



Saltoun Primary School

November 2013

Newsletter



Normally in a newsletter, I would tell you about what has happened and is about to happen and throw in the odd nag about reading bags or outer clothes and finish up with a light word or two to brighten the mood. I am sure you don't really need or read this, as unless you don't look at your emails from one week's end to the next you will be barraged daily with updates and reminders from school of a domestic nature. Instead, I thought I would take this opportunity to ramble on a bit about an educational topic. I used to do this in my weekly "Thought for the Week" on the blog, but for many reasons stopped this. Although a few people would mention the blogs politely in passing, there was no response to the questions posed online; I was running out of ideas after two years; I discovered how nice it was to walk the dog on a Sunday morning and think about nothing more taxing than what we fancied for dinner rather than to address some thorny school topic.

Strangely, I have missed the exercise of writing for an audience, albeit an invisible and silent one- you can see where I am going here- and so I decided that the newsletter was a perfect opportunity to practise my literary skills and explore a few educational chestnuts.

So... how about responsibility in learning? This is an important feature of our beloved Curriculum for Excellence. Embedded within the process of delivering a broad general education to our children, is the idea that they will be active participants in their learning. So what does this mean? Like an onion it can have many layers. For nursery children it may be that they choose which area they want to work or play in. The topics studied in the nursery reflect the children's interests and so they are responsible for this to a degree. They are also expected to look after each other and the resources. As the children get older they have opportunities to be responsible in a variety of different ways. We expect them to use their time in the classroom to maximum effect, to give of their best in all tasks, to recognise that all skills taught will have a relevance beyond the moment. Evaluating their work and planning next steps is important as is acknowledging when they need help. While staff have the responsibility for teaching, only the children can activate the learning- through being attentive, receptive and participative. A practical example of this may be in learning the seven times table instead of hoping it will drop out of the sky and into the head, or in making sure that all PE, swimming, Forest Schools..... equipment is in the school bag on the correct day.

There are lots of exciting ways of sharing responsibility too- children are given opportunities to choose topics or individualised aspects of studies for homework tasks; they choose work groups, research and presentation methods. They are sometimes given responsibility for school events- what they are, how they are run and how they look.

An example from each school. In Saltoun, it was the children who decided that they would raise money for Mary's Meals. A whole team of people then became involved in that, but the motivation and drive came from the children. In Humbie this week, the P5 group have prepared a lesson plan on Armistice Day and are about to deliver the lesson to the younger children in preparation for the poppy Café on Friday. Both schools have just formed "Management Committees"- small groups of children in the older classes who have responsibility for aspects of school life- charities and fundraising, playground, health, eco etc. While we do not expect the children to be solely responsible for these aspects, they will be guided in looking after the school and its day-to-day happenings and will be offered choices and opportunities to organise, change, adapt and improve.

What is your responsibility as parents? There are many answers to that one. I am not going to offer a single suggestion. That is down to you. Give me your thoughts- email, word-of-mouth, note on the back of a Tesco receipt. Your first responsibility is to respond. I will collate the results and let you know what you collectively saw as your responsibility in your child's/children's learning and school life.

Lindy Lynn



Remember to check out our website:

<http://edubuzz.org/blogs/saltoun>—you can check out the calendar too, this is updated weekly.

Mary's Meals

We are almost there. Just waiting on a couple more fundraising £10's to come in and we should make our £6000 goal. AMAZING!

November

- 6th P5/6 Rugby Festival
Ross High
- 7th 7pm Parent Council AGM
- 11th Maths Week
- 25th Family & Individual Photographs
- 27th HATS day at Saltoun

December

- 4th P5/6 Tea Dance in Fletcher Hall 1.45-3
- 17th Christmas Show in Fletcher Hall
- 18th P1-6 Trip to Panto at King's Theatre
- 19th 10am Carol Service in Church
- 20th P1-P6 Parties
School finishes at normal closing time for holiday!



January

- 6th All start back to school
- 10th P3/4 swimming starts
- 20th Fair Trade Week
- 22nd Badminton Taster
- 27th 7pm Parent Council Meeting



House Captains & Vice Captains for Tyne, Kinchie and Keith

The whole school recently voted for Captains and Vice Captains to represent the three houses. The following were duly elected:

- Tyne** Dylan Allen, Captain and Marcus Brunton, Vice Captain.
- Kinchie** Niall MacLean, Captain and Amber Gordon, Vice Captain.
- Keith** Sam Bell, Captain and Amy Gordon, Vice Captain.

*P5/6 Tea Dance
Fletcher Hall
4th December 2013*

1.45—4pm

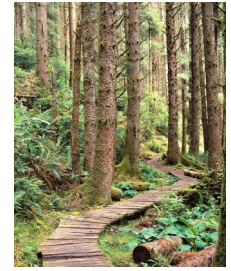
All Welcome

*Entry Free but Donations
accepted for Village Hall Fund.*



What is going on in our classrooms?

P1/2—have been busy with Forest School. Last Thursday to mark Halloween the children had dooking for apples in the forest. We have one more week left. The children are about to do a block of shared reading with P5/6.



P3/4—We have been taking an imaginary tour of Scotland. Whilst on our tour we have looked at Tunnocks of Uddingston, Charles Rennie McIntosh and the comics produced by DC Thomson such as the Beano. We will shortly be sending home samples of Christmas cards made from our art work of Tunnock's products. So do please send in your orders. Our next project is looking at animals, their classifications, habitat and how they have adapted to their environment. After concentrating on addition we will be moving on to measuring—particularly length. In our imaginative writing we will be looking at character setting, plot and what makes a story enjoyable. Forest School starts next week. In PE we are looking at ball skills, moving on to gymnastics and ending with creative dance.

P5/6— We are continuing with our World War II project. Looking at the escalation and the final stages of the war. Looking forward to VDay (Victory Day) - we are also learning the 'Jitterbug' which we will be able to show you at our Tea Dance on 4th December. We are also doing 'Make Do and Mend'. Our next project is Judaism. Next week we start back to Forest School.

Nursery-The nursery children enjoyed a fun Halloween week and all turned out in lovely costumes. We have also been learning about fire safety, setting o'clock times and planting bulbs. We intend to learn more about pattern and sequencing and naming and using parts of our bodies. We had an enjoyable walk round the village last week and now plan to use our photos to make a floor book about Houses and Homes. This may lead on to some 3D model house building. We have enjoyed dancing to different kinds of music at Hall Time and have a dance workshop planned around "Giraffes Can't Dance" for the start of December. We will be enjoying a Xmas show at Humble this year with Mr Boom; dates for Xmas activities to follow.

