



# 'The Phoenix'- Whitehouse News



**"We Rise By Lifting Others"**

May 2017

*Principal's Scribble...*

Dear Parent,  
Our pupils have completed their end of year assessments and teachers are working very hard writing **reports**. These will be sent home on the **16th June**.

Academically our results have been very pleasing. We are studying our end of year data but already we are seeing positive trends:

1. **Numeracy scores have increased** yet again!
2. **Literacy** is also impressive. We are achieving beyond national norms and **nearly all our Y.3 to Y.6 pupils are achieving at or above expectations**.

Also many of our classes have been involved in fun workshops and trips. A real highlight in May was our **Shared Education Fun Day** with our friends in St. James's Primary School. **Almost 500 children, parents and staff** joined us for a day to **celebrate our 25 years friendship**. It was a great day!

Finally, this month it was exciting to welcome our 52 new nursery pupils and 60 Year 1 pupils. The school is full and we have a waiting list for places. **We are very humbled by our community's confidence and support**.

In contrast, our Year 7 pupils received word of their new schools. **All pupils have been placed in a wide range of grammar and secondary schools**. While they will all soon get new uniforms we hope they will always proudly wear their 'Whitehouse label' with both pride and affection.

Yours sincerely,  
F. Bailie

**Sports Days**

**'Get Ready, Steady Go!'**



Please come and join us to celebrate the sporting talent of our pupils. These will be great mornings out for all family and friends.

**Thursday 1st June:**

**9am - Nursery Sports** - These will take place in the school hall. See nursery notices for more details.

The primary school races will take place on the school field (weather permitting).

**10am - Year 1 & 2 Sports**

**11am - Year 3 & 4 Sports**

Please send your child to school in shorts, a t-shirt, hoodie and jogging bottoms.

**Tuesday 6th June**

**10am - 12.30pm - Primary 5 to 7 Sports** - Please send children to school in their PE kits with a hoodie and jogging bottoms.

**GENERAL ELECTION**

School will be open as normal on  
Thursday 8th June.



**"Learning to Live"**

## Half Price Book Fair



On the **week beginning the 12th June** we will have a **Scholastic Book Fair**. The great news is that all books are half price!

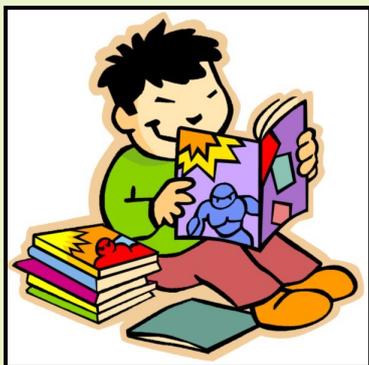
There will also be books available **priced from as little as 50p**. These small books are ideal for days out or holidays at the beach.

There will be an opportunity to purchase books each morning from **8.30am and from 2pm to 3.30pm each afternoon**.

The school gets a 10% commission from the sale to purchase new books. **We intend to invest this money in our school library**. In particular, we hope to buy non-fiction books to support pupils' research skills while studying key topics.

There will be a wide selection of books to enthuse readers of all ages. Come along and stock up in time for your summer reading.

Our very successful school library is going to pack up for the summer months. **After the 15th June the library will no longer be open for community use as we stocktake and get ready for 2017/18**. Where does a year go?



## Summer Fair 2017

It is hard to believe that we are getting ready for the Summer Fair again!

Please keep Friday 2nd June free and bring the whole family along from 5pm - 7pm. Your family can enjoy our barbeque, have their faces painted, visit a whole range of stalls and have fun on the bouncy castles.

This is a major opportunity to help our very successful P.T.A to raise money for the year ahead.

We hope that the sun will be shining! Please come along and support us.



### Health & Safety Notices

Please read carefully and support these requests:

- **Grape Safety** - Please take care and pre-cut grapes for younger pupils;
- **Dogs on Campus** - There are a number of pupils with genuine dog phobias and allergies. Please do not bring dogs on school grounds. There are also some reports of owners not cleaning up after their dogs. This is totally unacceptable!
- **Parking** - We are in the process of spending nearly £10,000 as a small minority of parents refuse to abide by the published parking rules. This includes parking close and even over pupil crossing areas. This is both inconsiderate and dangerous!

# Blueprint 2020

September 2016/17 sees the fourth 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

To share good practice across the school and beyond to enhance staff development and pupils' attainment. This will include the development and coaching of curriculum leaders;

The continued development of Shared Education with St. James's Primary School. In particular, this will allow the schools to promote S.T.E.M. and Forest School learning as well as achieving 'Rights Respecting Schools' status;

To engage with community stakeholders to increase aspirations, attainment, early intervention and collaboration. This will include focused family learning support interventions.

## Ethos

Implement and review a whole school wellbeing strategy;

Achieve the British Council's International School Award by June 2018;

Use the pursuit of the Eco Green Flag, by June 2019, as a means to educate our school community to be more eco friendly.

## Learning and Teaching

90+% of pupils, in both, Literacy and Numeracy will achieve as expected or above;

I.C.T. will more effectively enrich creativity, thinking skills and improve school management;

Review and update our P.D.M.U. provision.

## May Update

- On the 17th May we jointly hosted with the staff from St. James's Primary School a wonderful **Shared Education Fun Day**. The event was held at St. James's Parish Centre. There was face painting, an open farm and a whole range of fun games. Better than this was the genuine sense of community, friendship and conversation that was obvious on the afternoon.

Between 400 to 500 children, parents and staff attended. Pupils, as a treat, were allowed to wear their own clothes. This was, however, a very deliberate decision. It was lovely seeing families have fun together and no visible sense of two separate schools just a collection of happy children.

As we come to the conclusion of this 25th anniversary of our schools' friendship we have much to celebrate from our past, enjoy today and strive for in the years ahead!

- Our **literacy and numeracy results give us much encouragement**. While we are always striving for better, we felt that the scores have been very pleasing. Numeracy results have increased yet again and the level of pupils reaching their potential in literacy is so high!

# Uniform Policy

September 2017

## Key Points to remember:

All uniform items should be clearly **marked with your child's name**.

Footwear - **Children should wear sensible flat black shoes to school (not trainers)**. No platform soles or high heels are allowed.

Children are not to come to school with **unnatural coloured hair and/or outlandish/extreme hair-styles** that cause a distraction to others.

The only jewellery permitted in school on health and safety grounds is a **wristwatch and a medical bracelet**. Watches should be removed and medical bracelets covered with a sweatband to partake in P.E.

**Earrings are strongly discouraged in school**. If parents opt for their child to wear earrings they must only be small studs, either silver or gold.

***Children who are participating in P.E., swimming, sports clubs and /or physical activities must not wear earrings***. On days when these activities are scheduled children must leave their earrings at home. We do not want pupils removing and replacing earrings. This is due to the potential risk of injury, earrings being lost/stolen and the spread of infections. ***Staff will not be responsible for the removal, insertion or storage of earrings.***

***Make-up*** is not to be worn to school by children.

## School Uniform

- Red school sweatshirt with the approved logo
- Dark green polo shirt with the school embroidered badge
- Dark grey trousers or knee length grey skirt
- Black/grey socks (boys)
- White/grey socks or plain grey/black tights (girls)
- Plain flat black shoes

## P.E. Uniform (Year 3 to Year 7 only).

- White round neck t shirt with red embroidered school name
- Dark green shorts
- Black plimsolls
- Hair band/clip to tie back long hair
- P.E. kit should be in a named draw string bag

# Whitehouse Primary School – Year 7 News

My favourite memory is going to Sentry Hill and having lots of fun rolling down the hill loads of times.

Bobby Mullan



My favourite memory was in December when everyone went to Bushmills, but when they were away, Leah and I got to stay in school and put up the Christmas tree decorations, and baked lots of things.

Madison Allen

My favourite memory of Whitehouse Primary is when we went to Bushmills and did all the activities and all the other trips.

Jake McDonald

My favourite subject is English because I love writing stories. My hobbies are horse riding, baking and climbing trees. My ambition is to become a baker or to rescue animals.

Hannah Convery

My favourite subject is English because I love to write poems and stories. I'm looking forward to writing poems in different languages. My ambition is to be a teacher or poet.

Hannah Bailie

My favourite memory was when I went to Sentry Hill, and I chased all my friends round the garden. My other favourite memory was when I met all my friends in P1, and that was the best day of my life.

Molly M<sup>c</sup>Crum

My experience was amazing at Whitehouse Primary School because of the trips, friends, teachers and the resources.

Trenton Waring

My favourite memory of WPS was in P.6 when Kasey-Leigh got chased by a bee.

Kaci Kempton

My favourite memory of WPS is when we went canoeing at Bushmills because we saw a seal, and it was fun.

Max McKay



My favourite memory of WPS was when we went to Sentry Hill and we played in the massive garden and when we were playing with bugs.

Molly Acheson



My favourite memory of Whitehouse was our trip to Bushmills because of all the different activities and things we tried.

Kasey-Leigh McNally



My favourite memory in WPS was when I made friends with Lewis by me walking over and asking Lewis what his favourite colour was, Lewis said his was yellow and I said, "So is mine", then we became friends.

Ben Kelly

My favourite memory of WPS is when we went to Bushmills and it was really good and terrifying. My favourite subject is science because we got to make slime and we learnt lots of new stuff.

Zara

My favourite memory of Whitehouse Primary School was when we went to Bushmills. I had a wonderful time although some people were sick but I still had fun. My favourite subject is maths because I love to do the working out.

Reon Sharif

My favourite memory of Whitehouse Primary School was when the school football team won a tournament at Abbey Community College. My favourite subject is P.E because I really like sports.

Dylan Kernaghan

My favourite memory of Whitehouse Primary School was being part of the eco team because I went around our school at break doing energy saving with Louise. I loved going around doing recycling and taking assembly.

Kira Jamison



My favourite memory of Whitehouse Primary School was at Bushmills when we built a tent and lit a fire because it took us a really long time to get it lit and we toasted marshmallows. Another good memory was rolling down the hill at Sentry Hill because we went really fast.

Matthew Rankin

My favourite memory of Whitehouse Primary School was decorating the Christmas tree with Madison because we got to decorate the Christmas tree whatever way we wanted. My second favourite memory was getting to touch the owls and birds in Year 3 because I got to touch them.

Leah Walker



Although I enjoyed my school trips [Bushmills and Sentry Hill] the best thing was being at school.

Whitehouse Primary School is a school where I love to go. To me Whitehouse Primary spells out HAPPINESS. Being here with my friends is perfect; break and lunch time is amazing. Now that I'm leaving I want to say that Whitehouse Primary School was the best school for me.

Abigail Neely

My favourite memory of WPS was when we went to Bushmills because I really liked the high ropes.

Keeley Martin



My favourite memory of WPS was when we went to Bushmills and I participated in all the activities, I really enjoyed canoeing. I also enjoyed doing Uplift in P5 and P7.

Grace Hamill

My ambition is when I am older I want to be a teacher at WPS as I love children and I would also like to be teaching P1 or P2.

Leah Dawson

My favourite memory was when I scored my first goal for the school football team and it was a header and I was the smallest person on the pitch.

Andrew Campbell



My favourite memory was when we saw the Spanish children in P6 I remember trying to explain what we were saying. I also remember playing for WPS girls' netball team.

Becky Rutherford

My favourite memory was getting picked for the school football team and Mr Harris also chose me to be captain.

Sam English

My best memory is meeting my best friend Christopher and doing rock climbing at Bushmills. I almost got to the top.

Cole Hearne



My ambition is that when I'm older I want to work with young children. My favourite memory of WPS was when we went to Bushmills and took part in other activities also when we went on all other trips throughout the years.

Abbi Dickson

# Talking Points:

## Holidays & Education

Every month we would like to share an educational issue with our families. The need for parents and teachers to be on the 'same page' is so important to help our pupils reach their full potential. My hope is that parents would find this information useful and thought provoking. We are also very keen for parents to respond with their comments to us. Your comments can be sent to Mr Bailie (wbailie552@c2kni.net).

This month we want to discuss the link between **holidays during term & educational attainment**.

We all know that holiday companies and airlines use the summer months to boost their profits. Teachers more than any other profession suffer from the higher costs when they bring their own families on holidays.

However, we are becoming increasingly concerned as our experience would suggest that many holiday companies seem to have changed the date at which summer process begin. A number of years ago the cheaper flights were still available on the final week of June but not now the summer pricing now seems to begin around the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June. This means more families are taking holidays in early June and even May!

In addition, in England there was a very coordinated campaign by parents against the school fining system for unauthorised absences (usually holidays). Thankfully in Northern Ireland we do not have this system. We have, however, continually asked parents to not take holidays during the school term. A small minority of parents are ignoring this plea. But this campaign suggested that all pupils could have a two-week holiday during term time. This view is very irresponsible. **If thirty pupils in a class all had a two week holiday at different times of the year it would cause chaos and impact all pupils' learning;**

Finally, no month is acceptable for a holiday during the school year, however, **September and May are exceptionally important** times of the year. In September we spend lots of time settling our pupils into their new classes and in May we do our end of year assessments to measure the impact of our work on the pupils' learning. This May we had a number of families taking holidays. This is very hard on the pupils who have to come back to school after being off for a holiday and then do an assessment. **It is like an athlete running in their most important race of the season without warming up.**

The research on the impact of poor attendance is striking. It shows **44%** of pupils with no absence in Key Stage 4 achieve the highest standards in English, maths, science, history/ geography and a language. This drops to **16.4%** for those who miss up to 28 days.

The same pattern is also seen at primary school, where pupils missing up to just 14 days of school in Key Stage 2 are a **quarter less likely to achieve the highest level or above in reading, writing or maths tests** than those with no absence.

"This evidence underlines the fact that **every day really does count and that missing school has a big impact on achieving the subjects that transform young people's lives**. In my experience ensuring proper attendance is vital - and more and more young people and parents are realising that even short breaks can harm their grades." - Patsy Kane (Principal)

We would ask that parents consider term time holidays very seriously. This is especially important if your child is being helped via learning support interventions.

As highlighted above holidays in September and May are extremely difficult for the pupils taken out, the rest of the class and the teachers.

Our parents on the whole are very supportive and sensible. We hope we never have the responsibility to issue fines to parents who take term time holidays. Our hope is that given the information and the research that our parents will make the right decisions.

# Diary Dates



## JUNE

**1st** - Sports Day for Nursery to Year 4. See the article on the front page for details.

**2nd** - M&M Productions - 'Charlotte's Web' at 9.30am.

**2nd** - School Summer Fair from 5pm to 7pm. School ends early to allow for set up:

*Years 1 to 4 with older siblings at 1pm and Years 5 to 7 at 1.15pm.  
Nursery pupils can be picked up between 1pm and 1.15pm.*

**5th** - Waste Campaign Week (Eco Committee)

**6th** - Sports Day for Years 5 to 7.

**8th** - General Election Day - WE ARE OPEN!

**12th** - Scholastic Half Price Book Fair. Open times from 8.30am to 9am and then from 2pm to 3.15pm.

**13th** - Pupils in school to attend a dress rehearsal of the Key Stage 2 Show - 'Music Magic'.

**14th & 15th** - 'Music Magic' Key Stage 2 Show from 7pm (doors to open at 6.15pm sharp).

**15th** - School Uniform event in the school hall from 8.30am to 4pm. Come along and buy uniforms for September 2017.

**15th** - Last day of the library borrowing in 2016/17.

**16th** - All Key Stage 2 pupils are allowed to come to school at 11am to recover from two late nights at the show.

**16th** - School Reports issued!

**20th** - Copy of school report to be signed and returned to school. This is very important for our records!

**23rd** - Year 7 Leavers' Celebrations Morning. Detail to be issued very soon by the Year 7 staff.

**28th** - Year 6 Parent Interviews for pupils considering entering the A.Q.E. Assessment in autumn 2017.

**28th** - Nursery Graduation Morning. Details to be issued by the Nursery Team.

**29th** - Year 6 Activity Day

**30th** - Summer Holidays! (No lunches today)

**30th** - Pay £1 for Dress Down Day

*Years 1 & 2 with older siblings at 12noon, Year 3 & 4 with older siblings at 12.15pm and Key Stage 2 at 12.30pm.*

**The school office will be closed until 23rd August, 2017.**

# Pastoral Care Team



Dear Parent,

As you are aware we have a very successful Pastoral Care Team. This team works together to keep our pupils safe and happy. If we can help your family please contact the office.

The Team includes:

**Team Leader:** Mrs R Watson

**Assistant Leader:** Mrs C Spratt (Nursery)

**Assistant Leader:** Miss C Hasson (Y1o Y.4)

**Assistant Leader:** Mr G Harris (Y.5 to Y.7)

## 'Dressing for Success'

### School Uniform Suppliers 2017/18

Our Uniform Policy was agreed by the school Governors, the Pupils' Council, parents and staff and is displayed on the next page. We ask everyone to commit to its continued high level of compliance.

There are three uniform suppliers:

**www.ourschooluniform.com** is an online platform that parents can order online or parents can visit the shop in Lisburn.

Telephone number - 02892620394

**G & J Geddis Ltd** is located at 18-22 York Street, Belfast.

Telephone number - 02890 351554

Please note that all suppliers this year have agreed to common standards of quality and shades of garment.

I have also been assured by each supplier of a steady stream of supplies and aftercare.

Finally, if you are entitled to free school meals you will also receive a school uniform grant. Therefore, even if you do not wish to have school lunches apply for free school meals as soon as possible.

On Thursday 15th June we are hosting a school uniform sales event in the school hall from 8.30am to 4pm. We hope this is helpful.