



## Oaklands School Newsletter

November 2016

Last term was busy at Oaklands School and this term has been no exception. All classes have produced a piece of news for this newsletter and we hope you enjoy reading about the things we have been up to.

### Staffing

At the end of term we will be saying goodbye to Angela McNiven, one of our PSAs in Class 1. We would like to thank her for all her hard work. Maureen McMenimin will also have a change after Christmas and will be reducing her days.

We will be having a small change around of staff the 1<sup>st</sup> of December where 4 members of support staff will relocate to new teams.

### Website

Our web group have been working extremely hard to update our website. We have a new domain name which we hope makes it easier for you to find us.

[oaklandsedinburgh.com](http://oaklandsedinburgh.com)

The web group have sent information home with instruction on how to follow our website. If you register as a follower then you will review an e-mail informing you of any new updates.

### Care Inspectorate

The nursery had a recent unannounced inspection from the Care Inspectorate. We have had a preview of the draft report and it is all looking very positive. The final report is due early December and this will be available to view via the Education Scotland Website. We will also place copy on our own site.



### Dates for your diary:

December is a busy month for us see below for diary dates:

1<sup>st</sup> of December - Seniors Card Roadshow at Edinburgh University

Christmas Begins – Christmas Tree goes up!

6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of December – Barge trips

7<sup>th</sup> of December – 12 days of Christmas begins

13<sup>th</sup> of December – Christmas Card Roadshow at State Street Bank

Cinderella - Theatre company in school

15<sup>th</sup> of December – Christmas Show at 10am

19<sup>th</sup> of December – Christmas Card Roadshow to Waverley Court

20<sup>th</sup> of December – Class 1 trip to Dobbies

21<sup>st</sup> of December – Special Christmas Lunch

22<sup>nd</sup> of December – Christmas Jumper Day and 'Clubbersise' 10 Year Extravaganza!

## Parent Pay

Across the City of Edinburgh all schools will soon begin to use the Parent Pay system. In order for this to be effective we will need up-to-date e-mail addresses for all of our parents. If you have changed your e-mail address recently can you please let us know? Just pop a note of it in your child's home/school diary. The plan is to go live week commencing 9<sup>th</sup> January.

More information to follow.



## MOVE

Anke and her team have been working tirelessly to gather evidence to support our move revalidation day on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> November. This is to enable us to keep our status as a 'Centre of Excellence'.

**Fingers crossed that it all goes well on Tuesday!**



## Sad News

We received news late in October that one of our S3 students Conall Kemp had passed away very suddenly.

Conall had just returned to school after a period of illness and this really was quite a shock for everyone. Many staff members and some of our families were able to attend his funeral on a beautiful sunny Saturday in November, there were tears shed and memories shared. Our thoughts are with Conall's family at this time.



**All of our classes have news items:**

## Nursery News

In the Nursery have been continuing our art work on the theme of circles. We explored lots of paint and glitter and the finished articles have made a beautiful display in the garden.



We are also working towards our ECO School re-accreditation at Oaklands. The Nursery children have been very busy setting up new recycling boxes and sorting out our rubbish into groups of either plastic or cardboard. Once we had done this we set off to the local recycling point ready to put our bottles and boxes in the correct containers.



Our pupils have also been putting a huge amount of effort into reaching their MOVE targets. This has involved using walkers and standing frames to help them participate in their learning and support them in getting about independently. We are so proud of their progress!



We have enjoyed using the brilliant Magic Carpet resource this year. The children are now very familiar with the activity and love interacting with all the different programmes using their hands and feet. The poppies, sunflowers and fish are all particular favourites!

### Class 1

Class 1 have been working very hard on our MOVE and communication skills. Pupils spend lots of time standing, walking and sitting with more and more independence. We've also been participating in swim sessions twice a week and practicing our standing and walking skills at home.



Class 1's communication skills are progressing exceptionally well, too. Pupils are choosing from real objects, photos of objects, and some are even distinguishing between subtly different photos. Pupils are expanding their vocabularies and learning to tell us what they want in different ways. Other pupils are demonstrating strong awareness in their VI sessions, as well. Class 1 are very proud of the progress we have made this term. Well done everyone!

### St Crispins Class

The St Crispin's Class topic this term is 'Light and Dark' and we have started by looking at the changing seasons. We are making the most of the Millennium Woods and have been visiting them each week where we enjoy kicking through the leaves and spotting the fruits and berries which are still on the trees. We have been making fat and seed cakes as our Eco-schools project to help feed the birds through the winter. We hope to sell some of these at the front door of the school in the coming weeks. We are also learning about the festivals which take place during the dark months. We have enjoyed watching Diwali firework displays on our big screen and making pictures of them. Soon we will be moving onto Christmas. Our class will be performing The Nativity as part of the school show which we are all very excited about.



Recently we were lucky enough to be given a brand new popcorn maker for our class and we have been making good use of it; measuring out the corn and then watching and listening as it pops before eating it for our snack. Another gift was a Soda Stream



machine and full bottle of gas which we will use in science and in cooking. We have also been given a huge bag of toys, another of books, a big bag of Mega Blox, a balance bike and a bubble machine. We can't thank the friends of our class enough for all of these fabulous donations!

## Class 2

We cannot believe how quickly the time is passing as we head at break neck speed towards Christmas! Over this term we have created our Rainforest corner in the class with all the sensory topic work the children been doing. Class 2 have had our wonderful Music Students from Edinburgh University on a Monday. Each week the girls have come along with interactive songs they have created and performed for our children. They also performed at our assembly on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November.

Work is also beginning on our Christmas show. Our talented Art / Drama and Music Specialist are very involved with this project. Watch the home-school diaries and book your seats as soon as you get the chance. Class 2 plan to have an enterprise barter system for Christmas decorations made by the children. If you wish to have one of our salt dough stars or Christmas trees, send in an item for the Food Bank and we will send home one of our decorations!



It is planned that our barter stall will also make up part of the Enterprise stalls which will be on display at our Christmas show. So if you are coming to the Christmas show, please bring in your food bank food donation and take a decoration.

## Class 3

We have had three great visits to the Holyrood Challenge this term. All the activities were rainforest themed and we enjoyed tasting the tropical foods, meeting colourful animals and exploring the outside areas and the

greenhouses. We've also had one visit to the Yard and are looking forward to another trip just before Christmas.

We're very happy to have welcomed Frances Duncan to our team. She is the class teacher on a Monday and a Tuesday.



In October we were learning about Harvest in RME and have learned a new harvest song. We also helped to harvest a range of vegetables and pulled a very large turnip as part of an interactive story. We had a great time at Halloween. We made witch and wizard hats, held a class party and took part in the school Halloween lunch.

## Class 4

We have been having a marvellous time recently learning about the rainforest animals and smells in class and at our Holyrood Challenge sessions. We have read stories in Drumbræ Library and in class about monkeys, parrots and snakes and have made soundscapes on the step-by-step to accompany some of them. In Music we have enjoyed gorilla big windy river songs.

Our enterprise recently has been making pakoras in Home Economics. We have mixed Besan (chickpea flour) with cold frozen peas; chopped smelly onions with special knives until they made us cry; chopped fresh-smelling bunches of coriander and then added spices from the rainforest with salt to give yummy flavour to our product.



We have had fun bagging and selling our produce around the school, having teased our potential customers with delicious aromas! Again, some of the class enjoyed using the step-by-step to advertise and encourage people around the school to dip into their pockets after lunch to support this enterprise. We take this opportunity to give you advance notice that we will be selling pakoras at our Christmas show on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December. Come and buy. Come also to see our interpretation of Pocahontas too!



### S1/S2

We have especially enjoyed cooking. We have decided to open 'The Oaklands Bakery' as one of our enterprise activities for this year. The pupils participate in cooking activities every week. We have been making a variety of products including soda bread, Spanish sponge cake and scones. We have been selling these products to raise funds for the Clown Doctors.

All the pupils in our class really enjoy the sessions we have with the Clown Doctors and this is our way of saying 'thank you' to them!



We also organized the 'Give it some welly' event for the Yard's 30<sup>th</sup> Birthday. It was a really good day with activities set up for the whole school to take part in. The pupils in S1/2 then went round all the classrooms collecting donations. At the end of the day and we raised £85.54! Thank you to everyone.

### S3

The S3 boys have been very busy of late. They have worked together to raise over £60 for Gorgie City Farm (excluding costs of materials) by making and selling handmade fragranced soap, bath salts, biscuits and fudge. They have also expanded their range to include S'Mores pops (chocolate and digestive dipped giant marshmallows!), coconut ice and other sweet treats. They also go to the shops together to buy Enterprise ingredients and materials needed in class, and one boy used his walker around the shops for the very first time. They are acquiring skills whilst focusing on the Health and Wellbeing, Social Studies and Science areas of the Curriculum.



The S3 boys have also been to the Yard, taking part in various activities. One boy used his MOVE skills to navigate the whole of the Yard in his walker, and two boys went on the chute for the very first time! The same two boys also rode the see-saw together, whilst another made lovely music on the piano. Another pupil has been attending weekly Home Economics classes at Craigroyston High School, where he has helped to stir and cook ingredients to make treats to take home. Another pupil has attended regular swimming galas, earning a silver medal. All of the boys who have swum, have enjoyed successful swimming sessions.

## Seniors

This is another busy term for the senior class as we continue to get ready for our upcoming Christmas Roadshows. This year, the seniors will be visiting a variety of locations across the city, showcasing and selling lots of the brilliant enterprise products made by Oaklands pupils. We have a whole range of goodies on offer from Sweetie Jars to Reindeer Poo! We have been getting crafty by making fingerprint Christmas posters to help advertise our products; it was very messy but good fun! A selection of Oaklands enterprise goods will be available for

parents/carers to buy in the run up to Christmas; more information to follow soon so keep a look out in your child's school bag.



Alongside our Christmas Roadshow preparations, the seniors are continuing to work towards a range of ASDAN and National Qualifications. We are exploring textures, tastes and smells through cooking activities such as making jams, pizzas and cookies. A recent trip to the barbers as part of the Personal Care award went down a treat! The pupils enjoyed trying out the hairdryers and sampling some fancy hair wax. We look forward to many more opportunities to be out and about in the community on work experience, at college and visiting the shops.

## SQA –Star Award for Senior Pupil

On Friday the 11<sup>th</sup> of November staff from Oaklands School attended the SQA Star Awards at The Assembly rooms on behalf of former pupil Gregor Downie.

Gregor had been nominated in the School Candidate of the Year Category for his exceptional work in the Senior Phase at Oaklands School. Gregor obtained 19 National Qualification units and awards in a wide range of subjects in levels 1, 2 and 3.





## Expressive Arts

From papier mache bugs, to copper creations, the pupils have again produced wonderful art work this term. In response to visiting an exhibition by Karla Black in the Modern 1 Gallery, S1 had fun producing interesting pieces using similar materials back in class. The seniors enjoyed using hammers while making copper models connected to their Asdan work and the primary department immersed themselves in many activities related to the rainforest.

The secondary department had fun and frolics during a special visit from the local fire service. Pupils also visited the local police station and other local areas to complement their community drama story.



We're hoping that families will be pleased with the printed results of the enterprise Christmas cards. The school will also be entering the council Christmas card competition and enjoying many other Christmas activities within art and drama. It's a busy and exciting time ahead.

## News from the Sports Coach

We are in our second term of swimming lessons and I am astonished by what our pupils have achieved in such a short period.

The nursery, primary and class 1 St Crispins have had great fun. Through constructive games and songs we are working on developing their water confidence and unlocking their potential to swim as independently as they can; either with or without swimming aids.

They have also been sharing these new found skills with their parents during our parent and child swim sessions.

We are using the 'Amateur Swimming Association - learn to swim' programme and over the coming months, pupils will be gaining certificates as they develop their swimming skills.



Our secondary pupils are all achieving great things too! They are working on their core swimming skills; such as safe entry and exit; buoyancy and balance; aquatic breathing; streamlining, rotation and orientation.

Several of our swimmers are gaining distance certificates and badges. So far our biggest distance swimmer has swum 200m (8 lengths)! We were delighted at being given the opportunity to participate in two Lothian Disability Sports Swimming galas. Team Oaklands swam well and all participants were very proud of their medals.



## Give it some Welly!

The Yard is a purpose built indoor and outdoor adventure playground for children and young people with disabilities.



The Yard is celebrating 30 years this November!

Oaklands School joined in and celebrated this special event. 'Give it Some Welly for the Yard' was a success in our school. During assembly all pupils played a 'find out what's in the welly' game and after that we did a 'welly wang' in the primary and secondary playground areas, to see who could throw a welly the farthest.



**We raised £85.54!!**

**Thank you all very much for your donations.**

If you would like to do more for The Yard visit their website fundraising section:

<http://theyardscotland.org.uk/get-involved/>

## SLT

The Speech and Language Therapy team and the Communication Working Party have been working together to put together and deliver a staff training workshop on onbody signing. This went ahead on Friday afternoon, with all staff invited, and was well received. People particularly liked watching the videos of exactly how to use on-body signs with a selection of our pupils.

## Christmas Signing

On our plasma screen at the school front door, we put up photos and pictures of common signs we use in Oaklands. In November/December we always display some Christmas signs – why don't you try them?



See our signing page overleaf.....



## Christmas



Flat hands (palms down) with working hand above at right angles to supporting hand. Working hand pulls away changing to closed hand

## Santa/Father Christmas



Working bent hand with extended thumb (palm up/out) brushes chin down towards waist, fingers touching thumb.

## Star



"N" hands and thumbs (palms forward, pointing up) at head height. Fingers and thumb open and close alternately while making small upward movements several times

Thank you for taking the time to read through our newsletter.

Currently we try to keep parents informed via text messaging, newsletters and the website.

The Parent Council have been very active this term. They have produced a new constitution, elected new office bearers and the meetings have been well attended.

Elaine Weir is the Chairperson and minutes from the meetings have been posted to the website.

If you would like to be part of your Parent Council please contact Elaine.

We hope you are able to join us on the 15<sup>th</sup> of December at 10am for the Christmas show. The Parent Council are hoping to have a short meeting beforehand...all welcome.

We have a busy month ahead and with lots of activities for our children and young people to enjoy.

Regards

*M Phillips*

Headteacher