



'The Phoenix' - Whitehouse News



'We Rise By Lifting Others'

December 2015

Principal's Scribble...

Dear Parent,

Christmas is a busy but wonderful time. Our children have been involved in their nativity plays, they are looking forward to the P.T.A. disco and the Christmas story has been revisited through assemblies and class work.

On Thursday 17th December our Key Stage 2 pupils will present their carol service in the Newtownabbey Mission at 10am. Families and friends are very welcome.

Three things we are proud of in the last month:

1. An inspection visit praised our Shared Education **work as innovative and exciting.**
2. The British Council assessed our European project as **one of the best in the U.K.!**
3. Our attendance level is 97.5% Our policy is being used as a **model of excellence.**

Please note the holiday list on the back page for the next school year 2016/17. It is very important not to take holidays during school times. **If your child attends 90% from nursery to leaving high school they will have missed a year and a half of school!** More than six days off each year puts your child's progress at risk.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.
F. Bailie

'New Year, New You!'



Our school wellbeing week kicks off on Tuesday 5th January. The week will cover four themes:

- Emotional Wellbeing
- Healthy Eating
- Physical Health
- Safety

The school and local organisations are contributing to the week with extensive resources. From physical fun to science experiments it will be a fantastic week! To make this all happen we are asking for £3 per child to cover a whole range of events. Return forms by Friday 18th December to avoid missing out on the fun.

A Fantastic Christmas Gift for your Child



Every parent wants the very best for their child. A great start to their education is essential. Our Nursery Unit and Primary 1 classes offer such an opportunity. Please ensure your completed form is returned to the school office by **13th January, 2016, at 12 noon.** An original birth certificate is required. Two documents to verify your address would also be very helpful.

"Learning to Live"

Blueprint 2020

September 2015/16 sees the third year of our dynamic six year school development strategy. This innovative and far ranging plan will bring our school to the next level in terms of learning and services to our community.

In this section we want to share some of our key strategic goals for the year ahead and then focus in on a few of the key innovations. Over the next year we will regularly report on what has been achieved and the new projects that we develop.

Strategic Leadership

- Introduce 'A Catalyst of Change'. This is a 3 year Shared Education Project which aims to foster outdoor learning, S.T.E.M and community partnership.
- Create a new school development plan for 2016 - 2019.

Learning & Teaching

- Develop the way we teach and learn phonics, spelling and handwriting.
- Continue to enhance pupils' achievements in mathematics.
- Use our iPads, laptops and computers more effectively to support learning.
- In the Nursery encourage better use of our campus to enrich pupils' learning.

Ethos

- Put our 3 year Wellbeing Plan into practice.

December Update

1. The pupils from our school have visited and hosted children from St. James's Nursery Unit. We have successfully bid for funding to engage in the Forest School approach. This helps children use the outdoors as a springboard for their imagination and language. Eight parents from our school have signed up to be trained as Forest School assistants.
2. Our Year 6 pupils, as part of their European mathematic/enterprise project, have set up their own Christmas European Craft Market. They imported and exported craft across the five countries involved in the partnership. The profits from their social enterprise will be calculated by the pupils and then donated to a local charity.
3. The first term of clubs has come to an end. We are very proud of the range and quality of clubs we have provided. The variety is the widest we have offered in the past five years!

Diary Dates



17th December at 10am - Key Stage 2 Carol Service in Newtownabbey Mission.

17th December - P.T.A. Disco (during school.) £1 from Nursery to Y.4. Y.5 to 7 pupils to bring money for treats (£2 max.) Non-uniform day.

18th December - A very special visitor to wish Nursery to Y.4 a Merry Christmas. Festive non-uniform day e.g. Christmas jumpers

18th December - School finishes for the Christmas holiday (no school lunches.)

Y.1 and 2 will be dismissed at 12.00 with older siblings.

Y.3 and 4 will be dismissed at 12.15pm with older siblings.

Year 5 to 7 pupils will be dismissed at 12.30pm .

Nursery pupils can be picked up from 12pm to 12.15pm. **If you have children in K.S.2 only then leave your child in the nursery until 12.10pm.**

5th January - School begins!

5th - 8th January - 'New Year, New You'.

13th January - Closing date for Nursery and Year 1 application forms (12 noon)

14th January - Nursery closed for staff training

3rd February at 7pm - Y.6 Parents' Transfer Information Evening. Please plan to attend!

8th Feb - 12th Feb Interviews - School finishes early for parent interviews and half-term.

Monday 15th - Friday 19th February - Half-Term Holiday!

Pastoral Care Team



Pupils' safety and care is our first priority. If you have any concerns we have a team of staff who are specially trained to support pupils and families. This team focuses on both child protection and wider pastoral support.

Team Leader: Mrs R Watson (Yr. 5-7)

Mrs H Clifford (Yr. 1 - Yr. 4)

Mrs C Spratt (Nursery)

'We Are Family'

This was the title of our 'Anti-Bullying' week this year which began on 16th November. We shared our updated policies on positive discipline and anti-bullying with the school community. Both policies have a focus on being both pro-active and pro-social.

The week included daily assemblies based around four areas of bullying:

- Cyber
- Emotional
- Physical
- Social



A survey with pupils at the end of the week showed that they were able to share what bullying was and who they could go to for help.

'A Catalyst of Change'

Shared Education Update

Our S.T.E.M. workshops for Year 5 have been very successful. We are delighted that the children are building up genuine friendships inside and outside school with their partners in St. James's Primary School.

The 'Rights Respecting School Award' element of the project has started. R.R.S.A. committees have now been formed in both schools. We have now been officially registered and are working towards the award.

The third strand of the project is based in the Nursery. Children from our unit and St. James' Nursery Unit have been taking part in 'getting to know you' sessions. This will continue in the new year as children will continue to meet in the two campuses to explore various aspects of outdoor learning. This will include a partnership with Forest Schools.

We are very excited to welcome parents on board with the project as they become trained as outdoor play volunteers and support the children as they learn and make new friends.

On the 18th November we welcomed Mrs Crawford and Mrs Burke from E.T.I. to our school to quality assure our Shared Education Project.

They praised the relationship between the two schools and the commitment of the staff. They described the work they witnessed in the afternoon S.T.E.M. workshops as highly creative and indicative of very effective learning.

Everyone was both very proud and affirmed!



R.S.E. Policy

Our staff have recently been working very hard to develop a Relationships and Sexual Education Policy.

We held a consultation on 19th November with parents and were delighted with the high turn out and response to our questionnaires. A huge thank you to everyone who took part!

There was enthusiastic support for the RSE agenda and many positive comments were made:

'Great policy and I am delighted the school is introducing this.'

'A very valuable and relevant policy and ethos from Whitehouse. I am looking forward to seeing the benefit to my child. Thank you.'

The Order of the Phoenix

In line with our pro-social discipline policy we have introduced an exciting house competition. The aim of the competition is to promote positive traits and attitudes in our pupils. These include being:

Respectful
Caring
Honest
Helpful
Responsible
Forgiving



Each child has been assigned to a house. The four houses are Giants, Dragons, Pegasus and Griffins. Everyone received a house badge and are rewarded with golden coins for their house when they show good behaviour. At the end of each half term the winning house's shield will be placed on the golden throne. Please encourage your child to get into the spirit of the competition.

Holiday List 2016/17

School begins on Tuesday 30th and Wednesday 31st August, 2016. These will be shorter days to help pupils ease into the new school year and to provide training for non-teaching staff. Year 2 to 4 pupils will leave at 12noon and Year 5 to 7 will leave at 12.15pm for both these days. **There will be no lunches served these two days.**

Nursery and Year 1 pupils, however, will be phased in gradually. Details will be provided during information sessions in June, 2016.

The school will be closed for two training days on the **Thursday 29th and Friday 30th September.** These days will be used to facilitate the key action areas of the school's development plan.

School ends on **Friday 28th October** from 1pm to 1.30pm.

School begins on **Monday 7th November.**

School ends on **Tuesday 20th December (no lunches will be served)** from 12noon to 12.30pm.

School begins on **Thursday 5th January.**

School ends on **Wed. 15th February** from 1pm to 1.30pm.

School begins on **Monday 20th February.**

School ends on **Friday 7th April (no lunches will be served)** at 12pm to

School begins on **Monday 24th April.**

School ends on **Friday 28th April.**

School begins on **Tuesday 2nd May.**

School ends on **Friday 26th May.**

School begins on **Wednesday 31st May.**

School ends on **Friday 30th June (no lunches will be served) from 12noon** to 12.30pm.

* The school has one additional training day to be taken. The school at this point is unable to confirm this day. When this date has been confirmed we will contact parents to allow as much time as possible.

NOTES:

The holidays above detail the days the children are not at school. The staff work a total of 10 training days. Five of these days are worked during the agreed holidays (normally during August) and five training days during the rest of the school's calendar year.



12.30pm.

