

## Braidburn School Parent Council

### Head Teacher's Report – 19 January 2022

#### General News

**Winter Windows winners** – We are all very proud of Ben Carson and Jack Armstrong, who were winners in the City of Edinburgh Council's 'Winter Windows' competition in December. Their designs, which were based on the theme of 'Connection and Kindness' and 'Climate Change,' were printed onto huge windows and displayed in Balerno. Ben's winning design shows a Sainsbury's online delivery driver arriving at his door with food and toys. Jack's winning design, which conveys the plight of global warming, caught the eye of senior Council officers, who made the decision to use it as the City of Edinburgh Council's Christmas e-card, tying it in with the net zero campaign for Christmas time. A huge 'Well done' to Ben and Jack.



**Senior Phase Options** – Our Senior Phase learners continue to enjoy their 'Options' sessions, focusing on developing skills within their chosen areas of learning. Our learners in the Art option took home some lovely artwork this week – including fantastic self-portraits. Our young people are working towards a range of SQA units – and our specialist staff are now busy co-ordinating evidence to demonstrate that our young people are achieving their learning goals.

**Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL) in Secondary** – The focus for IDL in our Secondary department this term is 'Scotland'. Learners in the Broad and General Education (S1 – S3) are exploring Scottish culture; and the learning contexts for IDL in our Senior Phase (S4 – 6) are Holyrood Palace and the Scottish Parliament.

**Learning outdoors** – Our learners continue to enjoy opportunities to learn outdoors, both within the outdoor areas of our school and in our local woods. Esk Class enjoyed some outdoor experiences in Braidburn Woods before Christmas - in the context of learning about Scottish animals; and they had fun building a shelter in the woods last week, with a focus on developing team building skills. Green Class recently made some bird feeder pine cones which they took to the woods to hide for the birds and squirrels.



**Child and Young Person's Plan meetings at Braidburn** – We have reviewed our operational procedures around Child and Young Person's Plan meetings, to ensure a more consistent approach. Some changes to our systems are now in place; and I have attached a parent information booklet with further information.

**Children in Need** – Children and young people across our school had lots of fun on 'Children in Need' day on 19 November. Well done to Cara McGurk from our Secondary department for her winning entry in our school 'Design a Pudsey' competition. We love Cara's 'Braidburn Pudsey' with his cool Braidburn sweatshirt!



**Staff training** – Our teaching and support staff teams have been engaging in self-directed professional learning to develop skills in using digital platforms and tools. Two of our Nursery Nurses, Wioletta Wlodarczyk and Kirsty Stanton, will be attending a 3-day First Aid training course in the next few weeks – and will then support as additional First Aiders in school. All support staff recently engaged in Eating and Drinking refresher training (where their initial training took place more than 12 months ago), and almost all staff have now completed practical training in supporting learners with Moving and Handling.

**Family Support Worker** - Our Family Support Worker, Josefina Verdaguer, moved away from Edinburgh at the end of December. 'With Kids' are currently recruiting to fill the post of Family Support Worker – and I will be in touch with an update as soon as I can.

**Upgraded printers and photocopiers** – New printers and photocopiers have been installed across the school, to replace our older machines.

### **Health and Safety Committee update/Facilities Management**

**Tree in South playground:** A large tree, which was located beside the fence in the South Playground, has been removed.

**Updated Infection Control guidance** – our school infection control guidance documents were updated on 6 January, following Scottish Government changes to self-isolation periods.

**CO2 monitoring in school** – Fionnuala Hamill, our Primary Depute Head Teacher, and Marie Goodfellow, one of our Nursery Nurses, have taken on the role of CO2 monitoring in school. This will help us identify any areas where ventilation needs to be improved.

**PCR tests for learners** – We now have a small supply of postal PCR testing kits available for use by learners who develop Covid symptoms whilst in school. Parents can collect a PCR kit if their child or young person develops symptoms in school to avoid the requirement for our learners to visit testing centres or to wait on postal kits arriving.

**Fire Alarm** – Carol Munro, our Business Manager, has met with AMEY to discuss some issues and requests around the tone of the Fire Alarm, including issues around linking of the Braidburn and Firhill alarms and requests to address the tone of the fire alarm to make it more accessible. The Parent Council have raised concerns around the impact of the Fire Alarm

tone on learners with Hyperacusis and ASD – and have asked if alternatives can be explored. AMEY have shared files of potential new tones, ahead of reprogramming the alarm.

**Transparent face masks (approved for use where surgical masks are required)** – The Scottish Government have now approved a range of transparent face masks, which can be used where PPE is required. Samples of these have been delivered to school, and staff in our Yellow and Green Class teams are now trialling these. Thank you to two of our Yellow Class parents for bringing the availability of these masks to our attention.

**Health and Safety Committee - Meeting Minutes** – Our Health and Safety Committee meet fortnightly. We have parental representation on the Committee. Moving forward, I will also share minutes of all meetings with our Parent Council Chair/Vice Chair.

### **Staffing news**

#### **Office Administrator update –**

- Leah Bowen has taken up the role of Office Administrator at Braidburn; and we are delighted to welcome her to our team.

#### **Pupil Support Assistant update –**

- We are delighted to welcome Bartek Kuniczuk to our Braidburn team. Bartek is currently supporting within our Primary department.
- Maureen Robertson, one of our PSAs in Secondary, has made the decision to reduce her working hours at Braidburn – and will now be in school on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays.
- Dominic Russell and Michael Hare will leave their posts at Braidburn in February. We will miss Dominic and Michael very much; and wish them all the very best for the future as they move on to new, exciting challenges.
- Caitlin Thomas left her post at Braidburn at the start of January. We wish Caitlin all the very best.
- We are currently recruiting to fill 9 x full week cover and 3 x part week cover Pupil Support Assistant vacancies across our school.

#### **Senior Early Years Officer in Nursey –**

- This post remains vacant and has been re-advertised. The advertisement is live on the 'My Job Scotland' website. Interviews will take place in the coming weeks.

#### **Teacher staffing update –**

- Adrian Rotaache, who was covering Kasia Bell's Maternity post, left us at the end of last term to develop his career within a mainstream setting. Paul McGhee, who has been supporting us at Braidburn since August, will take up Kasia's Maternity post.
- Noelle O'Doherty, our Esk Class teacher (Tues – Fri), left her post at Braidburn to take up a role in another provision at the start of this term. Interviews to fill Noelle's post took place on 17 December. We have identified a preferred candidate to take up the role of teacher in Esk Class – and I will share further details as soon as I can.

- Bahar Kay, teacher in Silver Class (Thursday/Friday) has left her post. Recruitment to fill this position is well underway.

**Staff cover to keep classes open** - We have made the difficult decision to withdraw curricular swimming for all class groups in the short term due to ongoing Covid related staffing pressures. We will review this after the Mid-term holiday in February. Our PE staff have been supporting our Base Class teams to ensure we keep classes open where we possibly can. Julie Malcolm, our Visual Impairment Teacher, and Lindsey Gladstone, our Support for Learning teacher, continue to provide base class support, where this is required to keep classes open. City of Edinburgh ASL Services are supporting us through providing support staffing cover where possible.

**Friends of Braidburn (FOBS) update:**

Our FOBS meeting on 22 November did not go ahead. A follow up meeting date is to be confirmed.

**Notable Dates**

11 February 2022	Mid Term holiday
21 February 2022	Learners and staff return to school
8 April 2022	End of term – Spring Holiday Evaluated IEP Targets and Class Newsletters home

**Cat Weir**

**19 January 2022**