



# Community Connections

Issue 8/20, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020

## Hello from Mrs Gillespie

December continues to move apace and we are now in the midst of Christmas preparations and celebrations – and the inevitable excitement that accompanies such activity!

Although different, it is so lovely to hear and see our children practising for their Nativity and Carol Service. I promise you that the finished results will be unlike any you have ever seen! A reminder of key Christmas dates can be found further on in this newsletter.

As I reflect on the year, three words spring to mind: change, challenge and community. The year has held a lot of **change** for us here in Wemyss Bay: changes in leadership, in staffing, in routines, in communication, in personal circumstances and in how we 'do' school, to name just a few. And these changes presented many **challenges**: we all suddenly had to up level our digital skills; we had to interpret and follow reams of national and local guidance and adjust to the rules impacting on our home and work life – often precariously balancing the two. For us here in school, we had the challenge of keeping all in our school and nursery safe whilst providing engaging and stimulating experiences to ensure our children continued on their holistic learning journey. Through all of this, the concept of **community** has been forever present: our families, our local village, our school and our nursery. It has been humbling to hear of the ways in which so many of you have supported each other and to learn of the projects that so many are involved in, reaching out to those who are finding things tough. And we have our own community heroes – those who have worked on the front line in a multitude of capacities, keeping our community safe and well. It's also been interesting that during this time of limited contact, more people than ever before have said hello when I am out walking - the value of community is not to be underestimated. Finally, we have had the chance to regroup here in our learning community, recovering and building on the strengths that make our school and nursery

### Get to know our staff...

Mrs Shona Combe, Early Years Education and Care Officer in our Nursery Class



#### What I am grateful for

I am grateful that I have my family and friends around me.

#### Interests

My interests are baking, sewing and shopping.

#### Favourite Food

I like pasta, blue steak and coffee ice cream

#### Places to Visit

I would like to visit Skye and Dubai

#### What I'm learning

At the moment I am learning about the stages of early arithmetical learning (SEAL).

#### What I'm reading and watching

I love to read autobiographies.  
I like to watch Still Game.

#### Something quirky about me

I am an adopted child who was very lucky to find a fantastic forever home.

what it is. Are we perfect? No, of course not. But we are growing and learning all the time and committed to making our school and nursery the best that it can be.

The past year has been difficult at times but if we can say that we have coped with and adjusted to ongoing change, responded creatively to challenge and have a renewed sense of community, then we can say that there has been value in the year too.

I am sure that the changes and challenges are set to continue for a while yet but I am also reassured to know that the strengths of our community will carry us through - thank you to you all.

Have a wonderful Christmas time and may 2021, when it comes, bring you all much joy and happiness.

## Learning Matters...

We are currently exploring, through Self Evaluation, areas of the curriculum that we wish to grow as we continue on the road to improvement. Our Outdoor Learning is developing well and this will remain a priority. The development of the application of numeracy knowledge and skills to wider problems and contexts is also an area of focus. We would ask you to encourage these particular skill sets at home, talking about the outdoors and asking your children what they have learned through their outdoor experiences, and posing numeracy based puzzles through everyday conversation – simple and fun but designed to make children think. Now, how many legs do Santa’s reindeer have altogether? And if Santa could visit 3,000 homes in one hour, how many could he visit in 12? And if there are 510 elves and 6 production lines in Santa’s workshop, how many elves would there be at each station if allocated equally? We’ll leave the rest up to you!

## Health and Wellbeing Matters...

Mrs Cushnahan

Healthy eating is an important part of living a healthy lifestyle. December is maybe not the best month to highlight this as we approach a holiday associated with indulgence! But as in most things, the emphasis is on getting the balance right.

The Eatwell Guide shows the different types of foods and drinks we should consume – and in what proportions – to have a healthy, balanced diet.



It shows the proportions of the main food groups that form a healthy, balanced diet:

- Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day
- Base meals on potatoes, bread, rice, pasta or other starchy carbohydrates; choosing wholegrain versions where possible
- Have some dairy or dairy alternatives (such as soya drinks); choosing lower fat and lower sugar options
- Eat some beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins (including 2 portions of fish every week, one of which should be oily)
- Choose unsaturated oils and spreads and eat in small amounts
- Drink 6-8 cups/glasses of fluid a day

If consuming foods and drinks high in fat, salt or sugar have these less often and in small amounts.

We are a health promoting school and nursery here in Wemyss Bay. We encourage the children to bring healthy snacks and packed lunches. The variety of colourful fruit and vegetables is very encouraging and we thank you for your support with this. The healthy choices you make now for your child will have a very positive impact on their choices as an adult. As well as being a health promoting school, we are also a nut free school. As we have some pupils with nut allergies, please remember to check the ingredients of all food items brought in from home. Thank you – and do please enjoy your Christmas dinner!

## School Matters...

### Parent Partnership

We wish to say thank you to our Parent Partnership for their ongoing support and for the recent donation of a Selection box for every child.

### How good is our school?

We have now shared in discussion with parents in all classes, to explore aspects of our curriculum and the wellbeing of pupils. Thank you for your feedback; this has already started to inform our next steps.

### Christmas

As we have already intimated, Christmas celebrations are a little different this year.

Here is an update on our plans:

#### **Christmas Cards**

In order to minimise transfer of items between home and school and vice versa, we would ask that children limit their Christmas cards to one for the class, which the teachers will display in the classrooms.

#### **Christmas Lunch**

Christmas lunches was served today – and it was totally delicious! A big thank you to Mrs Michie and her team for the wonderful meal they provided for us all.

#### **Christmas Cracker**

Thank you for supporting our scaled down Christmas Cracker this year. I can confirm that the amount raised through the enterprise projects was £742.30 - far beyond what we ever imagined. We appreciate your support so very much – thank you.

## Christmas Jumper Day

This will take place on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December. Please don't go out and buy a new jumper. An old one, a decorated one, a swapped one, are all perfectly fine. Christmas is a time when we think of others and the proceeds of this day, will be donated to Save the Children. Suggested donation is £1 but any amount makes a difference to those children who really need it, and is much appreciated. Thank you.

## Nativity

Our Nativity production has now been filmed (it's wonderful!) and the final touches are being applied. This will be made available to nursery and Primary 1 families only, via a You-tube link on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December. A keepsake disc will be available for purchase at the cost of £3.00. Thank you for your orders which have generated an additional £102.00! We will fulfil all requests by the end of term.

The proceeds of the Christmas Cracker and Nativity will help to boost our school funds, which are significantly depleted as you will appreciate. Thank you so much.

## Christmas Service

We are unable to hold our traditional carol service, but we have almost finished putting together a video of music, readings and poems. This will be made available to all families via a You-tube link on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December. There is no charge for this but we are collecting donations for our local community initiative: the Inverclyde Food Bank. All items will be quarantined either side of delivery. Please send food items in by Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December. Thank you.

## Christmas Parties

Christmas parties have started with P1, P2/3 and P4 enjoying some festive fun. The remaining classes and the nursery will have their parties on the following dates:

Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup>	P6
Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup>	P7
Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup>	P5

Friday 18 <sup>th</sup>	Nursery Parties
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Again, to minimise transfer of items between home and school, children should come in their party clothes and remain in these clothes for the whole day.

## Family Matters...

We have a large selection of school uniform garments in our uniform bank. We are working to catalogue these items but in the meantime, if you need something in particular, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will try to find a match. Please remember to quarantine any items once they are sent home. If there are any other matters that we can support you with, or if you just need a listening ear, then please call and ask to speak to Mrs Gillespie or Mrs Cushnahan.

## Nursery Matters...

Mrs Milligan

**Hello!** Thank you to all the parents that are now following our Twitter page. We now have about 95% of our parents on board. It is a great platform for showcasing the learning our children are demonstrating and for sharing information so please join us if you haven't already done so. We are looking forward to welcoming new children this week and next – our Nursery is growing!

### Information/updates/reminders

Lifelong Learning: The Nursery staff have taken part in SEAL (Stages of Early Arithmetical Learning) training, and are looking to introduce the strategies throughout all areas, indoors and out.

Safety: Could we please ask that you take your child to and collect them from their keyworker. We are encouraging the children to stay with their keyworker until parents and carers are within the 2-meter area. Thank you.

### What we have been learning.....

We have been promoting independence by encouraging our children to put on and take off their own shoes, coats, and wetsuits, washing their hands and self-selecting lunches and snacks. We would like to ask if you could reinforce this at home please.

We have been chatting to the children about what and where they like to play, these discussions inform our decisions as to what and how we resource and plan for the day. The children are becoming used to our self-selection resourced areas and we are seeing high levels of engagement.

Our primary focus continues to be the health and wellbeing of our children. However, through everyday experiences the children are accessing all areas of the curriculum and we have a new literacy display, where the children are challenged to find items that match the letters.

We have been practising for our nativity and you are in for a treat!

### The things children say.....

"P is for pigs and pens" at our Literacy display

"My Elf ate all of my Weetabix, I was very angry!"

## Outgoing Correspondence

27.11.20	Covid-19 Protocols letter	emailed
27.11.20	Webex Invitation to P7 families	emailed
04.12.20	Webex Invitation to P6 families (rescheduled)	emailed
04.12.20	Nursery and Primary 1 Nativity DVD order form	paper copy

## Looking Ahead

11 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Jumper Day Christmas Cracker Orders sent home
14 <sup>th</sup> December	Nativity link shared with nursery and P1 families
15 <sup>th</sup> December	P6 Party
16 <sup>th</sup> December	P7 Party
17 <sup>th</sup> December	P5 Party
18 <sup>th</sup> December	Nursery parties Christmas Carol Service link shared with families
22 <sup>nd</sup> December	School closes at <u>2.30pm</u>
6 <sup>th</sup> January	School reopens at 9.00am.

Thank you for your ongoing support – have a wonderful Christmas!