



'The Phoenix' - Whitehouse News



"We Rise By Lifting Others"

September 2015

Principal's Scribble...

Dear Parent,

It was great to welcome over 200 parents to our 'Meet the Teacher' evening. I believe it was a very positive night for all those parents who attended. The teachers really appreciated meeting their new parents and were affirmed by the support they offered for the year ahead.

The key message of the evening was the importance of genuine home/school partnership. I believe all parents want the best for their family. As a school we are very ambitious for your children. We, however, need parents to 'buy in' to the Whitehouse ethos. It involves planning to attend important events in the life of the school. It also means following rules and directions from the school. We need to focus on the important job of maximising every child's happiness and achievement. This is best achieved by real partnership.

We are excited by 2015/16. Let us work together to achieve great things.

Yours sincerely,
F. Bailie

Building Brighter Futures



On Friday 16th October every child in our school will be invited to take part in a sponsored fitness event. Its purpose is to raise £2,100 to split between our three chosen charities.

This year our three charities are:

- Banardo's
- The Children's Hospice
- Our Cambodian School Project

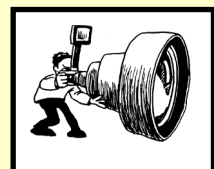
These three charities reflect our aim to help children to see their responsibilities to those in their school, the local area and the global community. Not only is this a practical way of raising money but a great way to teaching children to count their blessing and have compassion for others.

Help us support these excellent causes.

Only one form per is expected family

"Say Cheese!"

Opus will be in school on Friday 9th October. Remember to send in a brush or comb!



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.
- Encourage the work of our School Council as we work towards a Green Flag.

Campus

- Use our website to keep everyone informed about what is happening in school.

September Update:

Already lots has been achieved!

- iPad training completed in August 2015. It was an excellent day!
- Y.5 parents informed about the new S.T.E.M. project.
- Staff are involved in designing seven week S.T.E.M. modules e.g. robotics.
- The nursery staff are developing new strategies for indoor and outdoor play.
- New electronic handwriting scheme in place across the school.
- Accelerated Reading introduced across all of Key Stage 2. A fantastic project that we believe will really enhance pupils' comprehension skills.



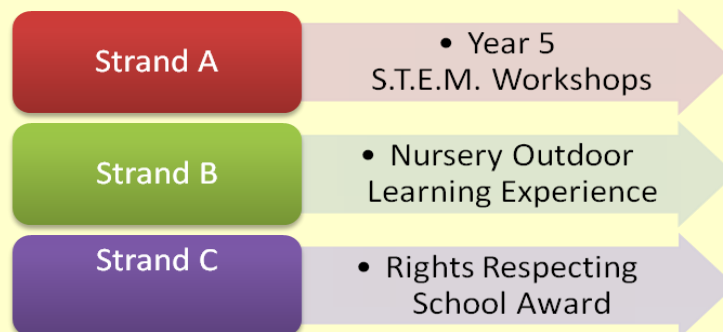
'A Catalyst of Change'

Shared Education S.T.E.M Project



We are delighted to inform you that in partnership with St. James's PS our school has received major funding to develop a three year programme to foster S.T.E.M learning and community partnership.

The project has three key strands in Year 1:



S.T.E.M. Workshops

Year 5 pupils from St James's Primary School will travel down by bus every Wednesday afternoon to take part in joint **Science**, **Maths**, **Engineering** and **Technology** seven week module. These will include for example, robotics and M.A.D. Science lessons. Staff from both schools will team teach these sessions. There will also be family science nights, a family residential and a science fair! By the end of three years all K.S.2 pupils from both school will be involved.

Nursery Outdoor Learning Experience

Our Nursery Unit along with St. James's will be visiting in each other's settings and exploring the wonderful outdoors. In small groups they will go with their teacher to the other school and take part in a range of activities to create, explore and solve problems with their new friends. Parent volunteers will be encouraged to join us on these sessions and will be trained on how to support children's learning in the outdoor area. Information regarding these sessions will be available soon from the Nursery teachers.

Rights Respecting School Award

Both schools will engage in the 'Rights Respecting School' Award Scheme. We hope to have achieved level one status by the end of the next school year.

These strands will gather momentum over the next three years and we are keen for everyone to get involved. We feel very strongly that Shared Education is a unique opportunity for relationships to be developed between pupils, parents and staff. We believe that the opportunity to explore and celebrate diversity is a key element of the project and will help our children be leaders in real community change.

In Focus: School Development

2015/16 marks the final year of our present school development. The past two years have brought a number of very pleasing successes. In 2015/16 we are confident that the best of this school development cycle is yet to come!

Here is a summary of our key success in 2014/15:

- ♦ Literacy and numeracy scores have increased for the **third year in a row**.
- ♦ Excellent end of Key Stage 2 results that put us **well above expected levels** for similar schools across Northern Ireland.
- ♦ **Accelerated Reading** has been successfully implemented in Year 5.
- ♦ **Numicon** is now used from Year 1 to Year 4.
- ♦ **IzaK9 Mathematical Problem-solving** has been introduced into K.S.2.
- ♦ The Nursery has been involved in training to **identify, support and track children with additional** needs more effectively.
- ♦ The Nursery Unit has been exploring **outdoor play via an Erasmus+ project**.
- ♦ New **iPads and laptops** have been introduced across the school.
- ♦ **S.T.E.M. workshops piloted** in Year 6 and 7.
- ♦ The school has successfully bid for a £90,000 **Shared Education bid** with St. James's P.S. Over the next three years we will promote S.T.E.M. subjects and promote better community links.
- ♦ An ambitious whole school **Wellbeing Three Year Plan** launched.
- ♦ 'Operation Blue' **Anti-Bullying Week** piloted in November 2014.
- ♦ The staff have spent time updating the **Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy**.
- ♦ **'New Year, New You'** Wellbeing community week was piloted in January 2015 across the school.
- ♦ We raised **£3,000 to build a school** for pupils in Cambodia.
- ♦ A very successful **Summer Fair** raised over £2,700!

In 2015/16 we have many ambitious plans. Many of these are listed on 'Blueprint 2020' section of this month's Phoenix. Every month we will keep you up to date with our progress.

A few of the more visible developments in **2015/16** will include:

- ◆ Our exciting '**Catalyst of Change**' **S.T.E.M. Project**. It will include our nursery pupils exploring the outdoors, all our Year 5 to 7 pupils being involved in exciting S.T.E.M. workshops and the school exploring the 'Rights Respecting School Award'. In addition to this our Year 5 pupils will be developing close friendships with children from St. James's P.S.
- ◆ Within Literacy we will be introducing a **new handwriting scheme** and focusing on how our pupils present their work. We have bought in a new electronic script that can be used to produce worksheets, signs and other material in our school script. This immersion in the new handwriting will make it a natural part of our children's everyday learning.
- ◆ We will also revisit our **phonics and spelling strategies**. Our testing demonstrates that our school is operating above the norm in this area. We want to, however, push for even higher standards.
- ◆ In Years 5 to 7 all pupils will use '**Accelerated Reading**'. The results last year for Year 5 were very pleasing. In 2015/16 we have high hopes for pupils' ability and enjoyment of reading to really increase.
- ◆ Our nursery will engage in developing a more **creative use of our campus**. This will include outdoor play and the better use of our building.
- ◆ Year 6 pupils will participate in a **European numeracy project** and use some exciting new engineering software to improve their understanding of mathematics in the real world.
- ◆ Our **new library will be equipped with new software** for pupils to enjoy. It will help them borrow books more effectively and find out more about their favourite authors and books. They can even publish their own writing and reserve their next book from home. After November we hope to have the **library open to our families from 2pm to 3.30pm** Monday to Wednesday.
- ◆ We plan to launch a **new house competition**. This will help to increase pupils' motivation and increase their sense of school community. We are due to launch the houses in November 2015.
- ◆ We are in the process of **improving our website** to make it more useful and keep it more regularly updated. By January 2016 you should begin to see the improvements starting to be more obvious.
- ◆ In the Summer Term we need your help to engage with us as we plan our **next three-year S.D.P.** Your opinions and ideas will be very much valued. Please get involved!

TIME FOR ME



Time 4 Me is a Barnardo's support service working in schools. It supports children families and schools when life gets tough. Time 4 Me will be in our school every week this year. Our Time 4 Me Counsellor is Julie Magowan and she will be in school every Wednesday morning.

Time 4 Me helps with the things children face growing up which can affect their learning. We support children and families coping with:

- Bereavement
- Changes in the family (e.g. divorce, illness, conflict)
- Friendship problems
- Bullying
- Worries about school work or moving to 'big school'

If you think your child would benefit from counselling speak to Mr Bailie, Ms Kennedy, Mrs Watson or your child's teacher. Julie will be happy to chat about the service and how it can help.



Pastoral Care Team



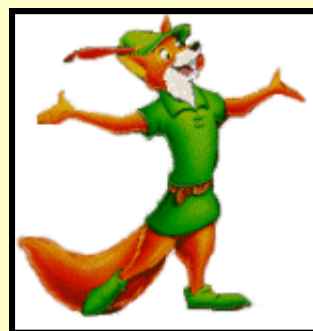
Pupils' safety and care is our first priority. If you have any concerns we have a team of staff who are specially trained to support pupils and families. This team focus on both child protection and wider pastoral support.

Team Leader: Mrs R. Watson (Yr. 5-7)
Mrs Clifford (Yr. 1 - Yr. 4)
Mrs Spratt (Nursery)

S.M.I.L.E. Night

'Robin Hood'

**Wednesday 30th September
@ 7pm**



All Year 1 to 7 pupils are very welcome. There is no cost to attend this fantastic theatre production. All child must be accompanied by a parent/carer.

Please plan to attend!

Holiday List 2015/16

School ends on **Friday 23rd October** from 1pm to 1.30pm.

School begins on **Monday 2nd November**.

School ends on **Friday 18th December** from 12noon to 12.30pm.

School begins on **Monday 4th January**.

School ends on **Friday 12th February** from 1pm to 1.30pm.

School begins on **Monday 22nd February**.

School ends on **Wednesday 23rd March** at 12pm to 12.30pm

School begins on **Monday 4th April**.

School ends on **Friday 29th April**.

A one week's break due to a very early Easter holiday.

School begins on **Monday 9th May**.

School ends on **Friday 27th May**.

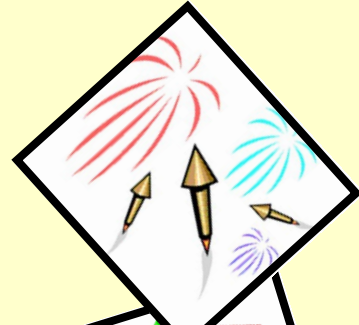
School begins on **Tuesday 31st May**.

School ends on **Thursday 30th June** from

12noon to 12.30pm.

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 during exceptional closure training days during the school year (included in the list above.)



Dates For Your Diary

Term One

SEPTEMBER

- **22nd to 23rd** - Year 1 Interviews
- **30th** S.M.I.L.E. Night for Y. 1 to 7. 'Robin Hood' @ 7pm.

OCTOBER

- **2nd** - Nursery Closed for Staff training
- **9th** -School photographs
- **14th** - Year 1 Phonics' Workshops (1-2pm and 7-8pm)
- **16th** - Charity Activity Day
- **19th to 23rd** - School Book Fair 8.30am and 1.30pm to 3pm.
- **19th to 23rd** - Early Closure at 1pm/1.15pm & 1.30pm for parental interviews.
- **23rd** - Library Opening!
- **26 to 30th** - Half Term Holiday

NOVEMBER

- **2nd** - School & clubs begin!
- **13th** - 'Children in Need' P.J. /Onesie Day
- **16th** - Anti-Bullying Week

DECEMBER

- **2nd** - Open Night for new Nur. & Year 1 pupils for Sept. 2016.
- **8th** - F.S. Nativity @10am
- **9th** - KS1 Nativity @ 10am
- **11th** - Nursery Nativities
- **17th** - Am - KS2 Carol Service
- **17th** - P.T.A. Disco
- **18th** - Christmas Holidays begin! Early closure 12noon/12.15pm and 12.30pm. No lunches today.

Term Two

JANUARY

- **4th** - New term begins.
- **4th** - 'New Year, New You' Week
- **14th** - Nursery Closed for staff training day.

FEBRUARY

- **8th to 12th** - Early Closure at 1pm/1.15pm & 1.30pm for parental interviews.
- **15th to 19th** - Half-term break.

MARCH

- **29th Feb to 4th** - 'Festival of Words' and Scholastic Book Fair (8.30am - 9am and 2pm to 3.30pm)
- **3rd** - World Book Day!
- **23rd** - Easter Holidays begin! Early closure 12noon/12.15pm and 12.30pm. No lunches today.
- **24th** - Easter Holidays



Term Three

APRIL

- **4th** - New term begins.
- **20th** - M&M Theatres present a fantastic production of 'The Railway Children'. Year 1 to 7 pupils are asked to bring in a £1 donation for the show.

MAY

- **2 to 6th** - **May Week Holiday** (this week is to help break up a very long Summer Term due to a very early Easter in 2016.)
- **30th** - Bank Holiday

JUNE

- **3rd** - P.T.A. Summer Fair from 5pm to 7pm. Early Closure at 1pm/1.15pm & 1.30pm .
- **7th** - Sports' Day
- **16th** - Reports to be issued
- **24th**- Y.7 Leavers' Assembly
- **27th** - Nursery Graduations
- **29th** - P.T.A. Summer Disco
- **30th** - Summer Holidays begin! Early closure 12noon/12.15pm and 12.30pm. No lunches today.

