



Loretto RC Primary Summer Term Newsletter

May 2018

Dear Parents,

Already we are racing through the last school term this session. The good old British topic of the weather continues to have us guessing. As a life skill please encourage the children to look ahead at the weather forecast and come to school prepared for it all. In Scotland, we can have four seasons nearly in one day, so coats are still needed and maybe caps and suncream later in the term too! Unless the weather is very severe, we plan to go outside to play at break and lunchtimes and run around.

Outdoor lunches for P4-P7.

At the moment this is on hold, as we are still finding that we drop too much litter during break times. Mr. Bonnar and I are keeping an eye on this and we will be happy to let the older children have picnic lunches when we see a good improvement in this. Come on everyone - we can do it!

Water bottles

Can you please check your child is bringing a bottle of fresh water into school each day? Unfortunately children are forgetting their bottle, which leads to disruption of learning and interruptions at the office, as children start looking for cups for drinks. We are trying to be eco-friendly and not use disposable paper or plastic cups. I know our John Muir Award pupils fully understand the impact these issues have on our environment and wildlife.

May Holiday

Monday 21 May is a school holiday.

Pastoral Visit

We were delighted to welcome Archbishop Leo Cushley to school recently for an informal visit. He chatted to the children and gave us his blessing. He enjoyed meeting the children and staff and commented on the relaxed, warm atmosphere in school. As ever our children were polite and respectful and asked him some though provoking questions.



Twitter @Loretto_RC have you checked us out? A quick insight into the life of the school for busy parents and families. Please 'like' us as then we know you have seen what we are up to! Especially school camp!

Holidays in school term

Please inform us **in writing** of any absence from school during term time. You are reminded that holidays in school term are strongly discouraged and in almost all cases will be recorded as unauthorised.

As you know we are trying very hard to meet our children's learning needs and there is a strong national focus on raising attainment...missed school days are missed teaching days. Please note that if you do choose to take your children out of school during term time we do not provide school work.

Staffing

We are currently recruiting for a Principal Teacher to cover Mrs. Todd's maternity leave. We are also currently recruiting for one additional teacher, to work across several classes. We wish Mrs. Capaldi every success in her studies during her two year career break.

Nursery to P1 Transition

Parents of new P1s will have received a letter outlining some dates for beginning to prepare children to move into P1. In reality the children here in our own nursery are already very familiar with school and the move is not a whole new experience - rather more of a flow into a new room with a new teacher. There will be a short meeting for new P1 **parents only** on Monday 4 June at 7pm in P1 classroom.

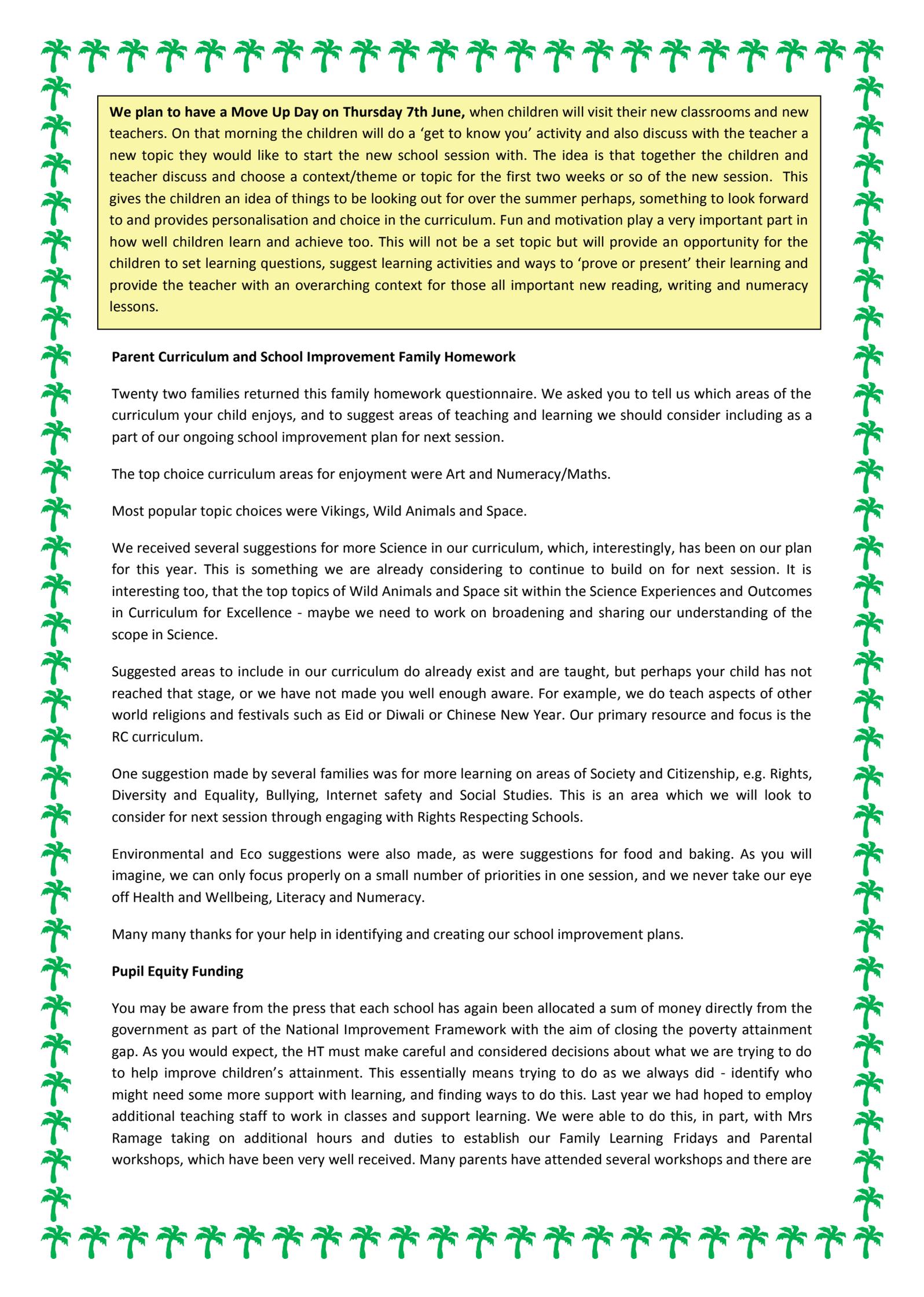
CHARITY and Global Citizenship - a huge thank you to everyone for your effort and generosity in raising £300.86 for SCIAF during Lent. Pope Francis Award - our P6 and P7 children are putting their faith and citizenship values into action in the community. P6 pupils will be invited to 'serve' at the Senior Parishioners Afternoon Tea on Friday 22 June. We did this last year and it was lovely to see the care and commitment of our young people, and the fun and shared times across the generations in our school and church family. Pupils can sign up with their P6 teacher.

Loretto Drama Club Show- Thursday 31st May 1.30pm and 7pm

This year P5-P7 pupils from the drama club will be presenting Cinderella. Our thanks to Mrs. MacDonald, Ms. Henderson and Miss Hannah for offering this opportunity in afterschool and lunch clubs. The show will be performed in school as a final dress rehearsal for pupils only on **Tuesday 29 May**.

Each family in classes P5-P7 will be offered two tickets for either the afternoon OR evening performance on **Thursday 31st May**. We are restricted by numbers for fire regulations. The show will be performed in our own school hall. A ticket donation will be requested to cover the cost of the performance and for school funds. **TICKETS** will be required for entry to the performance, as part of our health and safety regulations. After all children in P5 to P7 families' have tickets the remainder will be available on a first come first served basis after **23rd May**.

P7 Transition Visit to St David's HS is Wednesday 6th June and Thursday 7th June. Children come to school here in Loretto as normal and will travel there by bus from school. P7s must wear Loretto school uniform. After a brief settling-in assembly, the children follow a two day timetable. Pupils return to Loretto by bus at the end of the school day. This is usually in time for anyone to catch the school bus home to Wallyford and Whitecraig.



We plan to have a Move Up Day on Thursday 7th June, when children will visit their new classrooms and new teachers. On that morning the children will do a 'get to know you' activity and also discuss with the teacher a new topic they would like to start the new school session with. The idea is that together the children and teacher discuss and choose a context/theme or topic for the first two weeks or so of the new session. This gives the children an idea of things to be looking out for over the summer perhaps, something to look forward to and provides personalisation and choice in the curriculum. Fun and motivation play a very important part in how well children learn and achieve too. This will not be a set topic but will provide an opportunity for the children to set learning questions, suggest learning activities and ways to 'prove or present' their learning and provide the teacher with an overarching context for those all important new reading, writing and numeracy lessons.

Parent Curriculum and School Improvement Family Homework

Twenty two families returned this family homework questionnaire. We asked you to tell us which areas of the curriculum your child enjoys, and to suggest areas of teaching and learning we should consider including as a part of our ongoing school improvement plan for next session.

The top choice curriculum areas for enjoyment were Art and Numeracy/Maths.

Most popular topic choices were Vikings, Wild Animals and Space.

We received several suggestions for more Science in our curriculum, which, interestingly, has been on our plan for this year. This is something we are already considering to continue to build on for next session. It is interesting too, that the top topics of Wild Animals and Space sit within the Science Experiences and Outcomes in Curriculum for Excellence - maybe we need to work on broadening and sharing our understanding of the scope in Science.

Suggested areas to include in our curriculum do already exist and are taught, but perhaps your child has not reached that stage, or we have not made you well enough aware. For example, we do teach aspects of other world religions and festivals such as Eid or Diwali or Chinese New Year. Our primary resource and focus is the RC curriculum.

One suggestion made by several families was for more learning on areas of Society and Citizenship, e.g. Rights, Diversity and Equality, Bullying, Internet safety and Social Studies. This is an area which we will look to consider for next session through engaging with Rights Respecting Schools.

Environmental and Eco suggestions were also made, as were suggestions for food and baking. As you will imagine, we can only focus properly on a small number of priorities in one session, and we never take our eye off Health and Wellbeing, Literacy and Numeracy.

Many many thanks for your help in identifying and creating our school improvement plans.

Pupil Equity Funding

You may be aware from the press that each school has again been allocated a sum of money directly from the government as part of the National Improvement Framework with the aim of closing the poverty attainment gap. As you would expect, the HT must make careful and considered decisions about what we are trying to do to help improve children's attainment. This essentially means trying to do as we always did - identify who might need some more support with learning, and finding ways to do this. Last year we had hoped to employ additional teaching staff to work in classes and support learning. We were able to do this, in part, with Mrs Ramage taking on additional hours and duties to establish our Family Learning Fridays and Parental workshops, which have been very well received. Many parents have attended several workshops and there are

still one or two to come before the summer. At least 40% of children have had a family member attend one of these additional Family Fridays. Taken with the tremendous attendance at Class Assemblies, this is fabulous support for the children and the school. Thank you. Our evaluations from workshops highlight how tips and explanations have helped parents at home too.

Recruiting teachers is recognised as very difficult nationally. We continue to hold these funds and plan to recruit again. We have purchased some additional resources and staff training, especially for teaching writing using digital Literacy Shed, and again we can see the impact this is having on our writers.

There are national guidelines around this, including considering educational research evidence and asking for any suggestions parents may have. If you have any ideas about how we could support parents with their children's learning, please speak to Sandra from the Loretto Parent Partnership or come in and chat.

School Improvement

If you would like to help with any other ideas suggestions and evaluations for our new School Improvement Plan, I will be holding a drop in session (with tea and coffee!) on Monday 28th May at 1.45pm-3pm. There is no need to sign up or book in –just come along with your ideas. I will briefly show you our self-evaluation toolkit called 'How Good is Our School 4' and we will brainstorm - how we are doing in one particular area and what we might like to try to improve.

Diary dates

Date	Event	Location/Notes
Monday 7 th May	Holiday – Staff and Pupils off	
Tuesday 8 th May	In-service day – Pupils off	
Wednesday 9 th May	Pupils return	
Thursday 10 th May	Class photographs	
Thursday 10 th May, 9.15am	Holiday of Obligation Ascension Thursday Mass	Church
Fri 18 th May	Family Learning Workshop	
Monday 21 st May	Holiday – Staff and Pupils off	
W/b 21 st May	Walk to School Week	
Tuesday 22 nd May	All Return	
Friday 25 th May	East Lothian Athletics Competition – parent helper required!	
Monday 28 th May, 1.45pm-3pm	School Improvement Plan Drop-in Session	
Wednesday 30 th May 6.30pm	LPP meeting	
Thursday 31 st May	Nursery and P6 Buddy Playtime	
Thursday 31 st May 1.30pm and 7pm	School Drama Club show P5-P7	
Fri 1 st June, 9.30am	Women's Scottish Golf Open visitors	
Fri 1 st June	Polish Celebration of Children Day	
Sunday 3 rd June	FIRST COMMUNION 11am	Church
Wednesday 6 th June	Nursery Wheel-a-thon	Nursery
Wed 6 th June and Thurs 7 th June	St David's P7 transition visit	
Thurs 7 th June	Move Up day for pupils	
Mon 11 th June and Tues 12 th June	MGS P7 transition visit	
Tues 12 th June	Nursery P1 Story Visit	
Thurs. 14 th June	National Catholic 100 years Mass - 30 pupils from P4-P7	
Fri 15 th June 9.15am start	Sports day (weather permitting)	
Mon 18 th June	P1 Zoo outing - helpers required!	
Tues 19 th June	Nursery Sports am and pm 11.30am and 2.30pm	
Tues 26 th June	Whole nursery outing –both classes	
Wed 27 th June 1.30pm	Prizegiving and P7 Leavers' Assembly	Church Hall
Friday 29 th June 9.15am	End of term and Leavers Mass	Church