

Westruther Primary School

Charlotte Shortel Head Teacher
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October 2020 Newsletter

Dear Parents

As we come to the end of a very different school term, in a very different world, I would like to say how proud we all are of the children for the way they have adapted and coped with new rules and expectations. I would also like to say a big thank you to all our families for your continued understanding and support and for following the expectations in terms of social distancing. As a staff team we have appreciated that we are the lucky ones in these current circumstances – we are able to come to work every day, work together as a staff team, see our lovely pupils and their families and continue to experience all the joys which come with supporting children in their learning and development.

We have been able to conduct virtual Parent Council meetings, a virtual P1 Parents' Information Meeting and even virtual Parents' Evenings this term and these have been successful in the main. We will be sending out a small survey at the start of the new term for you to feedback to us your experience of the virtual Parents' Evenings. This information will feedback to the central team for their consideration regarding wider role out as we were selected as a pilot school.

Wishing you all a very happy and safe October break.

Mrs Shortel

Lockdown Memories Photobook

We received a visit from local photographer, Tara Grey in September when she came to present Mrs Shortel with her 'Gordon & Westruther Covid-19 Lockdown Memories' photobook. The book, which features many of our school families and staff, is filled with Tara's wonderful photos and facts which shows what life was like during the long period lockdown earlier this year.

We are thrilled to have been given the book, which has added to the rich history the school, and very much appreciate Tara's kind gift.



Mrs Shortel with P1 pupils, Lillie, Logan and Chloe



Mrs Shortel with Tara Grey with P7 pupils, Flora and Emily

PE

PE will continue outdoors for the foreseeable future. As the weather is starting to get much cooler, please ensure that your child is wearing warm clothing and footwear suitable for outdoor PE. Please also continue to send your child to school dressed in their PE kit on PE days. A change of clothes and shoes is recommended. Bikeability will continue for P5-7 after the October break for a further 3 weeks. We have now also begun having an additional PE session every other Monday.

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PE days for the next term are as follows:

Wednesday 21 st October	P5-7 Bikeability
Monday 26 th October	
Tuesday 27 th October	P5-7 Bikeability
Wednesday 4 th October	P5-7 Bikeability
Monday 9 th November	
Tuesday 10 th November	
Wednesday 18 th November	
Monday 23 rd November	
Tuesday 24 th November	
Wednesday 2 nd December	
Monday 7 th December	
Tuesday 8 th December	
Wednesday 16 th December	

Inspire Learning

Our P4s and P5s were very excited to have received their iPads this week and are already exploring the possibilities of how they can be used to support and enhance learning in the classroom.

There will be no expectation that a child has to undertake any work on their iPad at home unless they are unable to come to school due to a Covid-19 related reason e.g. school closure / Track and Trace procedures. If as a parent you wish to use this device at home to support homework tasks or any leisure / recreational activity you may of course allow this.

Please support your child by ensuring they have access to their charging cables in order to help them take responsibility for charging their own iPad ready for school the next day.



Halloween



We will be holding Halloween parties within classes on Friday 30th October. Although not compulsory, children are welcome to dress up if they would like to. However, we would ask children and parents to be mindful that costumes must be contained within each child's workspace and so large add-ons to costumes are not suitable this year!

We will also hold our usual lantern carving competition. This year, we would ask that children do not bring lanterns to school, but instead load a photograph of their lantern onto MS Teams, to be judged during the morning.

Amazing Achievement

Huge congratulations go to Roan in P5 who raised a staggering £775 for Cancer Research UK by cycling over 200 miles during the month of September. Roan rode his bike the 6.2 mile return journey between his home and school every day during September, whatever the weather.

An amazing achievement from Roan, showing our school values in action.



Parent Council Committee

An Emergency General Meeting of Westruther Parent Council took place on Monday 21st September, when Hayley O'Donnell was elected to replace John Kennett as Chair of the Parent Council. Hayley has committed to hold the position of chair for a period of two years.

Sharon Dutch (who previously held the position of Secretary) has taken over the position of Treasurer from Ali Boyle, whilst Marie Howey has taken on the position of Secretary.

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Huge thanks go to the outgoing Chair, John for all your work over the last 3 years and we look forward to working with Hayley in the future. Thanks also go to Ali, our outgoing Treasurer.

Date of the next Parent Council Meeting is yet to be confirmed.

Fundraising

During this period when the fund raising efforts of the Parent Council are very much limited, it is worth reminding everybody of what we can do.

Rag Bag

The Rag Bag fundraising scheme is a recycles textiles and clothing that may have otherwise ended up in landfill by providing good quality clothing to some of the poorest developing nations in the world. The scheme is free for schools to participate in and school is paid for every kilo of recycled textiles.

The Rag Bag scheme welcomes the following items:

- Wearable Clothing
- Handbags
- Paired Shoes
- Belts

Rag Bag cannot accept the following items:

- Workwear
- Table Cloths
- Suitcases
- Wet/Soiled Clothes
- Curtains
- Linens
- Books
- Duvets or Duvet Covers
- Towels
- Cushion
- Bric a Brac
- Pillows or Pillow Cases
- Blankets
- Carpets
- Clothes Hangers
- Electricals

easyfunding

Westruther Parent Council are also registered with easyfunding, a charity shopping fundraising website. easyfundraising turns your everyday online shopping into FREE donations when you use them to shop with over 4,000 retailers such as eBay, John Lewis, Argos, ASOS and Booking.com. Retailers then make a small donation to say 'thank you' and easyfundraising gives those free funds to the cause.

You can register to use easyfunding with the following link:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/westrutherpc/?invite=3IHJK5&referral-campaign=s2s>

Recycling

We are not currently accepting any items for recycling at school. However we encourage you to recycle at home as much as possible! We will inform you when this situation changes.



Continued thanks to all those parents who have downloaded the Groupcall Xpressions app.

For those of you who have not yet downloaded the app, Xpressions is a service which allows 2-way communication between schools and parents. The app is free for you to download, extremely easy to use and allows you to view information on multiple children, even if your children attend different schools in the Borders.

Should you have any difficulties downloading or using the app, please contact Mrs Brown by email at westrutherps@scotborders.gov.uk

There is also a dedicated support website for parents: <https://parents.groupcall.com>

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Coats to school

As autumn is now upon us, we wish to remind you that unless it is heavy rain, children will be outside during break and lunchtimes, and as such need to have appropriate clothing. Please ensure your child comes to school with a warm coat **every day**, clearly labelled with their name or initials.



Scottish Borders Council Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information

For the latest coronavirus information, advice and service updates, please follow the link below to Scottish Borders Council's dedicated pages:

<https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Diary Dates

Wednesday 7 th October	Virtual Parents' Afternoon/Evening
Friday 9 th October	Last day of term
Monday 16 th October	All resume
	ELC Consultations all week
Friday 30 th October	Halloween Parties in ELC, P1-4 and P5-7
Wednesday 11 th November	Flu Vaccinations
Thursday 12 th November	In Service Day – school closed to pupils
Friday 13 th November	In Service Day – school closed to pupils
Monday 30 th November	St Andrew's Day Holiday – school closed
Friday 18 th December	Last day of term

School will resume on Tuesday 5th January 2021



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