




Bellsquarry Primary School

“Learn, Believe and you will Succeed”

Article 28: Children have the right to learn and to go to school

Our website: <https://bellsquarryprimary.westlothian.org.uk/>



 @bellsquarryPS

Term 3 February Newsletter

What a wet, cold and windy time we've been having lately! Luckily the Bellsquarry School Community continue to smile and give learning and school events their all, despite the weather. Just a reminder that in icy/snowy conditions our janitor grits a pathway to the main entrance to allow safe access to the building. In really slippery conditions, we take the children into the hall instead of remaining in the playground before the school day begins and make a decision at breaks and lunches about the safety of the playground. We haven't let the inclement weather get us down at Bellsquarry Primary though. We've had lots going on!

Scottish Poetry Competition

The Scottish Poetry competition on 12th Feb was a braw event! Well done to all of the winners and runners up. The children did a fantastic job on the day and really impressed everyone here at Bellsquarry Primary School including our guest judges. Well done to all of the children who recited a poem whether they got through to the final or not.



Move to the Beat Workshops

Primary 4 and Primary 5 pupils have begun their 15 week Move to the Beat project with Limelight Music. The project will explore basic beats and rhythms. It will introduce techniques of body percussion, vocal sounds for exploration of vibrations, tones and rhythms of sound. We look forward to seeing what they have learned.



World Book Day

Our Literacy Ambassadors have been busy planning and preparing for World Book Day. They are organising a **Book Swap**. Pupils have been bringing in books for our book swap which will take place on **Wednesday 4th March**. We are grateful for any donations of additional books, especially for P4-7 age group to ensure we have a variety of books available for the children to swap. **Reminder: this is a permanent swap so children should not bring in a book they would like back.** Thank you for your support.

We will be celebrating World Book Day itself on **Thursday 5th March**. All pupils from Nursery—P7 will be issued with a World Book Day token. The token may be used for £1 off a book or audiobook costing £2.99 or more from participating bookstores until the 29th March. On **Thursday 5th March** we will be having a **dress down day**. We ask for a donation of £1 from pupils who participate. This money will go towards school funds which subsidises school excursions and other events in the school.



Commitment Achievement Respect Equity Support

Bellsquarry Learning Update

Please read below for an update on some of the learning taking place in each of the classes:

Primary 1

P1 pupils have been looking at what Fairtrade means and why it is important. After discussing their favourite foods, children are going to develop their researching skills with their P7 buddies to find out where their favourite food comes from. With World Book Day approaching Primary 1 pupils have designed their own book based on the story 'Mrs Mole I'm Home' written by Jarvis. After investigating animals that live underground, Primary 1 pupils are going to design their chosen animal a home using a range of materials and present at our World Book Day celebration assembly.



Primary 2/1

P2/1 has enjoyed a great start to 2020! Pupils have been working hard across all areas of the curriculum. In Maths and Numeracy, we have been looking at time and data handling. We are very keen to get our new narrative writing illustrated and on the wall. It was fun using our imagination to create a story about being stranded on a deserted island. This was a great link to our Katie Morag topic after our assembly about the Isle of Coll.



Primary 3/2

The children in P3/2 have now finished their castles and they look great! We have started our Habitats topic and enjoyed learning about how different animals are suited to their habitats. We worked in groups to write reports and demonstrated good team work, supporting and helping members of our team.



Primary 3

P3 pupils have been busy learning how to tell the time using quarter to and quarter past. They have been reading the novel 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' which they all are very much enjoying. This novel is being used as a focus for their reading and writing skills and is also being used to help develop their creative art skills. In P.E, they have been learning ball control skills with hockey sticks and were able to participate in teams in a mini tournament.



Primary 4

P4 have had a very exciting month! They presented their Fairtrade learning at the recent P4 Cluster Assembly and enjoyed the walk in the sunshine. They have been learning about life cycles and survival of fish through their Fish in the Classroom project. Sadly they only have a small number of fish left but they are still looking after them well! In Maths, they have been subtracting lots of different numbers and in Literacy they have been learning how to write an information report. They have really enjoyed their first Move to the Beat workshop and look forward to having one every Thursday.



Primary 5

P5 pupils have been very busy! In Numeracy and Mathematics, they have been looking at times tables and using their measuring skills to find the perimeter of rectangles and triangles. In Literacy, P5 have been learning how to take notes and then using their notes to write reports about classes of passengers on the Titanic! Speaking of the Titanic, they have been investigating how different materials float and sink in science and are planning on using their knowledge to build their own boats that float. P5 pupils have also been enjoying their weekly 'Move to the Beat' workshop where they are learning to move their bodies and sing.



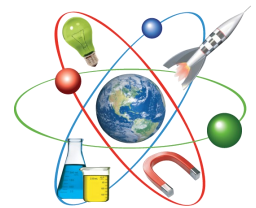
Primary 6

In Mathematics, P6 pupils have been extending their measuring skills e.g. measuring perimeter of irregular shapes using different units of measure. They learned lots about Fairtrade and then taught the rest of the school about what they had learned through their assembly last week. They have also been busy learning as many facts about Europe as possible. The children who had the most varied knowledge about Europe will go forward to the Euro Quiz next week. We wish them luck!



Primary 7

Primary 7 pupils have been revising persuasive techniques to allow them to plan and design posters about Fairtrade products. In Maths, they have enjoyed learning about angles, compass points and directions. They have been continuing to develop skills in Hockey and are transferring these into games. As part of JHYS Science Fair, pupils have been busy planning science projects to present in a couple of weeks.



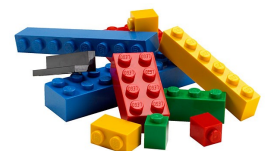
Games Club

As part of our Health & Wellbeing improvements, we have recently started up a Games Club twice per week at lunch times. This provides children with a different social experience in a quieter environment as it is currently limited to approx. 10-12 P4-7 pupils. We have consulted a group of children about the kinds of games they would like to have available to make it even more appealing and enjoyable.



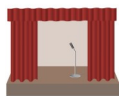
Donations Requested

We would greatly appreciate any donations of unwanted board games, construction toys, rubber animals and small cars etc. for use in the breakfast club and games club. Some of our current toys are old and very well used. Our children would very much appreciate these!



P4-7 School Show

The P4-7 Show 'We'll Meet Again' will be taking place this year. Rehearsals will begin next week. More info to follow.



Tennis Tasters P1 & P2 children have been receiving Tennis Tasters in school. This is to promote the Active Schools mini Tennis club at JYHS.



Arrival at School

The school day begins at 8:50am. It has come to our attention that several children are arriving after the school bell in the morning. Late arrival causes disruption in the classroom and, in some cases, distress to the child. Therefore we would appreciate if all parents/carers could ensure children arrive at school in time for registration at 8:50am. Thank you for your cooperation.

Absence from School & Nursery

Can we please ask parents from school and nursery to ensure that they telephone the school office before 9:30am each day of their child's absence. This is a West Lothian Safe Arrival at School's Policy requirement. Thank you.

Parent Consultations

We'll be holding our Parent Consultation evenings on Wednesday 18th March (5pm-8pm) and Thursday 29th March (4pm-7pm). As before, we will be sending out information soon about how to book appointments using our online booking platform. We look forward to seeing you all there.

On the evening, Preloved uniform items will be on sale. P6 and P7 age group uniform items are limited, therefore any outgrown donations would be gratefully appreciated.

Thank you for your continued support.



Lost Property

In my short time here, I have been surprised by the amount of lost property gathered on a weekly basis. Some of these items are labelled and have been easily returned to their rightful owners.

However, many items are not labelled and in a busy school environment children lay these down and it is very difficult to know who these belong to. It must be frustrating for parents when children return without many of their belongings.

Therefore, we will continue to teach children to be more responsible for their belongings but we would appreciate it if you could please ensure you label all of your child's items (including PE kits which are easily mixed up in the changing process). Thank you for your help with this.

You can access our lost property box (in the HUB next to gym hall) at any point during the school day, during breakfast club times and at pick up times. Please just speak to a member of staff.



Staffing Updates

Leadership Team Update

We have decided that it is best in terms of continuity for the school if I move to full time Acting Head Teacher until Ms McMaster returns. Starting next week I will be Acting HT at Bellsquarry Mon-Fri. We said farewell this week to Mrs Robertson who has been a wonderful support to the school over these past 7 weeks on Wednesdays. On behalf of the Bellsquarry community we would like to thank her for her time and support.

We have also advertised for an Acting Principal Teacher to help lead and manage the school. Mrs Ferguson, HT from Bankton Primary School will be assisting with interviews for this post. We will let you know as soon as we have appointed.

Teaching Staff Update

Mrs Robertson and I held interviews for the P3/2 class teacher post this week and I am delighted to announce that we have secured a permanent teacher called Mrs Coyle. Mrs Coyle, previously class teacher at Peel Primary, will be coming in to meet the children in the coming weeks and to have a handover with Mrs Gilmour and Mrs Naysmith. She will begin her post after the Easter holidays. We are very excited to have Mrs Coyle join the Bellsquarry team.

Teaching Students

Mr Drysdale finished his placement in P7 today. Mr Drysdale will be re-joining us after Easter and will be joining the class teachers in P3/2. He has been along to meet the class this week and we look forward to welcoming him back to Bellsquarry. It was Mrs Scobie's last day in Primary 3 today. We have loved having her in Bellsquarry Primary School and wish her well in her future career.

Playground & Outdoor Play

We're sure that you will all agree that access to fresh air and outdoor play and outdoor learning has great benefits; it contributes to healthy bodies and healthy minds. Therefore it is our policy to ensure children have access to outdoor play at break and lunch times unless the weather is extremely inclement. This means that due to the continued wet and windy weather children may get wet and muddy. If possible, we would appreciate if parents could provide additional tights, socks and/or trousers in schoolbags to change into if needed. We do have some spare items of clothing but this stock is limited. Thank you for your help with this.



Flooding

You may have seen or heard that we have a problem with flooding in the school playground. We are reporting this issue to the council every time it happens and they have been sending teams to drain the water each time. We are hopeful that they will be able to discover what is causing this continued issue and that it will be resolved soon. However, one of our parents is a drainage specialist and has met with me to discuss potential solutions. We plan to get the children involved in learning about drainage systems and coming up with a solution which would prevent or reduce the amount of flooding we experience. We think this is a very relevant and exciting learning experience for the children which will put skills for learning, life and work into a very real context. We look forward to coming up with potential solutions together which the children can then present to the council. One of the ideas is running off some of the rainwater into planters so if anyone has the ability to build planters and would be willing to donate these or the materials or time please get in touch. A great Bellsquarry community effort!



PTAG—Parent Teacher Action Group



The Parent Council recently changed their name to the Parent Teacher Action Group. Attending PTAG meetings allows you to have a better insight into what we do here at Bellsquarry Primary School. It gives you an opportunity to ask questions, share ideas and get involved in the wider school community too. The updated constitution etc. can be found on the school website:

<https://bellsquarryprimary.westlothian.org.uk/article/18055/Parent-Teacher-Action-Group-PTAG->

Fundraising Committee

The fundraising committee organised a very successful movie night and all of the children had a great time. Their next fundraising event is a Cocktail Evening on **Saturday 28th March** in Bellsquarry Village Hall. Tickets cost £25 which includes 4 cocktails and pizza. Tickets are on sale now.

Easter Egg Competition

The PTAG is organising an Easter Egg competition where pupils in school and nursery can decorate a boiled egg.

There will be a £1 entry fee and they plan to show off the masterpieces in a Gallery in our school hall where teas and coffees will be on sale. Further information to follow from PTAG.



New PTAG Logo

The PTAG would like children to design their new logo which will then be displayed on all PTAG correspondence. Children will soon be receiving an entry form which they can then use to design a logo which they think illustrates the work of the PTAG.

Funding Request Form

Bellsquarry's PTAG work hard to raise funds throughout the school year and our aim is that the money raised will be used to benefit the pupils in our school and nursery. However, sometimes it's unclear where these funds have gone and who decides how the money is spent. With that in mind, we have introduced a Funding Request Form which you can access on the [website](#). So, if you have an idea for an event, an activity or equipment which you think could be funded by the PTAG, please fill in the form and return it to us, either via the school office or our post box which is located in the main entrance foyer.

Commitment Achievement Respect Equity Support

Diary Dates

Mon 2nd March	P4 Lanthorn Library Visit
Tues 3rd March	ELC visiting Five Sisters Zoo—(1/2 AM children and FD children—speak to ELC staff to find out if your child is attending this group)
Wed 4th March	Book Swap
Thurs 5th March	World Book Day—Book tokens to be issued and bring £1 to dress down.
Fri 6th March	P6 Euroquiz Team to Howden Park Centre
Thurs 12th March	JYHS Science Fair (P7 pupils) 6:30pm
Fri 13th March	Glee Competition (P6/7 choir) Howden Park Centre
Mon 16th March	P7 Lanthorn Visit
Wed 18th March	Parent Consultations 5pm-8pm
Thurs 19th March	Parent Consultations 4pm-7pm
Fri 20th March	P3/2 Parent Assembly 9:45am
Fri 27th March	P2/1 Assembly for Parents 9:30am
Sat 28th March	PTAG Cocktail Night—ticketed event Bellsquarry Village Hall.

COMMENTS

We are very keen to hear about

- What we do well
- How we can improve

If you wish to comment on any items in the newsletter or any other matter, please complete the comments slip below and return it to the school office. Thank you.

Signed _____ Date _____

Commitment Achievement Respect Equity Support