



# Low Port Newsletter

November 2008

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the November edition of our school newsletter. You will see some changes in this edition as the children have had a greater involvement in the content of the newsletter. Some of the articles have been written by the children and their teachers. We hope that you will find the children's work interesting and that it will give you a picture of what they have been doing this term so far. We have a busy term ahead of us with Christmas on the way. The children are looking forward to preparing for the festivities in Low Port and we hope to see you all in the church for our annual Christmas Service on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December in St. Michaels Church at 2.00pm. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support of the school.

## **Christmas Arrangements**

A letter detailing all of the events which will be happening on the run up to Christmas has been sent home to all of our families. If you haven't yet received a copy please contact the school office who will be happy to give you a copy.

## **School Improvement Priorities**

Our School Improvement Workshops will be held in school on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December from 6.30pm – 8.30pm. Parents will be given the opportunity to take part in workshops on Active Learning and Information Communication Technology during the evening. We hope that you will be able to join us to hear about what we have been doing, the learning experiences your children are taking part in and future developments in each of these areas. A letter asking for attendance numbers will be with you shortly.

## **HMIE Visit**

On Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November a member of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education Team visited the school to look at the way in which we are using Information Communication Technology to impact on the four capacities of A Curriculum for Excellence. He visited a number of classes and met with a variety of staff and pupils during the day. He was most impressed with the high quality learning and teaching experiences which he observed in the classes. His feedback was extremely positive and he commented on the fact that he believed, *"that the use of ICT was a major strength of the curriculum"*. He stated that, *"there is a clear and forward looking rationale; sound evidence of consistent development; progressive skills acquisition and widespread integration and ICT is fully embedded in the curriculum; and you have also started taking forward thinking on transitions"*. In his feedback he also stated that "it

*is clear to me that I observed teaching which was at least very good with many features of excellence – some of the best teaching I have ever seen. I think that the combination of ideas from metacognitive approaches to learning, Assessment is for Learning, Curriculum for Excellence and skillful use of ICT is a powerful and heady mix which your staff seem to have taken on board – overall, very impressive. And your children are of course the beneficiaries of all this good practice. They seemed to enjoy school and were getting a great deal from it.”*

He also made reference to the fact that he liked the approach of asking pupils for their views on ICT and how well it was helping them and the far sighted policies on learning and teaching. He summed up his feedback by saying, *“I am sure that you can see that I was impressed by my visit and wish you well in your continuing developments.”*

During his oral feedback he thought that future developments could be in updating our ICT policy in line with Curriculum for Excellence developments and recognised that this was already planned as part of our School Improvement Plan priorities for this session; using the Plasma screen to display children’s written work; investigating the possibility of the children writing articles for local media; using spreadsheets to store, process and display data; to continue with the developments already being carried out.

We are very pleased with the feedback from his visit and have invited him to come and visit us again if he wishes to do so in the near future.

### **Shared Start/Finish Week**

We would like to thank all of the parents who were able to join us for Shared Start or Shared Finish. The next Shared Start/Finish week will be held during the week beginning 08.12.08. A letter giving details of when each class will be holding these has been sent out to parents. If you have not yet received a copy of this letter then please contact the school office who will be happy to give you a copy.

### **Supergrounds**

The Supergrounds area should be re-opened to the children in the very near future. We are currently waiting for the health and safety report which will give us the go ahead to open the area to the children coming in. We know that the children are looking forward to this and will let them know when we have more information.

We recently had an article published in the West Lothian Update magazine which celebrated our success. A copy of the article is attached to the newsletter for you to read.

### **Computers for Schools Vouchers**

Thank you to everyone who sent in their Tesco Computers for Schools vouchers last session. We gathered almost 15,000 vouchers and with these were able to purchase a new flat screen TV/DVD player, mats for our BeeBots (programmable toys) and new musical instruments.

### **Ragbag**

Thank you to everyone who handed in a Ragbag for our collection. We raised £100.50 from this which will go towards our school funds.

### **Book/Enterprise Evening – Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

We look forward to seeing you at Book/Enterprise Night next week and would like to thank Janet from Blast Off Books for organising the book sale, of which 10% of the total raised will be donated to school funds

## **Joan Lingard Visits P6 & P7**

On Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> November Joan Lingard came to see P6 & P7. It was a cold and dull day, but there was excitement in the air. First she gave us a short talk about herself, she then showed us the three books that she had brought with her. She had brought, "The Eleventh Orphan", "Natasha's Will" and "The File of Fraulein Borg". She explained to us how she got the ideas for her books and gave us tips on writing a good story.

We had time to ask questions afterwards. We found out a lot more about her then. We also were able to get her autograph on a sticker so that we could reserve one of her books to buy and put the sticker inside it. We all had a great time and enjoyed meeting her.

Report by Olivia (P7)

## **Trust Fund**

The Trust Fund have recently made it possible for us to purchase new IT equipment for the school. The classes now all have a Nintendo DS with Braintraining game to use in their independent maths learning areas and as the session progresses we hope to further increase the software available for the children to use. A Nintendo Wii and Wii Fit have been purchased for use by classes in developing the curriculum. It is currently set up in the Big Choose Area so that all of the children have an opportunity to use it and familiarise themselves with the programmes available. We are currently awaiting the arrival of pen drives for all of our P5, P6 and P7 pupils to use for home/school learning. We were also able to purchase new games skirts for our netball team. We would like to say a big thank you to all of our families who contribute to the Trust Fund. If you would be interested in donating through the Trust Fund then please check out our school website at [www.lowport.org.uk](http://www.lowport.org.uk) for more details. The Trust Fund will also have a stall set up at Book Week next week.

## **School Website**

Some of you will already be aware that the format of our school website has recently changed. This is to make it more user friendly for our children with additional learning needs. We would like to say thank you to our webmaster who changed the format after receiving feedback on how to improve the website for all of our learners.

The Webbies are currently working with Mrs Johnston on using the website as a means to display pieces of work done by our children. They have also been putting the staff through an interesting question list so that they can report the findings on the website! In the future the front cover stories on the website will be written by the Webbies.

## **Pupil Council – Fair Trade**

The Pupil Council are currently working on establishing the school as a Fair Trade School. They have been very enthusiastic about the work which they have planned and are planning a visit to Linlithgow Bridge Primary to meet with their Fair Trade group in the near future and are inviting speakers into talk with them about Fair Trade. Once they have more information they will post activities to be done on their school website page and share this with the whole school at assembly. If anyone can offer them some advice they would be delighted to hear from you.

## **A Poem for Autumn by Matthew (P5)**

Down by the reeds,  
On the big, brown trees,  
The wind whistles through the great oak,  
The water replies like laughter on a joke.  
On the branches near the sky,  
Water drips as clouds begin to cry.  
Leaves float down, all yellow and red,  
Onto the ground and their grassy bed.  
The branches are now growing bare,  
A squirrel jumps around, and on the ground, a hare.  
A fox prowls about, with nothing to fear,  
For the time of winter now draws near,  
The last few leaves fall through the air,  
The fox goes back to his hidden lair.  
Halloween night brings scary fun,  
And many creatures fly off or run.  
A thick carpet of leaves lie on the ground,  
With the red and yellow and orange and brown,  
Winter has nothing yet to defend,  
For down the old road and round the bend,  
The time of Autumn is at an end.  
Falling, falling, falling.

## **MacMillan Coffee Morning**

Thank you to everyone who helped support this event on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September by allowing your children to take part. We raised £189.56 and have received a letter from MacMillan supporter, Martin Clunes thanking us for our support.

## **Mrs Mitchell**

It was with much sadness that Mrs Mitchell made the decision to give up work for health reasons. We all miss her, but wish her all the very best for the future. Mrs Nicholls is currently covering part of Mrs Mitchell's hours and we would hope to increase these in the near future.

## **House Mascot Awards**

The House Captains recently announced the winners of the House Mascot Naming Competition at assembly. The winning names were as follows:

Ochiltree – winner - Ruth (P5)	winning name - Fuzzball
Becraigs – winner – Katie (P3)	winning name - Tuby
Cockleroi – winner – Rupert (P4)	winning name - Cocklerock
Cairnpapple – winner – Chantelle (P6)	winning name – Uncle Fluff

## **Ronnie – Lollipop Person – 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration**

As you will already be aware Ronnie our much respected lollipop person celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2008. He had insisted that he didn't want any fuss made, but in true Low Port style we couldn't resist the opportunity to show him how much he is appreciated. The children held a special assembly with singing, presentations, cards and P2/1 presenting him with a book which told him how wonderful they all think he is. Thank you to all of our families who handed in a donation to his collection. We gathered £200 from the children and families which he was overwhelmed by and promised to spend it on something special for himself. We also had a special cake made which was presented to him at the assembly whilst the children happily sang "Happy Birthday" to him.

## **Beetle Drive**

The PTA held a very successful Beetle Drive on 07.10.08. Thank you to everyone who came along and joined in the fun. The PTA raised £79.50 from the event which will be well used during the coming session.

## **Christmas Lights Competition**

We are delighted to announce that one of our children was the overall winner of the Linlithgow Christmas Light Design Competition. Abby (P5) was the overall winner and will have her light designed and displayed with all of the others in the High Street this Christmas and in Christmas' to come. The following children were also successful in winning prizes: Maddie (P3) was overall runner up and will have her light also designed and displayed in the High Street, Iain (P4), Grace (P4), Caitlyn (P6) and Neil (P7). Well done to everyone.

## **Mrs Golding**

Mrs Golding is currently off work due to ill health for the next few weeks. Mrs Barker will hold the fort during her absence and we would appreciate your support during this time of staff shortage in the office.

## **Ontario, Canada**

I (Miss Henderson) had a very successful week in Ontario, Canada and learnt a lot about the Ontarian Education System and the way in which the schools in the York District School Board operate. I found this to be a very worthwhile continuing professional development opportunity and over the coming session look forward to disseminating the knowledge gained with a wide variety of educational and community groups. It is my intention to share my experience with the Parent Council and Parent Forum during the coming session. I recently shared my experiences with the children at assembly.

## **Sneezing – A Poem Chosen by P7**

Sneezing on Monday,  
Sneeze for danger;  
Sneeze on Tuesday,  
Miss a stranger;  
Sneeze on Wednesday,  
Get a letter;  
Sneeze on Thursday,  
Something better;  
Sneeze on Friday,  
Sneeze for sorrow;  
Sneeze on Saturday,  
See your sweetheart tomorrow.

Lesley Henderson

Lynda Stobie