

Spring Newsletter

February / March



Dear Parent / Carer

Welcome to our Spring newsletter! It is lovely to see the lighter, brighter mornings and the signs of Spring beginning to appear! Although, the time between coming back after Christmas and Spring has flown by and we will be at Easter in a few weeks.

Authority Visit



On 2nd March, three colleagues from Midlothian Council visited our school to carry out a quality assurance and improvement visit. Our visiting team observed all class teachers teaching, spoke to several learners and a number of school staff throughout the day. Their feedback was very positive, with a particular

emphasis given to the polite manners and engagement of our learners. They highlighted some very good teaching practice which encompassed a variety of adult and pupil led learning, the use of appropriate resources and a good use of assessment strategies. As part of the visit, the team agreed with our areas of development, namely questioning, feedback and embedding the use of digital technologies to enhance learning experiences. We will look to develop our next steps over the coming months and into next session.

Staffing

As many of you will know, we said farewell to Mrs Martin, who took up a promoted post with Edinburgh Council on 24th February. Miss Neville who has been working at Hawthornden in a support for learning role since last August, has taken over from Mrs Martin and has been delighted with how well the children have coped with this change. A huge well done Primary 3!



Assemblies



It has been a privilege to watch a number of class led assemblies over the last few weeks. From a debating chamber to a chocolate factory, a celebration of International Women's Day to looking after our environment, we have seen an interesting array of topics covered! I would like to extend a huge thank you to those parents and carers who were able to join us for these assemblies, I know how tricky (& guilt provoking) it can be trying to juggle events in school with work/family responsibilities!

School Events

We have had a very busy term so far with our P4 pupils coming to the end of their swimming block and our P5 pupils about to commence their block of swimming!

Several pupils attended a Basketball Tournament which was very competitive and a lot of fun for the participants.





Our parent led Football Team is going from strength to strength with regular training sessions and matches being organised against other local schools!

Our Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSOs) have been working with our Transport Team at Midlothian Council to carry out surveys on how and where parents and carers are parking when dropping and collecting their children. The team, along with our JRSOs also work alongside our local police to ensure access in and around our school is as safe as it can be. Our JRSOs also shared with parents/pupils safe routes for them to use when walking to school.

P6 pupils were incredibly lucky to spend a day at the Sky Studio in West Lothian last week, finding out about a range of roles within the television and news industry, which resulted in them writing, presenting and filming their own news reports. A great day was had by all!

At our last Pupil Council meeting, members discussed the possibility of having a football pitch painted on our school field. This suggestion was taken forward by 2 of our P7 Pupil Council representatives, and I am delighted to say, that their request was granted and a pitch has been painted – free of charge! Great negotiating skills P7!

A huge well done to our P5 pupils who participated in the Bonnyrigg and Lasswade Historical Society competition. The entries were fantastic and I have been told we were just pipped at the post by Lasswade Primary School!

P7s are currently undertaking a block of Bikeability which will support our pupils in increasing their confidence and knowledge when cycling on roads/paths etc.

We also have three nurses working with our P7 pupils on a mental health programme called Headstrong. Information regarding this programme was emailed to parents before Christmas. This programme will give our learners strategies to use when life feels overwhelming. I really hope pupils engage with these weekly sessions in order to give them the best opportunity for high school and beyond.

We have taken receipt of 300 trees which we intend to plant around our perimeter fence. On our final day of this term we intend to plant these trees with the help of as many parents/carers/relatives as possible. We emailed parents recently to ask for any help you may be able to give on 31st March. Please contact Mark Jones if you are available to support in any way - M.Jones2@midlothian.education

Our annual duck race will take place on the last day of term. Thank you to our Parent Council for organising this event. More information is being sent separately.

Poltonhall Gala Day – this fabulous community event takes place on Sunday 4th June. Hawthornden will be participating in this day and would be delighted if anyone would wish to lead on this in terms of developing a theme/organising banners etc. Please email the school office as soon as possible if you would be interested in supporting with this, Hawthornden.ps@midlothian.gov.uk

Parental Engagement



As some of you will know, I am in the process of completing a Post Graduate certificate in Strategic Leadership.

Completion of this course is essential in my role as Head Teacher and although the time commitment is huge, I am

thoroughly enjoying the learning from it. As part of this, I am required to plan for and implement a change at Hawthornden. From feedback, data and my own experience of working at 'The Den', increasing parental engagement across our school is the area I wish to develop. There will be more information to follow, plus the opportunity to attend meetings/complete surveys around this topic. Please look out for this coming your way!

Final Plea

Can I please ask that children **do not** bring lollipops into school for snack or lunches due to the risk of choking when children are running around.



Dates for the diary (please note these may change)

Week beginning 13.3.23 – French Focus Week

21.3.23 – P5 swimming starts

31.3.23 – Coffee Morning/Tree Planting & Duck Race

17.4.23 – All return

****8.5.23 – Additional Bank Holiday / King's Coronation**

Kind Regards,

Jackie Mellon

Head Teacher