



**Friday 22 November 2019**

Dear Parents/Carers & Friends

**Key Dates:**

Week Beginning: **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November**

**Mon-Thurs – Mrs Kelly attending Columba 1400 HT Leadership Academy**

Tuesday 26 November            Library Visit: P2B 10am

Friday 28 November            11am **P5 Assembly**

**Sunday 1 December Christmas Fair 2-4pm**

\*Key **December Dates** for Diaries\*

Tuesday 10 December            Christmas Lunch

Wednesday 11 December        **P1 Nativity 1.45pm**

**Thursday 12 December SCHOOL CLOSED – Election Day**

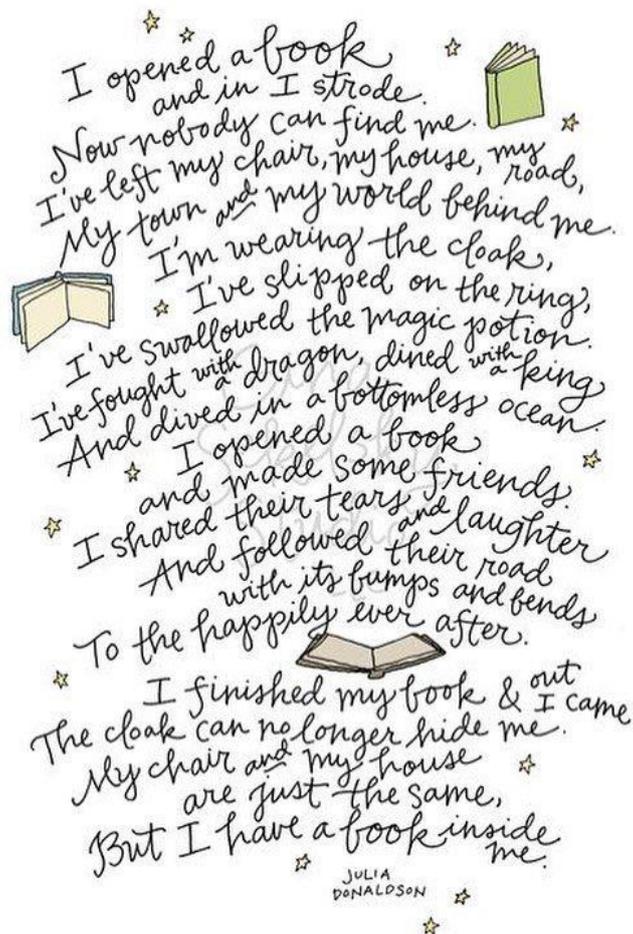
Monday 16 December            P7 Party (pm)

Tuesday 17 December            P6 Party (am) P3 (pm)

Wednesday 18 December        P5 Party (am) P2 (pm)

Thursday 19 December            P4 Party (am) P1 (pm)

This week was all about celebrating and cultivating a love of reading. Our thanks to Mrs Kinsella for organising and everyone who contributed to making it such a success. Badger the Mystical Mutt received an overwhelmingly enthusiastic welcome from his audience on Tuesday and we also enjoyed the authors live event, listening to The Gruffalo being read aloud in both Scots – lots of words to make us laugh – and in Gaelic, although this was trickier to understand the sing-song lilt of the language was lovely to listen to. At Friday's assembly the whole school came together in fancy dress to celebrate our favourite book characters, there were more than a few witches, wizards, spies and gangsters. Julia Donaldson's quote below summed up the week for us all:



## Columba 1400

This week I will be away from school until Friday morning. This is to attend the above Leadership experience with 20 colleagues from across Scotland. I look forward to sharing my thoughts with you on return. Mr Burgess will look after everyone until I get back, supported by Mrs Hawthorne, Mrs Kinsella and Miss Miller.

## Parking

It is very disheartening to receive complaints from our near neighbours on Duddingston Road and families living in Hamilton Drive about the continued disregard for the school streets signs and inconsiderate and dangerous parking. The parent council have asked the school to share the message below – we fully endorse it. Staff in school talk to the children daily about how we are a family and ways in which we can work together to keep ourselves safe. Please can you reinforce this message by parking in a safe place.

### **Parent Council - Clarification on parking:**

*No one should be parking in front of the school from where the crossing lady Margaret is to the entrance all the way to the lights on school side of street.*

*Parking here (whilst currently legal) endangers the lives of our children. We are awaiting new road markings.*

*We have had several near misses and this week a child was hit by Brunstane school.*

*The Parent Council has agreed to spend around £200 on cones but this money could be better spent on visiting authors, a workshop or treats for the children*

*Please can we ensure we are mindful of where we park. Thank you*

### **Parent Council AGM**

Mr Burgess, Mrs Morrison and I attended the AGM on Tuesday, the office bearers for this session are below:

**Chair: Jo Worrall** (P1&4 Parent)

**Treasurer: Colin Wood** (P3 & P5 Parent)

**Secretary: Deidre Maguire** (P1 & P5 Parent)

**Fund Raising Lead: Sharon McLeay** (P7 & P3 Parent)

Our thanks to the extended team for their continued support. The PC are keen to spend money and have already agreed to fund the buses to the Lion King and to retain Lego & gardening club. Extending the library provision is an idea under consideration alongside the possibility of floodlights for the astro and increased playground equipment. Working together with the parent council is a great way to get involved with the wider life of the school, if you are keen to be involved or have ideas please do get in touch.

A way to become immediately involved is to help at Sunday's Christmas Fair. The second in our new school. There are a variety of ways in which you can help, setting up on Fri afternoon, helping beforehand, manning a stall on the day or helping with clear up at the end. See the parent council Facebook page for more information:

<https://www.facebook.com/St-Johns-Portobello-RC-Primary-School-Parent-Council-Page-191984170872586/>

An issue discussed at the meeting was Christmas present buying for teachers. We heard of the letter sent by a school in England asking families to donate to charity rather than buy staff presents. We are supportive of this idea and will release details of our Advent Charity ideas in the next newsletter. Teachers and support staff understand the pressures families are under at this time of year and in no way wish to add to the stress many families experience.

## **Weekly Round-Up:**

**Skills Groups** These are progressing well and we hope the children are enjoying the variety of groups on offer. We aim to complete an evaluation at the end and build on the feedback from pupils to inform the next set of groups. Rugby and basketball, although energetic have not been cited as such hard work as knitting!!! Some of the P6 boys looked like they had spent an hour in the gym!! Mrs Kane and Mrs Scoular have been working very hard and have commented on the sense of achievement vocalised by the groups who have managed to produce a few rows and successfully cast off!

## **Pupil Groups Update**

The ECO group have been campaigning for us all to 'switch off' in school and at home during switch-off fortnight. A quick check around my office – a phone charger and portable speaker were quickly turned off. They are also campaigning for reductions in plastic – we are conscious that school milk comes with plastic straws and additional wrappers. This is something they are keen to highlight with the council. Watch this space.

We launched the journey to silver award for Rights Respecting Schools at assembly on Friday. Pupils interested in learning more are invited to join the Rights Respecting Committee, led by Mr Burgess and supported by Miss Coleman. To achieve silver, we also need a parental volunteer or two. More info to come.

We aim to have the House and Vice Captains lead coffee mornings sharing learning, early in the new year. Their next task, after recovering from the talent show is to lead us in the carol service on the last day of term.

The PEPAS group met after securing their silver award and have set out the actions required for Going for Gold. They are sure about how to progress to the next level and are ready to go for it.

## **AND FINALLY...Christmas Jumper Day**

Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> December seems to be the day for wearing something festive. Again, in trying to reduce expense we would like to make this more cost-effective for our families. We will open a 'Christmas Jumper Swap Shop' If you have any Christmas jumpers that no longer fit, or you want to come and browse any we do have, our Pop Up Shop will be open from Mon, 9<sup>th</sup> December.

Simply bring a jumper along and choose another, I am also a firm believer that a Christmas Jumper is for much more than 1 day! Our children can wear their festive jumpers (over their uniform) every day from Fri 13<sup>th</sup>.

Jumpers can be deposited in reception and a collection box will be available during the Christmas Fair on Sunday.

Email [admin@st-johns.edin.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-johns.edin.sch.uk) with achievements and news items.

*Jacqueline Kelly*

Headteacher