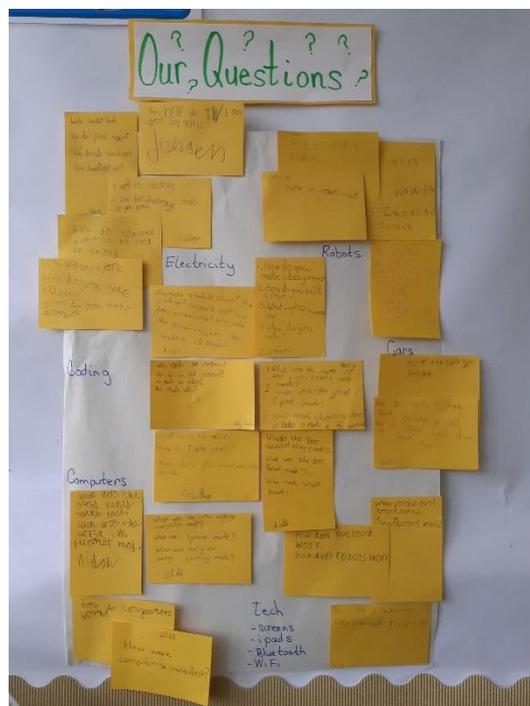
We are getting our literacy and maths programmes underway with a "back to basics" focus. In maths this term, we will mainly be focusing on improving our speed and accuracy in simple arithmetic. Primary 3 have been enjoying taking part in active maths lessons and games to support our learning.

Primary 4

We have been spending plenty of time outside and recently wrote some fantastic Mesostic poems using our senses.



We have also been thinking about all of the things we would like to learn related to our Technology context for learning and have already started looking at the ways technology has changed and learning how to code to prepare us for operating the various robots we have here in the school.



Primary 5

Primary 5 have settled back in to school well and have approached all the new routines and procedures enthusiastically. We have created a class contract and worked together to plan how we can make our classroom a safe and happy space for everyone. The children chose to learn about Myths and Legends as their first topic. So far we have researched the story of Icarus and of Remus and Romulus. See a picture of our display below about Icarus. We are reading the novel 'Krinklekrax' together and have been looking at some of the themes from the book including bullying. In Maths, We have been learning about place value and reading numbers up to a hundred thousand. Some of us have gone beyond that and been reading millions and billions. Everyone had great fun picking fruit from our fruit trees to take home and share with their families.



Primary 6

Primary 6 have now expanded to 28 pupils and we have all settled in well. During the first week, we made our own class contract and got used to some of the new routines. We have started a novel study using the book 'Wonder' By R J Palacio and are thoroughly enjoying it. We created a display and wrote our own precepts (mottos to live our lives by). In maths this term, we are learning about place value in numbers to 10 million, rounding and estimating. Our topic this term is Europe and so far we have been learning about the countries in the European Union, their capitals and currencies and where to find them on a map of Europe. We will also be learning about landmarks, customs and famous people amongst other things.



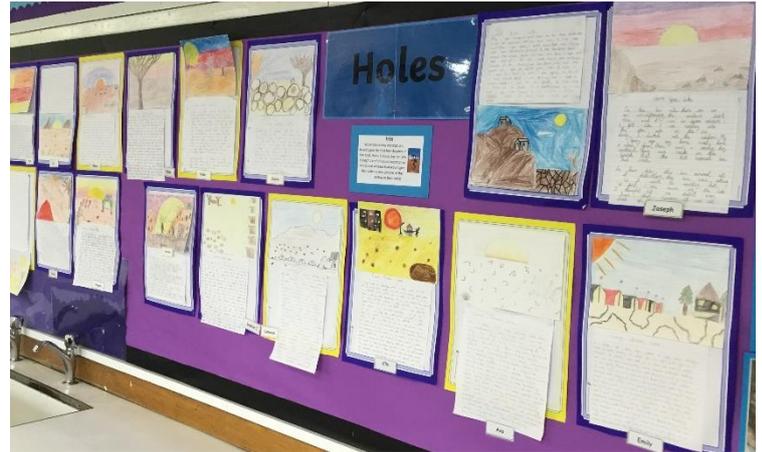
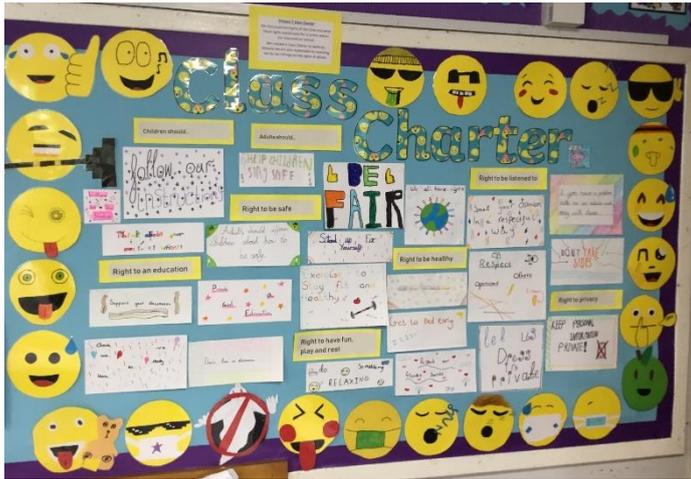
Primary 7

At the start of term in P7, we spoke about the 'Rights of the Child'. As a class, we devised our Class Charter which is on display in our classroom for reference and discussion.

This term in Language and Literacy, we are doing a whole class novel called 'Holes'. We will do a lot of extended writing related to our novel. So far, we have written descriptive settings and persuasive letters.

We have selected our topics for the year. Our first P7 topic (in Social Subjects and Science) is 'Animals across the continents, animal behaviour, survival and adaptations'. We are going to produce our own books about our chosen animals. We have also created a 'News Bulletin Board' in class to discuss news items related to our topic.

In maths we have been learning about place value, larger numbers and rounding. We are now learning about Integers (negative numbers) in real life contexts and we are going to move on to BIDMAS (Order of Operations). This term, we will also work on the 4 processes (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) within problem solving contexts. P7 will also start the first round of the annual Scottish Maths Challenge.



P7 Maths Champions 2020

In session 2019-2020, a group of P7s volunteered to participate in the annual Scottish Maths Challenge. The competition runs from September to May every year over a series of rounds. We are delighted to announce that four of our former P7s have finished in the Top 10 cohort within Central and East Scotland. Congratulations to Archie Macmillan, Toby Goodier, Cleo Herbert and Kara Dawson. Usually, the 10 highest scoring regional winners are invited to attend an awards ceremony at St Andrews University. As the awards ceremony cannot go ahead this year, we will invite the winning pupils back to school to receive their 'Top Gold' mugs and certificates when 'assembly restrictions' have eased. Congratulations to the P7 maths champions!

Children's Leadership Groups

Due to the restrictions in place this year we have had to change many of our approaches in school. As children from different classes are not permitted to mix inside the building we are unable to organise children into different leadership groups as we normally do. This year whole class groups guided by the class teacher will undertake leadership roles and share information across the school. Activities will obviously be limited due to restrictions on events etc. at this time.

P7 Leadership Groups (with Mrs Bairner) – We have 4 leadership groups in P7 which include P7 House and Vice Captains, P7 Squaddies, P7 Yearbook Committee and P7 Reporters. All pupils in the class are in one of these committees. P7 House and Vice Captains will be involved in planning and leading house events and house competitions within the school. All candidates prepared a speech and poster for the 'election'. Everyone in the school voted for the new House and Vice Captains. P7 Playground squaddies plan playground games for the younger children in the school. The P7 Yearbook Committee will plan and organise the P7 yearbook. Finally the P7 Reporters will report on the work we are doing in class and update the P7 page of the school website.

P5 and P6 Grounds/Outdoor Group working with Mrs McCormick and Miss Allen. The children will get together via Google Meet this week to organise an action plan for the year. Children will be responsible for planning next steps on how to continue to improve the school grounds, communicate with School Grounds Group volunteers and take forward Eco School and John Muir initiatives.

P4 JRSO - This year Primary 4 will be taking on the role of Junior Road Safety Officers under the guidance of Mrs Stevenson. We will help raise road safety awareness and promote road safety issues

to everyone in the school and the wider community and get involved in organizing safe and active travel activities.

P3 Pupil Council – This year Primary 3 will be leading the Pupil Council under the guidance of Miss Mitchell. We will discuss ideas on how we can make positive changes to our school and local community.

P1 & P2 Eco - P1 & P2 will be leading the Eco Group this year. We will be starting with the RSPB Wildlife Challenge. It is a challenge for the children to connect with the natural world in brave new ways and earn awards as they go. We will link with our nursery class as they will also be doing ECO activities.

Daily Mile Path

After 2 years of careful planning & organisation by parents and staff in the Grounds Group the Daily Mile Path is now FINISHED! The children and staff are making good use of the new Daily Mile Path. The children particularly love the little seating areas along the way.

A huge THANK YOU to all who have organised, helped donated and supported the project.

A special thank you to Mr Furniss for his hard work sourcing funding and support and to Mr Pickard for project managing the installation of the path and communicating with Mrs Cassidy at each stage over the summer break.



Thanks also to the local businesses who have sponsored this project. The Co-Op via their Local Causes scheme, Tesco, ASDA and Waitrose. Thanks also to GAP Plant Hire for providing the heavy machinery.

The children will benefit massively from this facility especially over the winter months when the grass is often out of bounds. We have submitted information and pictures to both the Stirling Observer and Milngavie and Bearsden Herald. Please look out for these in the next couple of weeks.

See this week's Milngavie Herald

The Wee Spuds

Congratulations to The Wee Spuds allotment group who won two classes in Killearn Horticultural Show. Have a look on <https://www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk> to see all the entries

Sunflowers grown during lockdown. Wow!



Website

Our website www.strathblaneps.com is updated regularly with information about our school and nursery. Each class has their own page and there is information about leadership groups and clubs. On the information page you will find our School Improvement Plan, Standards and Quality reports and other relevant information. If you would like to receive an email at the end of each week which highlights changes that have been made to the site, *please sign up for updates* by following the link on the homepage of the website. You can unsubscribe from this mailing list at any time.

School Improvement Plan

This is now available on the website. It is a recovery plan that will be changed and adapted as circumstances change. Staff across Nursery and Primary have all signed up to work together in development Groups to lead on improvement priorities. They will agree their action plans and work collegiately, reporting on progress in achieving outcomes in the annual Standards and Quality report at the end of the academic year.

Standards and Quality Report

This is now available on the website. It is the report on progress in achieving outcomes from last year's School Improvement Plan. All staff contributed by reporting on the work of their Development Group however some information and data was not accessible from home and was not included when this was set to Stirling Council for sign off in June.

Please take the time to read both documents. A significant amount of work goes in during the year to achieve the outcomes reported and also to producing them. As always we welcome your views so if you wish to comment please send an email to the school office.

Staged Intervention

A number of children across the school are supported through staged intervention. As face to face meetings are not possible just now and we have so many issues with connectivity etc. staff have agreed that they will call parents directly and have a discussion with them about their child's

support. SLA timetables started last week and we have utilised the additional space available in the old P1 and Nursery rooms to enable staff to meet small groups or individual children for 15 minute support sessions and check- ins.

Parents Night

Due to current restrictions face to face meetings are not permitted therefore staff will issue a short interim report in November instead. Staff won't wait until report time to let you know if your child is having difficulties in class, with learning or friendships. Likewise please advise staff if circumstances at home change, or your child is presenting as anxious or unhappy when discussing school.

Assembly

As we are not permitted to bring children together for assembly we are doing this today via Google Classrooms. I will hold assembly, which will be streamed to the whiteboards, and staff will present certificates to the children on my behalf in class. Our Wi-Fi is so weak. Fingers crossed this works.

ICT

We are very grateful that our Parent council purchased new chrome books for our school. This has made a big difference for staff and children. School also purchased chrome books for individual children who require digital support for their learning. At the minute our issues are with poor connectivity and access to Wi-Fi.

Parent Council Annual General Meeting

This will be held on 17th September at 6.30pm via Zoom and will involve the office bearers, DHT Miss Spencer and myself as advisor to the Parent Council. The first virtual 'meeting' of the Parent Council will be agreed at the AGM.



Outdoor Activity

Our children have always gone outdoors, in all weather, for breaks and learning. All children are required to have **wellingtons and waterproof jackets** for this reason. Every child has a wellington drawer in school to store outdoor clothing and footwear. Children also require to have a change of shoes for PE, whether indoors or outdoors. The current COVID guidance does not allow any indoor PE at the moment and because it is statutory for children to have 2 hours of PE per week this has to be done outdoors in one hour sessions. Regardless of the activity outdoors, being outdoors isn't the issue, inadequate clothing and footwear is, so please ensure your child has what is required at all

times. We have a number of children who refuse to wear a jacket/wellies in the rain. Staff constantly remind them. Please do so at home too.

Ventilation

We are required to have all windows and doors open at all times to ensure adequate ventilation. Full heating is now on in school but it is not as cosy as it would be with windows closed. We await guidance about how this will be managed over the winter months, in the meantime an extra base layer would be helpful on the colder days.

Cleaning

A new cleaner has been appointed to undertake an additional four hours of 'touch point' cleaning daily in school 10.45-2.45. Miss Leanne Peters, who lives locally has been appointed by Stirling Council. Miss Peters participated in the Special Olympics and achieved many medals for cycling.

We welcome Leanne to our school.

COVID Guidance

Face coverings

Updated guidance has been received from Scottish Government this week to reflect the changes around face coverings. The only change for primary children is that any child 5yrs old, and above should wear a face covering on dedicated school transport. No changes to **arrangements in school** have been made therefore everything will continue as it is until guidance is updated.

School Grounds

Our school grounds are available for 'drop/collect and go' at this time. Thank you to all parents for following current school guidance. It is very much appreciated. Last out, please close the gate.

NUT FREE ZONE

We have a number of children with nut allergies. Please check that all snacks and packed lunch items are nut free.

School Lunch Menu

We will continue on the current three week rota until the October holiday. Please find a copy attached with the corresponding dates for week 1 – week 3.

KS Cassidy

Headteacher