



## FEBRUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER

### KING'S MEADOW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dear Parents/Carers,

It is hard to believe that Christmas was only 5 weeks ago as, as always, school is back in full swing following the break and so much is happening.

It was good to see so many of you on our recent parent/carers' evenings. You will have another opportunity to share in your child/ren's learning in March.



#### PARENT COUNCIL

#### **VACANCY - CLERK TO THE PARENT COUNCIL**

We are looking for an experienced Administrator who can provide first class support to the Chair of our Parent Council.

You will be highly organised, proficient in using Microsoft, and an experienced minute taker.

The Parent Council meets around 5 times per year normally on a Thursday evening from 7 to 9pm

This is a casual appointment and the rate of pay is £43 per meeting.

If you would like further information about this post please contact Val McIntyre on [vmcintyre@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:vmcintyre@eastlothian.gov.uk) 01620 827228

The next meeting of the Parent Council takes place in the Drama Room at 7.00 pm on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February. **All parents/carers are welcome to attend.**



#### HOLIDAY

**The school will close at the usual time on Friday 12th February and re-open for pupils at the usual time on Tuesday 23rd.**



#### PTA FUNDRAISING NEWS

Our Christmas Fair was a great success. The sum of £687.99 was raised for the PTA; most of which was from the hamper raffle tickets and refreshment sales. Thank you to all who donated items.

The children's year group craft sales amounted to a super £610.35. This money will be used to support our Friday Clubs.



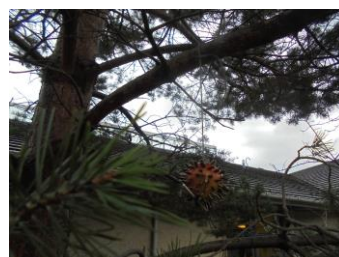
#### CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY

A huge thanks to everyone for supporting our P7's fundraising for children in Syria. As a result of so many children, and staff, wearing festive

knitwear the sum of £268.09 was raised.



#### NATURE DETECTIVES CLUB



Nature Detectives got off to a "flying start" with our first sighting of Goosanders, on the River Tyne! The children have been learning the

importance of feeding the birds in winter and have made super bird feed using apples studded with sunflower seeds. We are hoping to attract a wider variety of species to the school garden



### START OF DAY



Please remember that there is no supervision in the playground at the start of the day. Parents/Carers are responsible for their children until the bell rings. We are still at a time of year when the weather can be dark and wet, so we would request that children are not sent to school before 8.30 am.



### ATTENDANCE



Parents/Carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child/ren attend school regularly. If, for any reason, your child is unable to attend school please inform the office by telephone, preferably between **8.30am** and **9.15am**. Failure to inform us of your child's absence will initiate a text/phone call to you so that we can check on your child's safety. If we are unable to contact you the absence may be passed to ELC's Children's Wellbeing Team. **On return, you should ensure that your child brings a letter confirming the reason for their absence.** Planned absence eg holidays, should be requested as far in advance as possible, preferably two weeks before.



### INDOOR SHOES



Please remember that all children should have a pair of

indoor shoes to change into upon entering the building. These shoes can also be used for indoor PE. For safety reasons, children should not be walking around the school in stocking soles.

### HEAD LICE



We would like to ask all parents/carers to check their child/ren's heads **at least** once a week. Parental vigilance plays a vital role in keeping the spread of this problem under control.

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Head-lice/Pages/Introduction.aspx>



### DATES FOR THE DIARY



- Friday 5<sup>th</sup>: P6C assembly. Parents/Carers of this class are welcome to join us at 9.00 am.
- Monday 8<sup>th</sup>: P7C to visit Sky Skills Academy
- Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup>: P7A to visit Sky Skills Academy
- Thursday 11<sup>th</sup>: P7B to visit Sky Skills Academy
- Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> 7:00pm: Parent Council
- Friday 12<sup>th</sup>: P6D assembly. Parents/Carers of this class are welcome to join us at 9.00 am.
- 15<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> inclusive: HOLIDAY



### AROUND THE CLASSES



**P4A** have been very busy in school since the holidays and are really enjoying our new topic 'Adapting to the Cold'. We have decided to link this with our literacy and science learning. So far, we have planned to learn about how polar climates affect living things and have begun researching how animals adapt to the cold. During one of our science experiments, we have investigated how effective blubber is for animals

and have been busy recording this in our writing, where we learnt how to write a scientific report. We now plan to continue exploring the Arctic and Antarctic and examine ice during our science experiments. We have really enjoyed learning how to use non-fiction texts to gather information and this will help us with our research project and presentation on our chosen polar animal. In maths, at the beginning of each lesson, we are continuing to work on our mental maths skills and are focussing on multiplication and division in our main lessons. We have all been practising times tables and understand how they are built up by using arrays. We have developed quick recall of our 2,3,4,5 and 10 times tables and some of us are even working on the 6, 7, 8 and 9. We all are able to multiply using the formal written method and have moved on to using our knowledge of times tables to support us when dividing. Remember to keep practising tables at home. This term we have music with Mrs Roberts and have been having lots of fun learning how to play the ukulele. We continue to receive P.E with Mrs Arnold on Mondays and Wednesdays; taking part in indoor athletics. Please don't forget P.E kit. Swimming continues every Wednesday for some of the class so please remember to also bring swimming kit. Whilst some of the class have been swimming, the rest of the children have been doing some yoga with Miss Grantham. We have all been feeling very relaxed after our yoga lessons and are enjoying learning something new.



**P4B** have been working hard on our Adapting to the Cold topic, which has had a particular focus on Science, Literacy and Social Studies. We have

completed a number of practical scientific investigations which have explored the insulating properties of air and fat, and the melting rate of ice in different solutions. Our literacy work has then involved writing some super scientific reports based on our experiments.

In numeracy, we are currently working on multiplication and division. We have enjoyed playing a variety of games using hundred squares and counters, before completing our written work. Thank you P4B for putting so much effort into learning

your multiplication tables. Remember to listen to the Times Table Toons on Mathletics!

In reading, we have been identifying the features of a non-fiction text and are now using our knowledge to research a chosen Arctic or Antarctic animal. We created some interesting questions to help focus our research. Our next step is to use the notes we have gathered to create and give a presentation to the rest of the class.

P4B will also be working with Mrs McDonald, a PGDE student from Edinburgh University. Mrs McDonald will be with us from the 25<sup>th</sup> January to the 4<sup>th</sup> March, we are looking forward to having some exciting lessons with her.



**P4C's** interdisciplinary topic has a science focus this term. We plan to participate in, and record, a variety of practical activities, experiments and investigations to increase our

understanding of adapting to the cold.

Our focus on reading for information and written work will complement our experiments as we look for facts and record our findings in reports. Please continue to share your child's A.R reading book on a regular basis, ideally for 15 - 20 minutes every school day.

The link between multiplication and division, recording sums in written form and increased mental speed and accuracy in a variety of tables will keep us very busy in our maths times.

We are looking at how music can touch our emotions and evoke feelings. The class has been assigned to ask an adult at home to name a piece of music that has moved them/been significant in their life. From grunge to heavy metal, from country to pipe bands - we will share our results and listen to a few suggestions.

Thank you so much for the beautiful baby photos sent in to celebrate our naming ceremonies topic in R.M.E. This has been a rewarding and well received topic. We have looked at Buddhist and Sikh ceremonies and we plan to compare this to Christian and other cultural traditions around the world over the coming weeks.

We welcome Miss Handley to our class for the next six weeks as she embarks on her middle years teacher training placement. I know she is looking forward to working with such an enthusiastic, supportive and hardworking class.



**P5A** have enjoyed learning about Scottish inventions in the year of Innovation, Architecture and Design. They have been working hard with Mr Connell on a Tuesday on a piece of artwork inspired

by Enric Miralles and Charles Rennie Mackintosh. They also designed their own inventions, updating a piece of today's technology. We have some exciting looking bicycle, television, car and watch designs on display in our classroom. Our next topic will be a Scottish History topic. The children will be given the outcomes and will be asked to choose the context they think best suits them.

In PE, we have been working on gymnastics. This week we incorporated objects into our sequences. It was quite tricky but there are a few budding rhythmic gymnasts in the class. Mrs Arnold has been teaching us First Club Golf. The weather hasn't been very kind on a Tuesday morning, but Mr Blackie has been coming in to help us whether indoors or out so we owe a big thank you to him.

Our second Pitch, Pulse and Magic performance will be on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February. A piano and trumpet duo will be performing to us and enhancing our knowledge of musical terms. We have been having fun experimenting with pitch, pulse and rhythm in music with Miss Smith.

We have been learning all about John Muir through drama; he led a very exciting life and we are only at age 22 so far! We are hoping to kick start our John Muir project this month. Our provisional date for visiting Amisfield Walled Garden is Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February. We will leave school as close to 9am as we can and be back by lunchtime. Anyone who wishes to join us as we *discover* and *explore* a wild place is more than welcome.



**P5B** are studying the life and legacy of John Muir and part of this involves working towards achieving the John Muir Award.

This means that the class has started to explore the River Tyne in Haddington, looking for a way to conserve the area. We are working closely with the Countryside Ranger, Jen Newcombe. Our first visit involved identifying trees, looking at the impact that humans have had on the area and searching for evidence of change over

time by using photos. Thank you to all of the parents who supported this trip. It was a dry but very cold day! We are planning 3 more trips - Tuesday 8 March, Monday 21 March and Tuesday 7 June. All parents are welcome - just let us know in advance.

As part of our conservation of the river, the Forth Fisheries Trust will be visiting soon to deliver trout eggs for the class to look after and rear into trout fry to be released into the Tyne just before the Easter holidays. The tank has already been delivered and filled with water but the eggs are not ready yet due to the cold weather so they will come immediately after the February holiday. Dr Jo Girvan, from the Trust, will make the delivery and explain to the class what is involved. Eventually, if we do a good job, each child will be able to carry some fish to release into the river! We have been collecting small water bottles to freeze and these will be used to chill the tank water which should ideally be around 10 - 15 degrees. It is a job that needs done daily and everyone will get an opportunity to participate.

The class has started golf on Tuesdays and will continue practising the three swings - chipping, putting and full swing - up until the Easter holidays. There will be a mini golf game organised by the golf development officer, Kate Green on Wednesday 13 April. Any parents who would like to support the golf lessons, please contact the school. 5B will be golfing between 9 am and 9.45 each Tuesday, usually outside unless the weather is really awful!

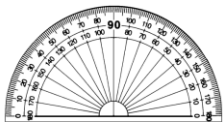


**P5C** has been focussing on John Muir for the last few weeks and will continue to do so as we work towards our John Muir Awards. Our walk along the railway was a great success, even though it was freezing - a massive thank you to the adults who braved the cold and came along. It was lovely to see the children come to school ready and taking responsibility for themselves. Our next walk is the morning of Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup> of March - please get in touch if you would like to come along. We also have a John Muir dance workshop on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> of March.

On Wednesday the 10<sup>th</sup> of February we have our second visit from the Youth Music Initiative. This time they are bringing a pianist and a trumpet player! On a musical theme Mrs Roberts, our Music specialist, is teaching the class to play the ukulele and they are making good progress.

After the February break, P5C will be taking on a Scottish History topic. The class will be deciding what we learn about, maybe Mary Queen of Scots or perhaps Robert the Bruce? We plan to have a class museum ready for the Child Led parents evening in March.

Looking back a little, the class have been very busy. They have been writing acrostic, shape, cinquain and haiku poetry. They've been learning to play golf as part of First Club Golf and developing their gymnastic skills in PE. In numeracy, times tables are being learned and revised and in maths we have been learning how to name, describe and draw 3D shapes and their nets.



**P6A** have had a very busy start to the term.

In class maths, we have been finding out about angles. We have been practising using a protractor, identifying different types of angle and recording a named angle correctly. For further protractor practice, we have used [www.mathplayground.com/measuringangles](http://www.mathplayground.com/measuringangles) and this is something the children can continue to practise at home. Later in the term we will move on to look at the 8 compass points and the size of the angles between them, as well as describing the position of objects using degrees, compass point and whether it is turning clockwise or anti-clockwise. This is in preparation for a class hill walking outing on Tuesday, April 12. Tables practice and mental maths will continue on a daily basis. I am also planning a block of work looking at division, as many children are unsure of this. For those who can confidently and accurately divide, we will work on word problems and long division.

Our spelling continues on a weekly basis. The pattern for this week was either -ed or- oy. We will go on to work on -ly,- ily, double letters, plurals and common words during the next few weeks. Each Tuesday, we are working on written comprehension, focusing on sentence structure, literal and inferential questions. Grammar work will continue with work on the subject/predicate of a sentence, tenses and thesaurus/dictionary work.

In topic work, we have been finding out about the world through both physical and political maps of the world and Europe. This will continue with us eventually looking at ordinance survey maps for our hillwalking. We will continue to explore the

biological sciences through our "Puberty" topic. Next week we will begin a new and different topic, which I am really looking forward to teaching. It is called "Philosophy for Children" and I am sure it will result in some very interesting discussions!

Finally, we will be visiting Central Hall in Edinburgh for the finals of the Mock Court Project on Monday, February 29.

Please let me know if you would like any more information about our work in class or if you would like to meet to discuss anything.



**P6B** have had a busy start to 2016! The children put together a very impressive French assembly and had great fun coming up with ideas that would show their French knowledge through song and drama.

One of our topics this term is **P4C** (Philosophy for Children) which is a programme designed to help us become more thoughtful, reflective and considerate individuals. Using stories from Anthony Browne, Beatrix Potter and Dr Seuss, we will focus on developing our listening, taking and debating skills around our personal beliefs, values and morals.

Our other topic this term is 'Puberty' and we are enjoying learning about the physical and emotional changes that start to happen as a result of puberty.

As a class, we have two school trips to look forward to: the Mock Court Finals where we will watch the four finalist teams argue in front of the sheriffs, and a hillwalking trip to the Lammermuirs.

May I take this opportunity to ask parents to actively encourage their children to regularly use Mathletics to help keep up the mental maths skills we have been working on, in particular, times table knowledge, multiplying and dividing. All children have a log-in and password and know how to find the website and use the system. They can also download an app to use on mobile devices.

Accelerated Reader is also an area I would like to focus on and see the children of P6b doing more reading at home and further quizzes in school. The children can check to see if their favourite reading books are on the A.R system at <http://www.arbookfind.co.uk/>. If the book isn't on the system we can request it be added. This should be done as soon as the book is started as it can take up to 2 weeks for the request to be authorised.



**P6C** have been looking at philosophical questions in our new topic this term Philosophy 4 Children. The class have enjoyed discussing their thoughts in groups and sharing them with others.

In writing, we are looking at re-writing fairy tales from a different perspective. The class are really getting into their writing and letting their imaginations run!

In our growing up topic, we have been talking about how our body changes. We have already changed a great deal since we were born. Many thanks for sending in the baby photos. Our guess the baby competition is under way!

In reading, we have now finished writing our author profile of Astrid Lindgren. We worked hard on our research and then used our notes to produce a leaflet.

In Maths, we have been learning how to use a protractor to measure and draw angles. We have also been trying to spot different types of angles in the world around us. In group maths, we have been covering decimals.

In P.E., the children have been working on gymnastic sequences. They have also been working on their rugby skills in preparation for the rugby festival in March.

We have been learning how to talk about the weather in French and we can now count to 100. We have also been revising the days of the week and months of the year.

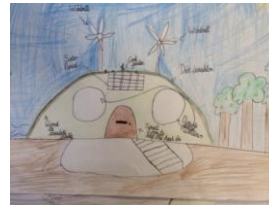


**P6D** have been trying our best to read for 20 minutes a day in school and at home. We have been making a real effort to then complete AR quizzes within 48 hours of completing our books and our perseverance has been rewarded by a very impressive class word count of 2,576 406! Well done to everyone who has contributed.

We also celebrated the birthday of Robert Burns on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January with a traditional poetry recital. We had a choice of Fireworks off the Castle by Matthew Fitt, Mince and Tatties by JK Annand or Scots Wha Hae by Robert Burns himself. 12 members of primary 6 were then selected to perform for members of the Haddington community

at The John Gray Centre which was a fabulous chance to show off our Scots language skills.

After the February holiday we are looking forward to attending the finals of the Mock Court project. We will then embark on our Great Outdoors topic which culminates in a day hillwalking in the Lammermuir Hills with Mrs Reid. We will be learning about the major characteristic features of Scotland's landscape and building our understanding of how these were formed. We will also be using and developing maths skills to interpret information from different types of maps and apply our understanding of scale to interpret simple maps. In literacy we will be working in groups to create our own books (including character, setting and story) in the style of a well-known children's author.



**P7A** feel as though we have been back for much longer than we actually have and the Christmas holidays are now a distant memory!

We are very busy preparing for our visit to SKY TV Skills Academy where we will be making a documentary. Our focus is 'The Rubbish Equation' - hence the waste audits! Our waste surveys showed interesting results with most of us recycling and composting our food waste. We are trying to identify items that could have been recycled but slipped through to household waste. 7A show great examples of managing waste responsibly. On Friday, Mr Wood from ELC waste management is coming in to tell us what happens to all our recycling. We already have questions about why we collect our food waste and if we can recycle empty plastic food packaging. Hopefully 7A are regularly informing you at home about the huge quantities and costs of wasted food and how we can combat this.

When we go to SKY TV, we will work in four groups. Each group will present a different section of the report - studio, 'on location', eye witness and expert. We will take on roles such as presenter, editor, cameraman and producer. We are all given a copy of the report to show our families. It should be a fabulous experience. **It's an early start though - we leave King's Meadow at 8:15am. Packed lunches and school uniform are also required.**

As a different approach to raising awareness of environmental issues, we have been designing 'eco houses'. The house plan has to link with a power point explaining how it will be built and which materials will

be used to make it as eco-friendly as possible. There has been a lot of interesting research. We are fairly knowledgeable about topics from wave energy to composting toilets! Each group will present their work to the class. Another part of our topic is finding out how our actions impact on the environment of Scottish wildlife. The 'Wild about Scotland' bus is coming here from Edinburgh Zoo to help us with this.

The Woodland Workout is going well. We are not as dirty as some of the class might like to be! We are improving our stamina, suppleness and strength through the activities. Another consideration is safety, and risk assessing the best places in the woodland area to carry out our tasks. We have also been timing our daily mile runs and it is fabulous to see everyone's commitment and improvement.



**P7B** are visiting the SKY Academy Skills Studios in Livingston. This provides our students with the opportunity to develop skills such as: creativity, problem solving, communication, team work and self-management by producing their very own news report. We

are looking forward to this trip and are currently very busy preparing for our visit. We need to investigate the subject for the news report which is 'Taking Care of our World' and then prepare scripts to use on the day. We will be working in groups and taking on various roles which will make best use of the strengths in the class.

We have been learning about the development of energy sources through the years and thinking about ways to reduce our energy use at school and home. We worked in groups to research, plan and design an eco-house and presented our ideas in class.

Linked to this, our homework task was to create an insulation chamber to preserve an ice cube for at least 30 minutes. We had some very creative inventions. Well done 7B.

As part of our PE this term, the children are enjoying making use of the playground to complete a variety of cardiovascular exercises through the 'Woodland Workout'. Unfortunately the weather at this time of year often leaves the ground wet and muddy, so it is important that the children have old clothes and shoes to wear as we aim to get outside as often as possible.

For Accelerated Reader, the children have completed STAR Tests again and have been set targets to encourage them to read every day, both in and out of school. We hope that 7B can rise to the challenge.



**P7C** have started the new term with a new topic. We are currently studying The Environment; with a specific focus on fossil fuels and global warming. The children will be

using what they have learned to create a news broadcast at the Sky Academy Skills Studios on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> of February. They are all looking forward to the trip. As part of this topic we have also had a visit from the Edinburgh Zoo "Wild About Scotland" bus where the children learned about some of the threats to Scottish wildlife and how some species are becoming endangered due to human activity.

We have also completed our novel studies this term. Thank you to the children for putting in lots of effort and completing their reading task in the time provided. The completed novel studies were all of a very high standard. On the subject of reading, the children are all being encouraged to read for 20 minutes a day in class and should be taking home their Accelerated Reader books to read for a further 20 minutes at home. We are seeing lots more children taking quizzes and experiencing a lot of success with Accelerated Reader. Keep it up!

In French we have been looking at the topic "Ma Maison". We have been learning and practising vocabulary related to rooms in our home, our family and objects in our bedroom.

Mrs Arnold is working with a selection of children at the moment to train for an indoor athletics tournament. The whole class is also taking part in basketball lessons with Mrs Arnold on a Tuesday and Thursday, during P.E. Despite the bad weather, we have also been getting out into the playground most days to take part in the daily mile. The children are trying hard to beat their own personal times for the mile run.

7C are working with the art specialist this term and Mr Connell is completing an environmental piece of art showing the problem of pollution in our towns.

We have had a busy start to the term and have our Sky Academy trip to look forward to. Thank you to the parent helpers who have offered to come on the trip. Look out for a copy of the children's news broadcast coming home after our visit.