



BALGREEN PRIMARY NEWSLETTER

April/May 2024 Newsletter

Welcome to the April/May version of our newsletter. A lot has happened in the last few weeks as you can see from the information below.

Pupil Absence

In the event of pupil absence from school we are asking that you contact the school absence line (0131 337 6066 Option 1) and leave the reason for your child's absence. This needs to include the reason for absence and the nature of the illness. The more information we have allows us to code the absence correctly. Some of you are contacting the admin account by email and we prioritise attendance each day so may not come across your email until the absences have been recorded, meaning you may receive a text about your child's absence despite having emailed the school.

Whooping cough

Every three to four years we also see a surge in whooping cough. Edinburgh is currently experiencing a particularly pronounced surge in whooping cough cases this year. Whooping cough is caused by infection with pertussis bacteria. For most school-age children, symptoms will resolve over a number of weeks, while for some, coughing can persist for a few months. Immunity reduces after a few years, so it is possible to catch whooping cough more than once. Adults can also get infected, though they might not experience the characteristic "whoop" with coughing.

People with current whooping cough are infectious for up to 21 days from the start of symptoms. With appropriate antibiotic treatment this reduces to 48 hours. Therefore, children and young people diagnosed with whooping cough should not attend school/nursery for 48 hours after starting antibiotics, or for 21 days if not treated.

Like other respiratory illnesses, transmission of whooping cough can be reduced by encouraging good hand washing and respiratory hygiene. Children and adults should cover their mouths and noses with a tissue when coughing and sneezing, and dispose of used tissues immediately.

Primary 3-7 playground

We are incredibly lucky as a school to have fair sized playgrounds for pupils to access. We know that many families in Primary 1 and 2 come round to the Primary 3-7 playground to wait for the older siblings to finish school. We are asking that Primary 1 and 2 pupils do not use their bikes, scooters and balls in the playground from 2.40-3.15pm as we often have pupils and classes using the playground at this point. We have had a few near misses in recent weeks!

Big Change Battle

We currently have pupils competing against other classes. Our Parent Council have placed large jars outside classrooms and pupils are busy placing copper coins (1p and 2p) coins in them. The stage with the highest score earns £100 for their class and this can lead to resources being purchased for the class, a trip or a party. Pupils can reduce the amount other classes raise on sabotage days (Monday



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and Friday only) by putting in silver coins (5p, 10p, 20p, 50p and £1 coins) that lower the total amount of rival classes. We have two more weeks to go and the competition is fierce.

Pupil Support Officer

Our learning community comprises of Dalry Primary, Stenhouse Primary, Craiglockhart Primary, Tynecastle Nursery, Balgreen Nursery, Gorgie Mills and Tynecastle High School. As a learning community we bid for national funding and were lucky enough to receive money that allowed us to recruit a Pupil Support Officer whose remit is to focus on attendance. We are looking at the level of need just now and she will begin to contact some of you to see what supports can be offered in order to increase attendance for specific pupils. Her name is Magda Rojek and we are delighted to welcome her to Balgreen every Monday morning.

Parental involvement

We have looked to invite you into school more frequently this session and this saw two very successful open mornings in Primary 4 and 5. Primary 4 saw families seeing learning taking place in class and pupils and staff thoroughly enjoyed welcoming many of you into class to see first hand what has been taking place.

Primary 5 recently held an enterprise morning that saw pupils sell products and services in order to raise money for both classes. Undoubtedly influenced by the Apprentice and Dragons Den they were amazing sales people and managed to raise £351.47 thanks to your generosity. Thanks to all who attended. There are other opportunities detailed below for you to come into school and share the learning taking place.

Gardening improvements

As we shared in last month's newsletter we have been working hard with an army of volunteers to develop our garden inside our courtyard. A meeting took place this week that saw parent council representatives, staff and our lead gardener Dave begin to make plans for the summer. We now have raised beds in the garden and we have classes ready to plant beans and peas this month, along with sunflowers. We are making up rotas to help look after the beds and the garden this term and into August 2024.

Culture calendar

We were very busy in the lead up to the holidays learning about the wide variety of celebrations and festivals which our school community take part in. P6 pupils from our Muslim community worked with Mrs Palmer to deliver an assembly about Ramadan and Eid – thank you to Noor, Noman, Tasnime, Wadad and Lina who helped to make this such a success. We also learned about Holi and children from our Hindu community were given the opportunity to take part in a school assembly with Mrs Murray and shared a story about the meaning of Holi. In the lead up to the holidays children took part in our Easter egg design competition, well done to the class winners. Mrs Wheelaghan and our minister Mr David Scott led assemblies where we learned about the Christian story of Easter.

Celebrating diversity

As a school community, we took part in Down Syndrome Day, learning about what it means to have Down Syndrome and raising awareness by wearing odd socks. Well done to all those who remembered to wear odd socks – even if you do this every day!



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Red Nose Day

We raised an amazing £269.26 as part of our Red Nose Day support. Pupil council reps were in the playground and in classes gathering the money and we are really pleased to have played our part in contributing to this worthwhile cause.



Pupil council Reps hard at work counting the monies raised.

Primary 7 Basketball

Many of you will know that we are very passionate about basketball here at Balgreen. We have basketball as part of our Active Schools programme, take part in competitions in the West of Edinburgh and compete against schools from all over Edinburgh.

On Monday 22nd April Balgreen were competing in the play-offs having earned their place the previous month.

After some incredibly tense games we were runners up and missed out on being top by only one basket- it was that close! We are incredibly proud of the teams positive attitude, growth mindset and endless energy! Well done Primary 7.



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Key Dates for this term

Tues 14 th May	Parent Council meeting online
Mon 20 th May	Monday Holiday- school closed to all
Fri 24 th May	Sports Day 9.30-11.45am in Saughton Athletics track
Wed 29 th May	Primary 1 Assembly 2pm All P1 Parents and carers invited for 2pm
Thu 30 th May	Our year- Primary 5 invitation to parents and carers to visit P5 classes
Fri 31 st May	Sports Day (reserve date if rained off on the 24 th May)
Fri 7 th June	Primary 6 Science Fair- parents and carers invited to attend (more info to follow)
Fri 14 th June	Primary 7 End of Year show- two performances- more info to follow
Tues 18 th -Thu 20 th June	Primary 7 Three Day visit at secondary schools
Mon 24 th June	Primary 7 EPIC day in school
Thu 27 th June	Rose Day 1.15pm Saughton Park Bandstand
Fri 28 th June	Last day of term 12 noon finish

