



Pilrig Park School

Sunshine in Leith



October 2026

A very warm welcome to our first of four newsletters for session 2026 / 27. In August we welcomed our new S1 pupils to Brown Class. They are all settling in well to Pilrig and are already taking part in our lunchtime clubs, Spartans, Samba drumming, Pupil Council, to name just a few activities! Planning is underway for their first class outing to the Modern One Art Gallery with Ms Wheat in November. We look forward to sharing stories and photos in our next newsletter. As regular readers know, I include some favourite pictures in each of my newsletter introductions. Here is a lovely photograph of two of our S1 pupils working together on a Home Economics matching game.

As you will read, we have had a very busy start to the new school year. We kicked off the session with an assembly promoting our school value of *Ready to Learn*. Orange Class and Ms McLarty took one of my favourite songs, Parklife by Blur, and rewrote the lyrics to make them unique to Pilrig! Mr Cuddy recorded the track; Orange Class directed, starred in, sang, and filmed the video; and the whole school enjoyed at our first assembly. I have included the link to the video on the school website so that it can be enjoyed by families! pilrigparkschool.org.uk



In September, a Macmillan Coffee Morning for staff was organised by Red Class and Ms Vennelle. It was a tremendous success and the boys in Red Class did a fantastic job serving everyone.

Our leavers have been learning about the world of work and there was tremendous excitement when our school postie dropped in to give our school posties a few wee tips!



Finally, I would like to finish with a few words of thanks to Mrs Catriona Ferguson, Art teacher extraordinaire / dedicated Principal Teacher. Put mildly, Catriona will be hugely missed. As well as all her amazing work as an Art teacher, Catriona has been a vital part of the school leadership team. Her dedication to her remit over the years cannot be taken for granted. So many things happen at Pilrig due to the work behind the scenes that she does as well as her attention to detail. Whether it is the whole-school pantomime trip, Scottish week, all the leavers' celebrations, making the school Christmas tree, entering the school / pupils into competitions, organising all the assemblies throughout the year, never mind her remit as a Year Head – the list goes on! On a personal level, Catriona has shown me enormous kindness, a listening ear and always been there with an offer of help. I will miss the pate, stewed apples and all our conversations about iPlayer, Hieronymus Bosch, Gustav Klimt and Caravaggio! Wishing you lots of love for your future plans both on a personal level and with your family.

Have a wonderful October holiday everyone!

Take care and keep safe.

Ms Ann M. O'Hagan

Head Teacher



Dates for the diary.

20th October: Pupils resume

22nd October: Whole school nasal flu vaccine

26th October: Pilrig Park School Parent Council meeting on TEAMS at 5pm
A link will be sent to all parents/carers that morning.

18th November: Parental Engagement event from 1.30pm - One World Fair!

3rd December: S1 to S6 Parents Night 4 – 6pm, by phone call or in person

9th December: A Pilrig Carol Winter Show, 1.30pm

11th December: Whole-school silent disco

From 14th December: *Sing, Sway, Sign* Choir on tour!
More information to follow nearer the time.

18th December: End of term

6th January: Pupils resume

Coming soon ...



BREAKING NEWS

As we go to print, news just in, that FOUR of our pupils have been picked as finalists in the Edinburgh Schools Photography Competition.

This year's theme was "Social Justice and Self-Portraiture". The judges were very impressed with one particular entry, and it has been given a special commendation, one of just three to receive one!

The work will be on display at the National Library of Scotland (George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1EW) on 16th and 17th of October 2026– [the exhibition linked here](#).

If you have any free time in the holidays, it would be great if you could attend and take a selfie of yourself with our pupil's work. We will do an article celebrating their successes in the December newsletter and include pictures of our school community visiting the exhibition.

Congratulations to all the finalists! A fantastic achievement. We are all very proud.



**National Library
of Scotland**

**Leabharlann
Nàiseanta na h-Alba**

The National Library of Scotland is a registered Scottish Charity, No: SC011086

Brown Class

Our first years, Brown Class, have had a fantastic start to the year and have settled in well to secondary school life. Pupils are showing confidence in navigating their way around school independently, following their timetables, attending break and lunchtime clubs, and making new friends.

In PHSE, we have had a strong focus in class on getting to know everyone's likes and dislikes. Pupils equally have the opportunity to make choices across the curriculum, sharing their likes, and joining in with preferred activities.



Brown Class have also been learning about following daily routines. All pupils take part in toothbrushing, have a weekly class job, and have taken on responsibilities in their wider school life, such as recycling, as well as joining a number of clubs they are interested in, such as football, basketball, boccia, choir, and dance club.



In Lifewise and Digital Literacy lessons, pupils are learning about rules, and have signed a contract stating they understand the rules for using iPads in school, which may differ from rules at home. Pupils can all identify at least one rule which must be followed in school, and can sort and understand the difference between these and our school values which they are learning about at the same time.



Well done everyone in Brown Class on a positive start to the year!

White Class

We have had a busy but excellent first term back! White Class have settled straight back into routines after the summer holidays, and they are making great progress so far in S2.

Outdoor Learning Challenge

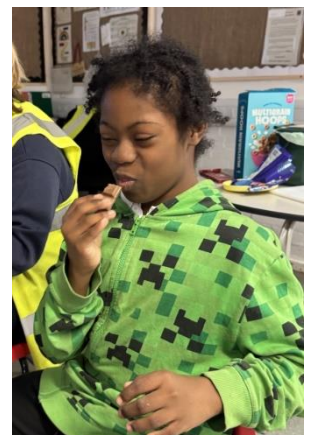
We were very lucky to be invited along to the Outdoor Learning Challenge at Holyrood Park. White Class took part in building their own fires, roasting marshmallows, learning about protecting chimpanzees through talks, playing games and making leaf art. We had an excellent day and had so much fun.



Science – 5 Senses

This term, we have been learning about our 5 senses. So far, we have explored hearing, touch and taste. We have been using aided language boards to help us choose describing words such as dry, wet, sour, spiky and smooth.

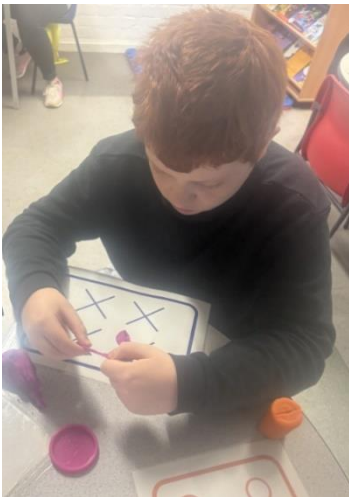
White Class took part in a food tasting as part of our learning which was lots of fun.





Literacy and Communication

In Literacy, we have been focussing on functional writing using our weekend news visuals to help us. Every Monday, White Class take part in a class discussion then complete writing tasks focussing on activities, weather and feelings. I am so proud of how much progress we have been making in this! We have also been continuing with our core word programme, learning new signs, listening to songs and working hard on fine motor tasks, reading and handwriting.



Favourite Moments of This Term...so far



Pink Class

We are thrilled to welcome Pink Class back for their second year at Pilrig Park School, and what a fantastic start it has been. The pupils have returned looking settled and ready to learn. After our success with the special badges last year, we are keen to work towards these again, thinking of new and creative ways to earn our badges. As part of our One World Challenge, we have chosen to learn about good health and wellbeing in Colombia using pupil voice to make the decision.



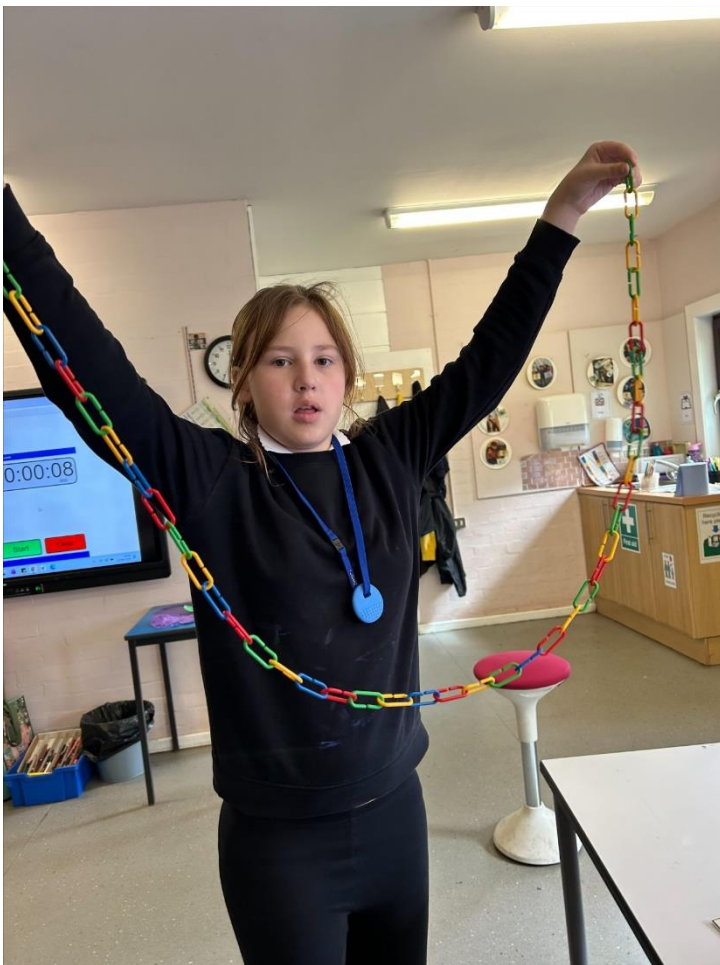
Our Literacy sessions have been full of imagination this term. The pupils have been diving into the world of descriptive writing, learning how to bring characters to life using their words. With the support of Aided Language Boards, we have focused on using different vocabulary to describe how characters look and feel. The class has been practicing using colour, size, and texture words to paint a picture for the reader. Alongside this, we have developed our skills of personalisation and choice as we have voted for our first few class novels, using the front cover, author and blurb to help us make a decision. We particularly enjoyed reading Julian Gough's 'A Bad King is a Sad Thing' which told the story of an ice bear who wanted to take over the valley and a group of animals who worked together to stop him. We will be looking at whether we enjoy other books by the same author next term.

In Numeracy, the main focus has been on exploring place value and understanding the structure of numbers. Pink Class have been using rekenreks – our beaded counting frames – to partition numbers in different ways, helping them see how numbers are built from tens and ones and to recognise number bonds. We have also been sharpening our mental maths skills through skip counting in 2s, 5s and 10s using number lines and number squares to support us. It has been wonderful to see their confidence grow as they spot patterns and navigate larger numbers with ease. Next term, we will look at addition and subtraction, trying strategies using concrete materials. Alongside this, we will recall the learning we did last year about time and money and identify our next steps in these areas.

During Lifewise this term, Pink Class has been working hard on independent dressing skills. This includes developing fine motor skills, such as managing zips, buttons and laces. Next term, we will build up to taking a trip to a local shop, navigating around and identifying different items of clothing there. We will also look at creating a shopping list for a specific meal and finding those items in a shop.

Finally, our Asdan curriculum has led us into meaningful discussions about community and citizenship. Pink Class have been exploring what it means to be a good citizen both in and out of the classroom. To experience democracy in action, the pupils have been taking part in class votes, learning that everyone's voice matters. They have also been challenging themselves to look out for one another and take responsibility for their environment. We are particularly proud of their efforts to keep the school playground tidy, showing real respect for their shared spaces.

It has been a productive, fun and highly successful first term back. Pink Class has set a wonderful standard for the rest of the year, and we cannot wait to see all the things they will achieve next.

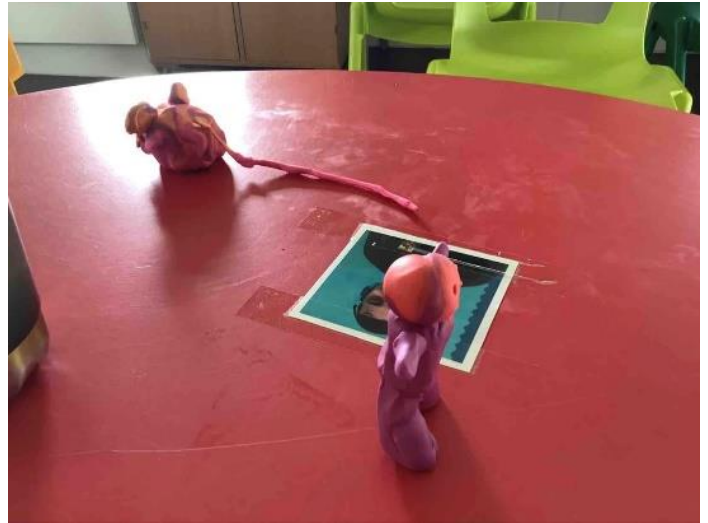


Blue Class

Blue Class have settled into S3 very well! We have been very excited to start researching Japan for our One World Challenge! Drawing some Japanese foxes together and learning how to say 'Konnichiwa' which is 'Hello' in Japanese.



Blue Class have been working hard in Film & Screen class as well! Blue Class are the first class in the school to take part in this course, fresh from Screen Scotland! We have started by looking at stop motion animation and creating our own models to use in our short films.



We have also been working on life skills, folding and hanging our own clothes! Everyone did very well and I'm sure they will be able to fold their own clothes at home in no time...



Blue Class have enjoyed Science this term, focussing on Senses! We went for sensory walks outside in the playground and found out how difficult it is to do everyday tasks with one of our senses taken away!



Well done Blue Class!! We are all looking forward to a fantastic break and an even better return to school!

Yellow Class

The start of the year has been, as always, very busy. We have started a wide range of National Qualifications, ranging from Communication Passports to Cultural Celebrations and lots in between.

We got our new ipads and have been getting to grips with typing in our own passwords. We are learning how to ask for help finding things online, remembering that we have to wait our turn, listen to the adults when they say finished and also to spend time away from the ipad too in order to have safe and healthy habits.



For Lifewise we have been exploring a range of online exercise activities:- Warming up with some brilliant action songs, a bit of cardio, some yoga and ending each session with relaxation. I would say the warm ups and relaxation parts are definitely the most popular. Our skills at following routines have definitely improved and we are all feeling that little bit fitter (but not much more flexible in Miss Sawyer's case).



In English we have spent time creating our communication passports, sharing information about our lives, our families and friends, our likes and dislikes and most importantly how we let others know this information. Everyone has very clear ways of communicating and it has been interesting to find out from each other what we enjoy doing when we aren't in school.

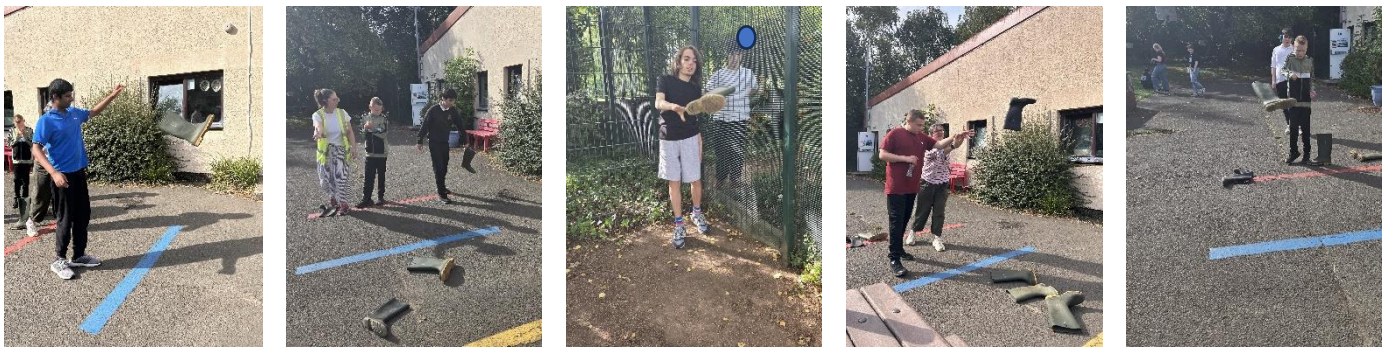
We have begun our journey to getting our bronze Duke of Edinburgh award in the last few weeks and we are focussing on practising skills, we chose setting the table, using cutlery, nail care and making hot chocolate! So far, we have been getting to grips with laying out cutlery, and using knives and forks to cut playdough and theraputty. By the time February comes round we reckon we will be experts in this!



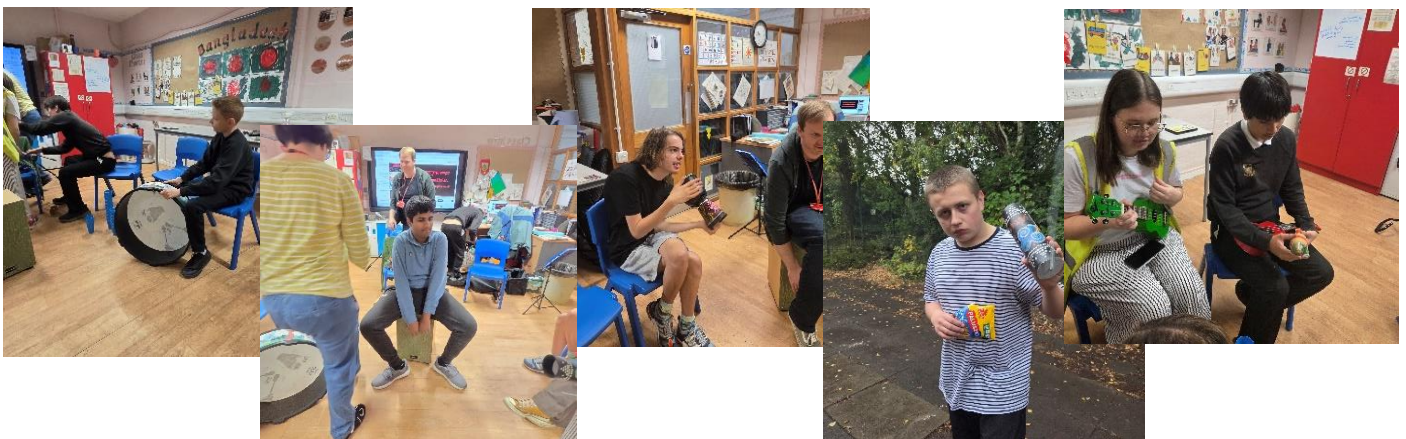
We also had the first of our visits to the Botanic gardens where we harvested onions and potatoes which we gifted to each of the classes when we got back to school. It's always great to visit Tricia and Brenda at the gardens and they keep us really busy tending to the plots. Along with harvesting we did some weeding, watering and composting. It was a great afternoon and everyone got involved.



In Social Subjects we have been looking at cultural festivals and celebrations. Our focus so far has been on Scotland so we have learnt about the Highland Games, and had a turn at welly wanging, which was great fun once we mastered the knack, and now we are learning about the Viking festival of Up Helly Aa. We have started making our own Viking helmets and plan to have our own torch light procession after the October break – with paper torches!



We have been really lucky to have been chosen to take part in the Youth Music Initiatives project for the Creative Arts Award. This started this week and the whole of the class got involved in exploring a range of instruments, from triangles to xylophones. Possibly the biggest hit was the cajon – a box that you sit on and when you hit it makes a really loud noise! We can't wait to see what music we can create with Julia and Ally.



It has been a brilliant start to the year, full of learning and new experiences and we look forward to the next term!

Purple Class

A Fantastic Start for Purple Class!

Purple Class have had a fantastic start to the school year! We have been busy learning, trying new experiences and developing our skills across a wide range of subjects and activities.

As part of our Qualification Scotland unit on capturing digital images, we have entered an Edinburgh Schools Photography Competition. We have been exploring photography, thinking about what makes an interesting photograph and developing our digital skills. *See BREAKING NEWS on page 4*

Our Employability course has taken us on a *Work Safari* around the school! We explored different areas of the school to find out about the many different jobs people do and the skills they use in their work.

We have also been very busy with our Rights Respecting Schools work. As members of the RRSA Steering Group, we presented at a whole-school assembly and made a news-style video to launch our exciting new One World Challenge, which will help us explore global citizenship, sustainability and the world around us.

In LifeWise, we have been exploring different ways to relax and look after our wellbeing. We have tried chair yoga and a variety of relaxation activities. One of our favourites has been the *Wiggle Dance* followed by some peaceful meditation time in the Pink Room!

In Social Subjects, we have been finding out about Scottish cultural festivals and traditions. We particularly enjoyed learning about the Highland Games and discovering some of the history and traditions behind this much-loved Scottish event.

It has been a very busy term, and we are incredibly proud of the hard work, enthusiasm and creativity shown by everyone in Purple Class. Whether pupils communicate through speech, symbols, technology, gestures or other forms of communication, everyone has been getting involved, sharing their ideas and showing us what they can do.

Well done, Purple Class – what a fantastic start to the year!



Purple Class doing Chair Yoga in LifeWise

Here is an example of each of the class completing tasks, from examples of self-portraiture we have taken for capturing digital images, to playing emotions games, and preparing for our assembly.



Red Class

Red Class have had a beautiful start to the year! They have been completing work related to the “One World” school theme for 2026 – 2027. In spirit with our theme this year, the boys have been studying the “Around the World in 80 Days” unit. They have been following Phileas Fogg around the world and have started learning about each country that this adventurous explorer visited. They have also been participating in the Sustainable Development Goals monthly challenge related to learning and exploring Greece and its quality of Health and Well-being. Lastly, they have been learning about personal care routines during PSHE, and how to take care of themselves.



First day in college!



Teaming up with Orange Class to record a surprise Happy Birthday video for Ms. McLarty!



The Red boys have been learning all about personal care routines. From battling nasty germs to folding clothes and shining shoes!



Greece is the chosen country for the Sustainable Development Goals monthly challenge! Red Class will be looking into Goal 3: Health and Well – being.

A snippet from the Red Class video speaking in Greek!



The boys have begun creating an instalment showing the route that Phileas Fogg followed and along the way learning about the countries that he visited.

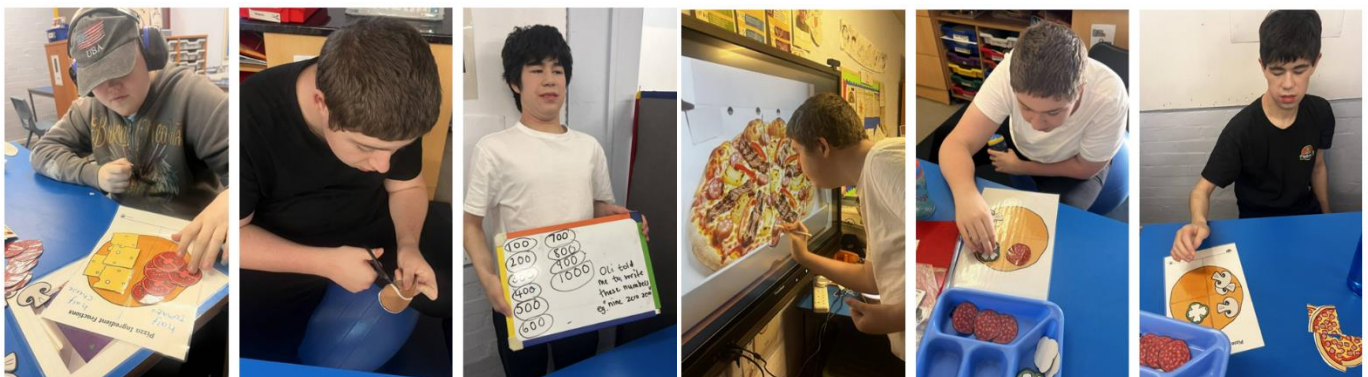
Green Class

Miss Morrison, Mahnaz, Nargis and Green Class have had a great term learning together! I hope you enjoy reading about our fun!

As part of our ASDAN course, “Getting ready to go out” we have been learning how to keep our bodies clean and thinking about the clothes you wear for different things that happen in our lives – going for a walk, going to a party and going to a restaurant for food. The boys have been practising the hand movements for shaving and the steps in washing their hair.



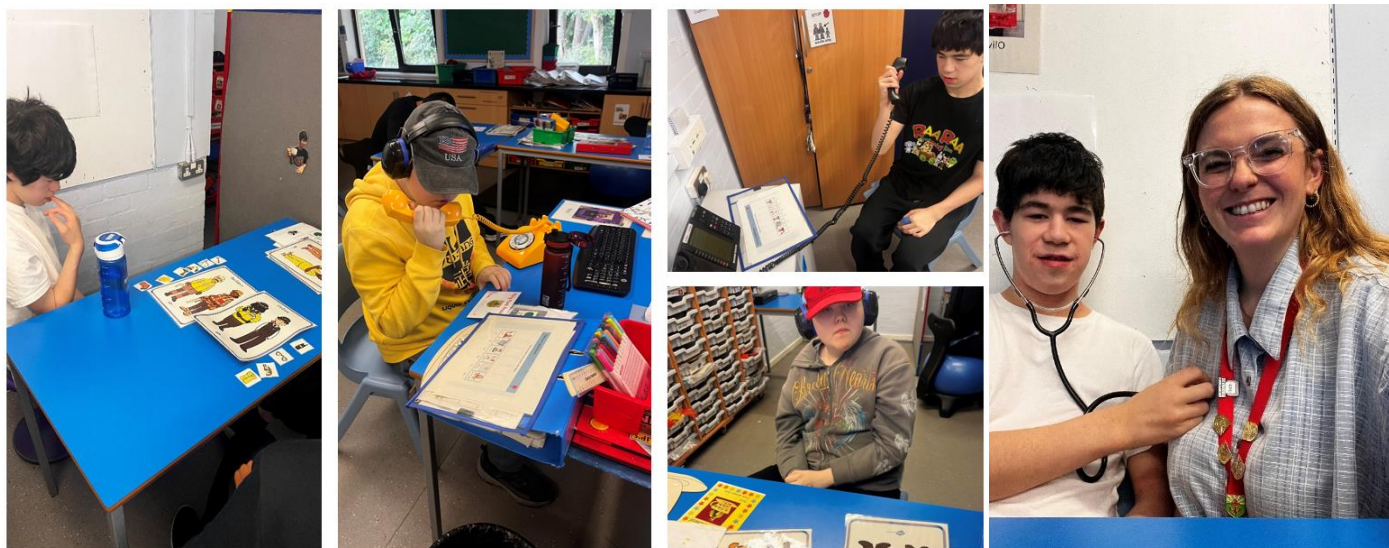
Some pupils in Green Class are working on their National 2 in LifeSkills Mathematics: Number and Number Processes. We have been exploring numbers with 3 digits – saying them out loud, ordering them and writing them on our own. We have covered fractions such as half and quarters. We had fun playing our “Pizza Express Chef” game and made half/quarter topping pizzas for our partner based on their orders.



Green Class have started learning about Vietnam through our “One World” school wide product. This is our fact sheet that the class made. Each pupil had their own section to research using their iPads. They found images and then shared them with the class by adding the Boardmaker symbols to our fact sheet. The class really loved looking at clips of the water mountains and busy streets of Hanoi. Since making the fact sheet, we have taken part in games such as Vietnamese number bingo, and it helped us to make a “hello around the world” video for our ADSAN work.



We have been working on the LifeSkill Challenge: “knowing people who help adults”. The class have explored people in our community that help us. They have confidently told me the different responsibilities that come with the jobs and some of the uniforms and objects they use to do their job. A pupil told me Police use radios and handcuffs for saying “you are under arrest” and Royal Mail say “knock knock, hello delivery”. A big part of our work was working on our independence when engaging with these services. After watching examples of people making appointments in different services, our pupils ordered the steps to practice speaking to “Dr Mahnaz” (our PSW) and used this as a communication support through the phone call. They all did a brilliant job!



Through another ASDAN project we have been completing the challenge: “use different software to write, edit, save and print”. The boys experienced using PowerPoint and Google to find images they wanted before saving and printing them to design the front of their work folders. The class showed their individuality through the themes of their favourite film directors, flags, pop singers, cartoon characters, animals and food.



For our ASDAN module “use design software to produce something” we used Word on a laptop to type a sentence for our newsletter to share with our families. We used sentence starters and then picked the answer to finish our sentence to explain what we have been doing in our lessons. We then decided which colour we wanted our writing to be. The classes work is below along with the photos they picked to show their families



On Wednesday after lunch Green Class have been learning to play baseball.

We are throwing and catching balls to help us play a game.

We looked at the person when they are throwing the ball to us.

We used a baseball to hit the ball.

After we hit the ball we run around the cones.

I feel safe and happy playing baseball.

I feel happy and calm playing baseball.

I feel happy playing baseball.

I feel happy playing baseball.



Orange Class

Orange Class are very excited to be starting out on their final year at Pilrig Park School.

We've spent some time looking back over the past 5 years and we have our class flags from previous years on display in our Tutor room.



We have been enjoying joining the *Come Alive* sessions that White Class have been organising for everyone on Monday mornings. Here we are enjoying some of the sessions indoors and out.



The pupils in Orange Class have chosen Germany for our One World country.

So far we have located Germany on a globe and in an atlas.

We have been learning how to say 'Guten Tag!', which is how people say 'hello' in German.

We have also been trying to learn to count to 10 in German;



Eins, Zwei, Drei, Vier, Funf, Sechs, Sieben, Acht, Neun, Zehn

While working on the ASDAN – Towards Independence – Getting ready to go out unit, we have been discussing places to visit in Edinburgh, with most pupil's favoured option being the cinema, despite other options, like the Edinburgh Zoo or Edinburgh Castle. Maybe something we could hope for later in the year.

More recently we have been discussing what to wear to various places and events and making sure we know how to take care of our personal hygiene.

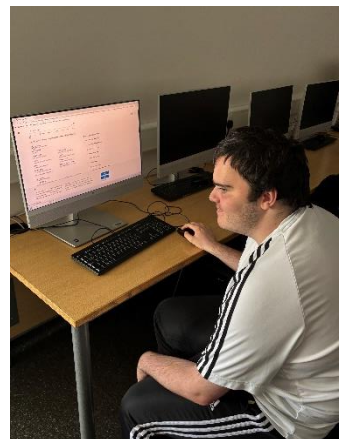
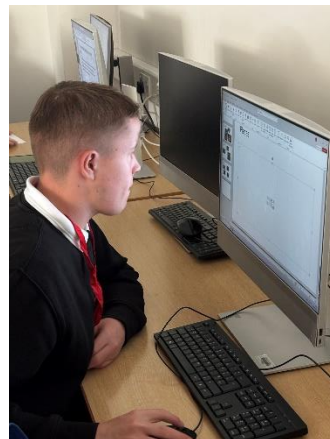


We are hoping to gain our first School Badges of the year in November. We have applied for the Assembly Badge and we are now working towards our Kindness Badge. Should be easy given what a kind bunch we have in Orange Class. Here they are showing that kindness begins at home by helping each other in a recent task.



Most of the pupils from Orange Class, along with one of the pupils from Red Class, have been attending Edinburgh College on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

They've been really enjoying it so far.



Maths

Senior Phase

Pupils in the Senior Phase have been starting to work towards some Qualifications Scotland awards.

This year there are pupils completing National 1 Number Skills units, National 2 Lifeskills Mathematics units and some pupils completing the National 3 Applications of Mathematics course.

Red Class are working on Money, and we have been looking at banknotes, with the pupils designing their own.



BGE

Blue Class have spent most of term 1 on the topic – Number.

We started by seeing how many digits pupils were able to work with. Although some pupils are still working on numbers to 100, there were a few pupils able to read numbers up to and including millions, that's 7 digits in case you didn't know!

We have been adding and subtracting within number ranges appropriate to each pupil.



English

BGE - Blue Class has been exploring the world of ridiculously rich people in *Billionaire Boy* by David Williamson and the adventurous worlds of spies in *Stormbreaker*.

The have also been playing games with their peers and engaging in paired or group reading activities.



The Blue bairns playing spies and trying to find the mole.

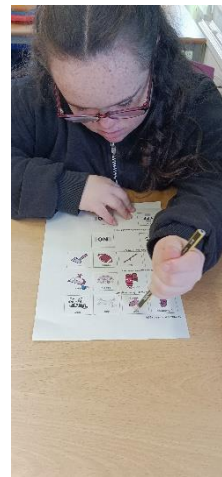


The Blue Bairns completing work on *Billionaire Boy*, *Stormbreaker* and reading for pleasure and learning!

Senior Phase – Purple Class have been learning about the tale of *Jack and the Beanstalk* and completing work spanning from story sequencing to stealing as a moral issue.



Deciding whether it was okay for Jack to steal the giant's hen, money and harp as well as talking about good and bad sharing.



Story Sequencing and character identification.



The Purple Peeps completing work towards their National 1 Scottish Qualification.

Orange Class have been working towards their National 2 Scottish Qualification in Investigating Media and National 2 Internet Applications. The Orange Leavers want to leave their mark in Pilrig Park School by creating media that will help parents, carers, and learners to cultivate a safe relationship with the digital world. For this reason, they have been exploring different media such as leaflets, movies, posters, and newspapers.

The Orange Leavers taking media shots.



High – angle shot



Full Shot



Close – up shot



Extreme close – up shot



Wide Shot



Long Shot

English & Literacy Resources

Dear parents & carers,

Please find an accessible list of websites you can use with your young people and a list of free events you may want to visit with your child during the October holiday.

Ms. Karefylakis

Websites

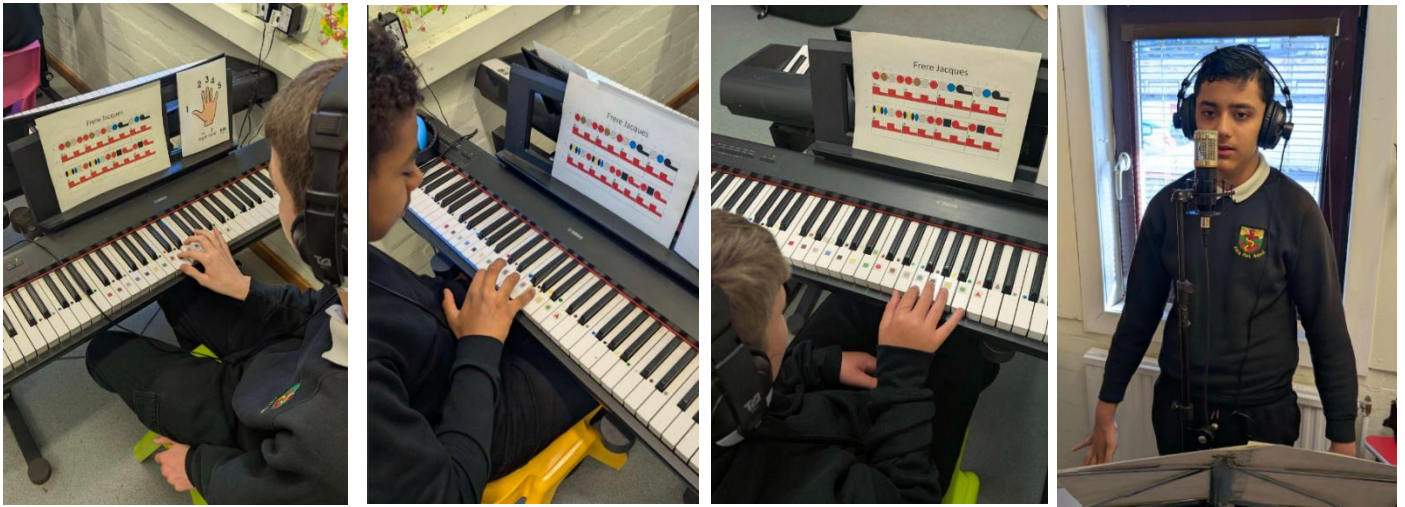
- 1) www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/fina-a-book/library-page
- 2) <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/how-we-help/have-fun-at-home/storybooks-and-games/>
- 3) <https://www.uniteforliteracy.com/free-books-online/home>
- 4) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/games>
- 5) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/stories>

Free Events

- 1) Drop-in Activity: Brain Blocks
 - Date & Time: Tuesday, 13 October 2026, at 11:00 AM
 - Venue: Physicians' Gallery (11 Queen Street, EH2 1JQ)
 - What to expect: A hands-on indoor discovery day led by University of Edinburgh researchers. Kids can explore brain anatomy through interactive stations.
- 2) Drop-in Activity: Make a Pomander
 - Date & Time: Wednesday, 14 October 2026, at 11:00 AM
 - Venue: Physicians' Gallery (11 Queen Street, EH2 1JQ)
 - What to expect: A plague-themed history and craft workshop. Kids can make a 17th-century scented pomander using real herbs, enjoy a rat-themed scavenger hunt, and play in a dress-up station.
- 3) The Big Draw at Lauriston Castle
 - Date & Time: Monday, 12 October 2026, starting at 10:00 AM
 - Venue: Lauriston Castle Courtyard (2 Cramond Road South, EH4 6AD)
 - What to expect: A completely free, drop-in outdoor drawing day. Families grab drawing boards, pencils, and paper from the courtyard to sketch across the castle's beautiful Japanese and Rose gardens.
- 4) Friday LEGO Club
 - Date & Time: Fridays throughout October
 - Venue: Museum of Scottish Fire Heritage (1A Dryden Terrace, EH7 4NB)
 - What to expect: A free, informal drop-in LEGO building group designed for children aged 5 and up.

The Music Department

Blue Class have been busy working on their chosen instrumental studies! Saim has even been in the recording studio working on his own version of 'Cheap Thrills'.



Orange Class have had their first introduction to music technology equipment and have been learning how to build signal paths to record audio!

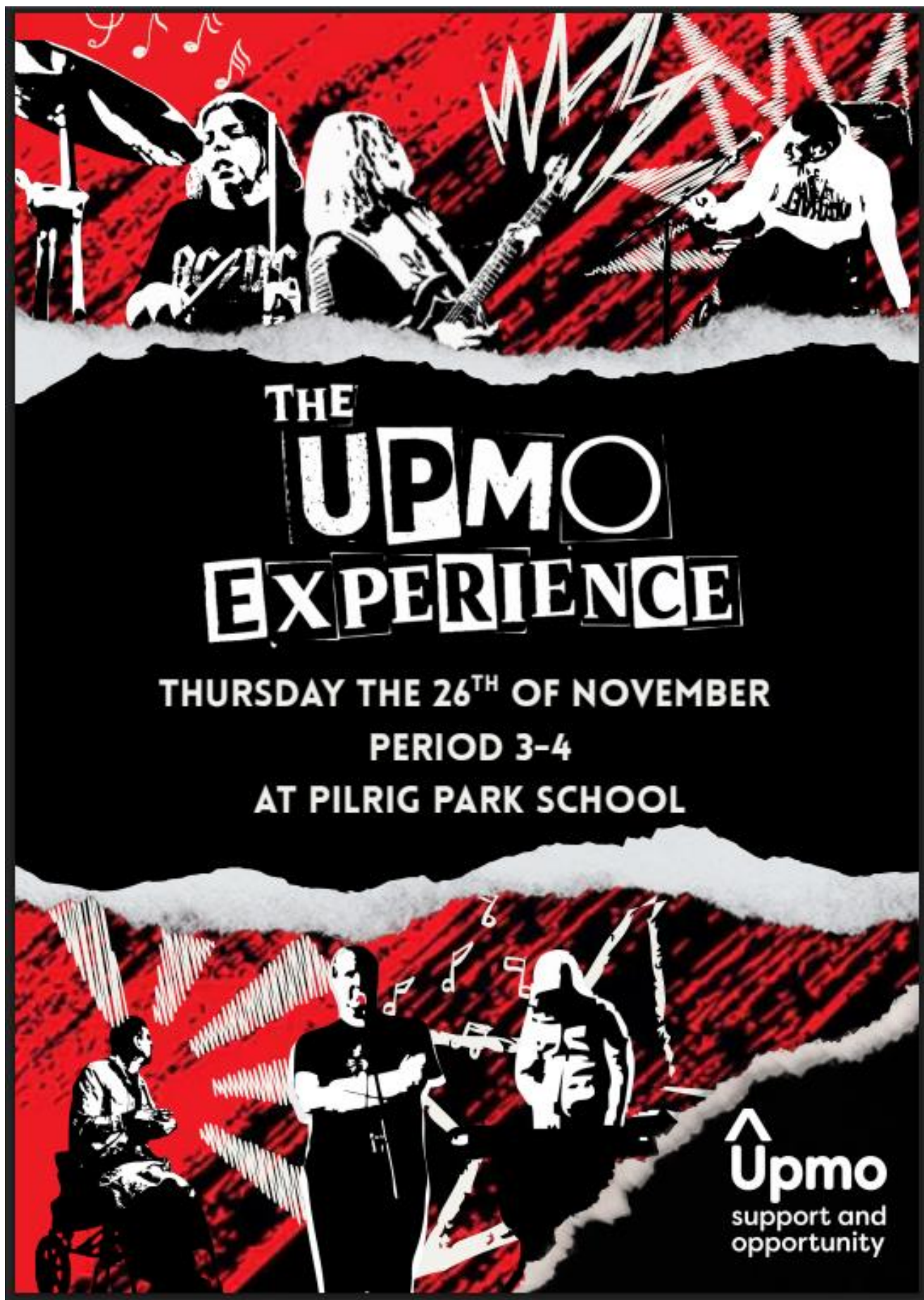


Brown Class have been exploring musical instruments, learning how to play rhythms on the djembe and dancing with the scarves!



Yellow Class have been exploring a variety of instruments used in 'Rock Music' earlier this term (they loved the snare drum!) and are now busy working on their school show performance!



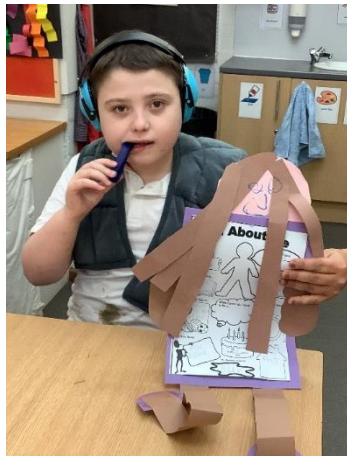


In the Art Room!



The focus for some of the BGE classes this term has included creating entries for not one, but three (!) City of Edinburgh Council art competitions! Designing winter-themed artwork in the middle of a hot spell was certainly a little surreal, but the results have been fantastic. We are now keeping our fingers crossed for a hat trick this year!

Brown Class have enjoyed getting to know the art room and explore different art materials and techniques. We started off the year with a project called 'All About Me' and had fun making ourselves with coloured paper!



Pink Class and **White Class** both started off the year with practicing their zig zag and wavy lines through a variety of lessons. We made crazy 'playgrounds for ants', using wavy, curly and zig zag strips of coloured paper. There were even bridges and slides for the 'ants' to enjoy!



We watched videos of lightning to learn about the zig-zag lines it makes. Then we created our own lightning pictures, using a variety of blue coloured pens and some very jaggy zig zags!



Most recently, we have been using paint to create some colourful rainbows before drawing on some 'bumpy' patterns. Finally, we cut out a paper 'body' to turn it into a colourful peacock!

The classes loved using the water paint and very small brushes – well done everyone!

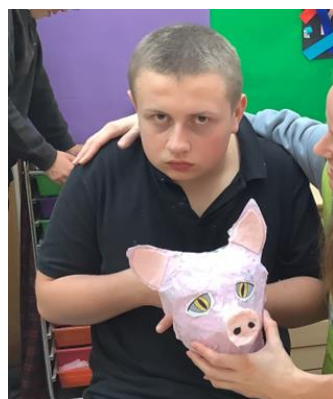


Blue Class have been working on the City of Edinburgh council 'Winter Windows' and 'Bus shelter' art competitions. They used chalk pastel to create these rather friendly looking penguins, complete with snow falling! For the next competition, we based our creations on this session's school theme, 'One World', giving the idea a wintry twist. The pupils put their fine motor skills to the test as they carefully cut out intricate figures of children from around the world, and joining hands to represent unity. Fingers crossed!



The Senior Phase pupils have been starting various new projects, whilst working towards their QS units and awards. **Yellow Class** and **Purple Class** have both been doing some papier mache projects. Yellow Class have made animal masks, moulding the papier mache over a mask form, before painting it and then adding fur and animal-looking fabric!





Purple Class have helped the school by making a set of 'One World' trophies for our Rights Respecting Schools work. The class used a balloon to form the world shape, then covered it in papier mache, painted it blue then cut out the countries to stick on. Mrs Ferguson had to use the gold spray outside because it is very smelly!



Red Class have started their expressive activity, as part of their National 3 Art & Design course. They have chosen a topic on which to base their ideas, collected some research images and are now in the process of experimenting with art techniques and compositions for their final piece of artwork.



Green Class started the year with the task of each pupil making a 'Memory Box'. They have decorated their box with their chosen paint colours. Next, they took photos of themselves and parts of the school and garden which mean something special to them. Lastly, we will add some sparkle using stickers and sequins! The class can keep memories of Pilrig Park School in the box and take it away when they leave school!



Well, this is my last ever article for the Pilrig Park School newsletter. It is time for me to wash my paintbrushes and hang up my art apron for the last time! After just over nineteen years at Pilrig Park School, I am now looking forward to having time to create my own artwork and spending more time with my family.

Pilrig Park School – I will miss you all more than words can say...

Mrs Catriona Ferguson



P.E.

Pupils participating in PE have been developing and improving skills and techniques through practice and play in following activities: Football, Basketball.



Aidan – our Active Schools Coordinator presented the Sports Ambassadors Programme to our pupils in September.



He also carried out the interviews for our Sport Ambassadors.



These pupils were selected – they will work on developing their leadership skills and organising sports activities for others.

Sports Ambassadors carried out a survey about favourite activities for school clubs amongst all our pupils.

The following clubs were chosen and have been running now for a few weeks: Football, Basketball, Running/Fitness, Boccia/Curling, Dance.



The Sports Ambassadors help with these clubs.



Our pupils continue to take part in football sessions at Spartans FC.



Home Economics

This term in Home Economics we have been working on developing new practical skills and working independently.



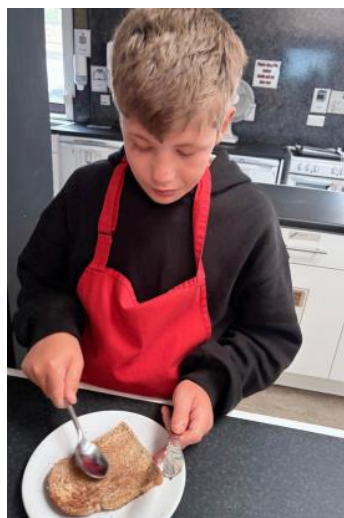
August

We started the term with looking at different fruits, why we need them, what they look and taste like, and where they come from. Making fruit salad, jam, pasta salad and cakes.



September

We have been making breakfasts, from toast and scrambled eggs to cereal bars and hot chocolate. We have been developing the independence skills of the pupils, so they can make these dishes with as little support as possible. Yellow Class used green tomatoes from the playground planters and made jam, which went down surprisingly well.





October

The start of October has been part of Fairtrade fortnight, so we have been looking at Fairtrade products we can use in school and how we can support this. Pink Class used Fairtrade chocolate to make chocolate bark to show at the Welcome Cafe for the S1s.



Red Class held their first event of the year - a bake sale where they raised money for Macmillan Cancer charity. We had amazing support from all staff and raised a whopping £246.15!! Well done everyone!



Duke of Edinburgh Award

We have launched the exciting new Duke of Edinburgh's Award in Pilrig Park School! Currently all pupils from S4 to S6 have started working on their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award. The award is made up of 4 different aspects that your young person is currently working on!



- ❖ Volunteering
- ❖ Physical
- ❖ Skills
- ❖ Expedition

For the first 3 months most pupils will be working on their *Skills* section. Mr T and Erin from the Hibs Foundation are delivering football and referee coaching on Wednesday afternoons. This is a fantastic opportunity for some of our young people to experience what it is like to train for a professional football club, while also adding hours to their skill section of the award.



Mrs Vennelle is working on cookery and life skills.



Mr Cuddy is working on the volunteering section of the award and music skills.



Miss Sawyer is working on life skills with her group.

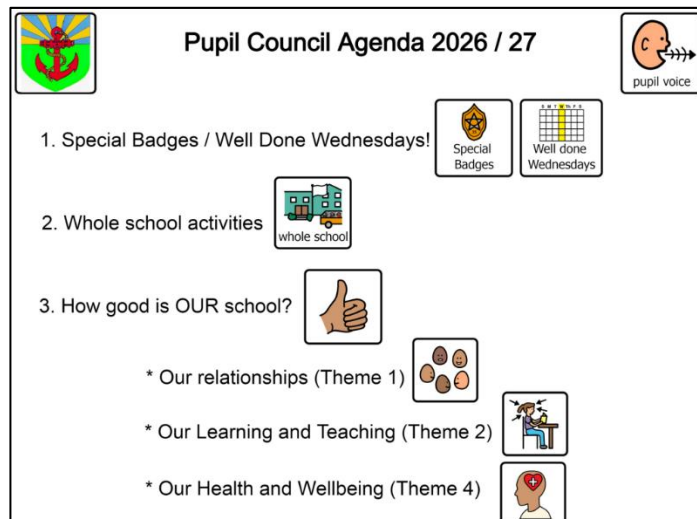
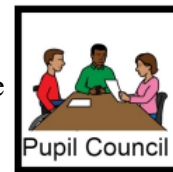


Miss Morrison is developing the physical section of the award for her group.



Pupil Council

The Pupil Council meet with Ms O'Hagan in her office every Wednesday during Pupil Voice time. We started the year by welcoming two new members for this session including representation from our new S1 pupils. Our first task is to have our photo taken together (there was much laughter!). We then agreed our agenda for the year which includes the introduction of *Well Done Wednesdays* where we celebrate all the **Special Badges** achieved throughout the month – more on this on the next page. Our next task is to begin our work on the themes from *How good is OUR school?* which we have chosen to focus on this session. More on this in the next newsletter.



It is going to be another busy year for the Pilrig Park School Pupil Council – and we are just ready for the challenge!

Pilrig Park School Pupil Council

PS. Just like Ms O'Hagan we want to include our favourite picture of this term!

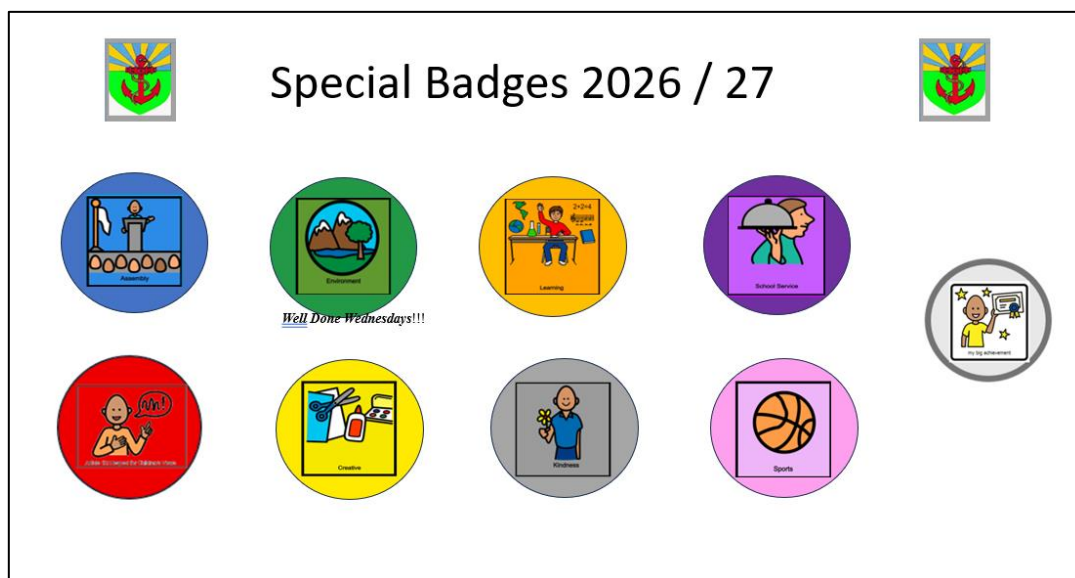


The Pupil Council launch *Well Done Wednesdays!!!*

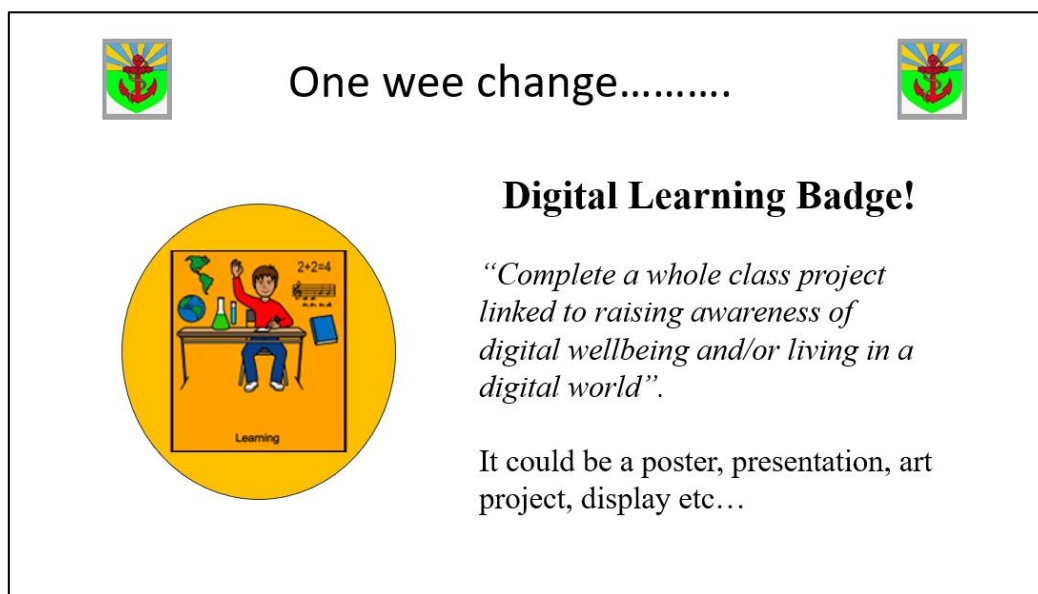
This session, we have come up with another new idea for celebrating success at Pilrig Park School - *Well Done Wednesdays!!!*

Classes need to have their submissions for Special Badges to Ms O'Hagan by the third Wednesday of each month. At our Pupil Council meeting on that day, we go through with Ms O'Hagan all the Special Badges applications and decide if classes have been successful or not. Thomas takes his job of stamping each entry very seriously!

For those of you who are new to Pilrig, here is what we mean by Special Badges!

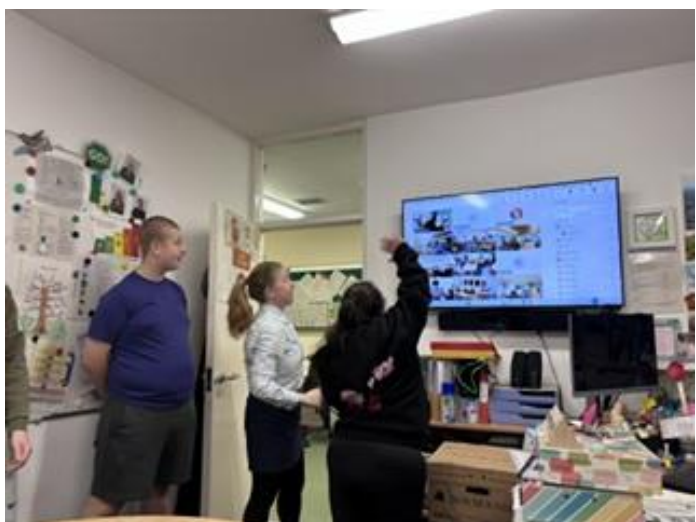


At the August assembly when we launched the Special Badges for this session, we told everyone about a new Special Badge which we were including for this year:



PUPIL VOICE

On the last Wednesday of every month, we have a very special TEAMs call with all the classes direct from Ms O'Hagan's office! During this call we announce which classes have been successful with their Special Badges. We invite a member of each class to come and join us in Ms O'Hagan's office where we present them with the badges and certificates for their class. There was enormous excitement on our first ever ***Well Done Wednesday*** and we hope you enjoy these photos.



The winners of Special Badges for this month are:

- The Environment Badge – White Class
- The Creative Badge – White, Green, Purple, Pink and Blue Classes
- The Kindness Badge – Yellow Class
- Rights Respecting Badge – Green Class

We look forward to welcoming more class representatives to Ms O'Hagan's office at our next ***Well Done Wednesday*** in October.

The Pupil Council

Pilrig Park School Newsletter

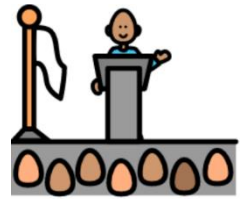
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October 2026



Assemblies this term

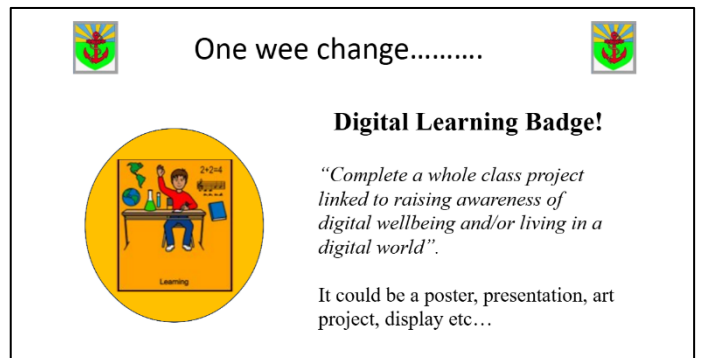
One of the highlights in the school calendar is when the whole school comes together in the hall for our monthly assembly! Each assembly is based on one of the school values, and a different class presents each month, on this theme.



2026 started off with Orange Class presenting in August on the school value, **READY TO LEARN!** The pupils made up their own music video with their take on Parklife by Blur... Pilrig Park Life! They even changed the lyrics of the song to show just how **ready to learn** they were.



Next item in August's assembly was a presentation by the Pupil Council. We were all reminded of our highly competitive Special Badges! The Pupil Council then revealed the exciting new Digital Learning Badge to us all! Each class can work towards gaining each of the special badges. Once all eight special badges are collected on the class pennant, the class will receive a special treat with the Head Teacher!



At each assembly, we love to celebrate all the successes that go on across the school. Each class shares their **'huge wins'**. Then we celebrate **Head Teacher awards** which are presented by Ms O'Hagan! Sometimes, there are even **gold** badges presented to staff and pupils for an outstanding success!



PUPIL VOICE

Music is a regular feature at assembly and in August, the whole school sang the well known 'One Love' by Bob Marley. This is a Pilrig Park School favourite and everyone, including the new S1 Brown Class, had a fantastic time singing, signing and swaying along!



Our August's assembly was however, tinged with sadness as we said goodbye to a long-standing member of staff. Our PSW Lesley is off to pastures new. We wished her all the best in the future, Lesley is still involved in the school charity Friends of Pilrig Park School, she just can't stay away!



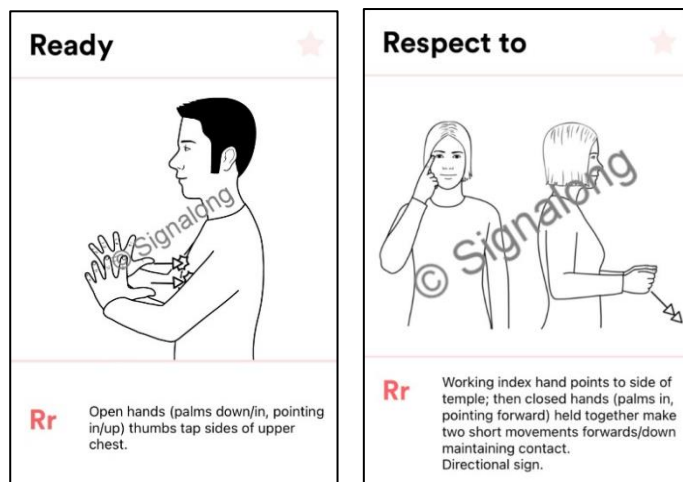
September's assembly was based on the school value, '**respect**'. Yellow Class presented on what **respect** is, showing their hip hop rapping skills with some excellent bling and rapping!



PUPIL VOICE

Green Class and Yellow Class present each month on the *Sign of the Month*, which is the school value. We learnt how to sign 'ready' and 'respect' by watching a video from these pupils showing us what to do.

Here they are, if you want to practice it at home!



The September Pupil Voice group to present was Purple Class. They reviewed the One World Challenge that the whole school are working on this year. So far, every class has chosen a specific country to find out more about! Purple Class treated us to a news broadcast about their chosen country, Mozambique, and showed some great dance moves and drumming skills!



The following **Special badges** were awarded to classes, at September's assembly!

White Class – Environment special badge and Creative special badge

Yellow Class – Kindness special badge

Green Class – Respect for Children's Rights special badge and Creative special badge

Purple Class - Creative special badge

Pink Class - Creative special badge

Blue Class - Creative special badge

Well done to everyone this month!



Young Ambassadors

One of our Sports Ambassadors took part in Sports Leaders' training course as his preparation to be part of the delivery team at Young Ambassadors Conference 2026. He learned how to work with group of pupils and how to create a positive learning environment which is fun, engaging and interactive.

Three of our Sports Ambassadors represented Pilrig Park School at The Young Ambassadors Annual Conference 2026. The event took place at Meggetland Sports Complex, Edinburgh on Thursday 1st October 2026. Participants learnt how to promote sport in their schools and inspire peers to participate in different physical activities.



Wellbeing Warriors

This year, White Class have become the “Wellbeing Warriors” Pupil Voice group.

We have been working hard to organise and plan activities and resources for pupils in our school to promote mental and physical wellbeing across the school year.

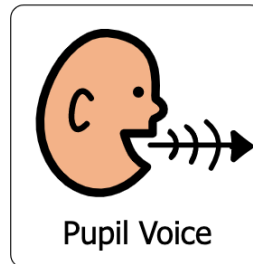
As part of this, we have taken over Come Alive from Mr T which runs every Monday morning. This term, the focus for Come Alive is dancing. When the weather is a bit wet and rubbish, classes can use a dance choice board (created by White Class) to take part in some Monday morning dancing. So far, this has been a great success, and pupils have been having so much fun.

What a way to start our week!



Digital Wellbeing Warriors

This year, we have launched our new Digital Wellbeing Warriors groups during Pupil Voice time! Orange Class with Mr McPhillips and Blue Class with Mr Mitchell will be championing digital wellbeing across the school throughout the year. Our Warriors will help pupils explore how we can use technology safely, positively and responsibly, while sharing ideas and activities to support everyone's digital wellbeing.



Orange Class have been learning to look after our own iPads and how to use them safely.



Our next task, along with Blue Class, is to create a poster to be displayed in each classroom about Internet Safety. This will include several pieces of advice to help people to be safe when they are accessing the internet.



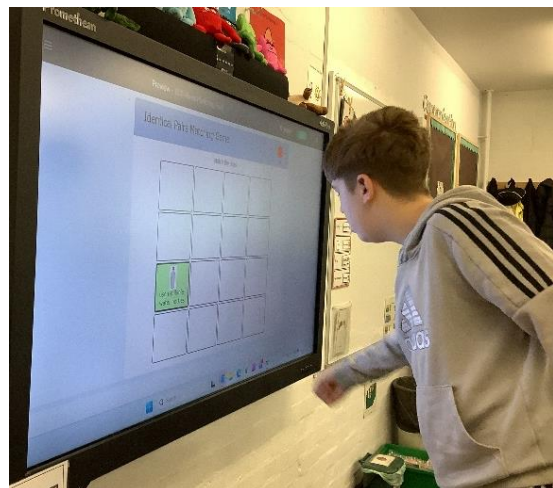
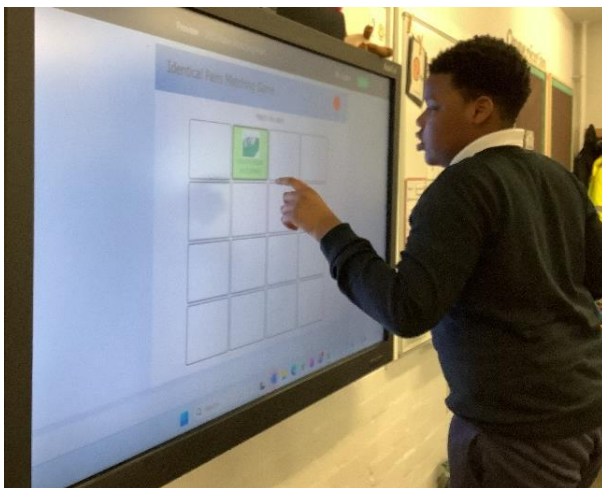
Eco Committee

This year's ECO Committee members are Brown Class, who are responsible for promoting and carrying out an extensive plan of ECO work this year in school.

The pupils' main weekly task, carrying out the recycling, has been going strong since the beginning of term, and the pupils have taken to the responsibility like ducks to water.



Brown Class pupils have also been learning Pilrig Park's ECO Code during a matching activity, and are preparing for an upcoming assembly where they will be presenting the code as a reminder to staff and pupils.



Fairtrade

The Fairtrade Pupil Voice Group, made up of Red Class and Pink Class this year, have been working hard towards gaining the Fair Achiever Award. We received some useful feedback from the Pupil Council on our Fairtrade Policy and have added symbols to make it more accessible. Our Fairtrade Policy has been signed by our Head Teacher, members of the Pupil Council, and the teachers responsible for Fairtrade. It is now in place across the school and will be submitted as part of our evidence for the Fair Achiever Award.



Pilrig Park School Fairtrade Policy

Pilrig Park School is committed to supporting, using and promoting Fairtrade, wherever possible. We believe that Fairtrade can make a difference to the lives of young people throughout the world by improving living and working conditions for the people who grow the things we buy.

Our school will:



1) Ensure that Fairtrade and Fairtrade issues, and the concept of 'fairness', are embedded into the curriculum and in whole school activities, and the culture of the school.



2) Promote Fairtrade in the school and wider community, by taking part in Fairtrade Fortnight, completing Fairtrade Challenges and highlighting Fairtrade activities in newsletters.



3) Ensure Fairtrade is part of the School Improvement Plan.



4) Use Fairtrade products around the school wherever possible.



5) Use the Fairtrade Schools Award identities on the website.



6) Put this Policy into practice through a Fairtrade Group that meets regularly to:

- monitor and drive forward the school's support for Fairtrade.
- make sure those connected with our school are aware of this Policy and can support it.
- take responsibility for Fairtrade Challenges and the Fairtrade Action Plan.

On Wednesday, we hosted a Fairtrade welcome café for new S1 parents and carers. Red Class made personalised invitations for the pupils in Brown Class and hand delivered them.



PUPIL VOICE

It was wonderful to see families enjoying sweet treats baked with Fairtrade ingredients by our pupils! We presented on the benefits of Fairtrade and shared a song about looking for the Fairtrade logo when you are doing your shopping. We taught signs linked to the song and performed it together, encouraging the families to join in too.



Next term, we will be compiling our evidence and submitting it to the Fairtrade Schools Award Team for verification. Hopefully we will have some good news to share from our submission over the next few months!



Rights Respecting School



One World Challenge

This year, Pilrig Park School is going global!

Purple Class, who are this year's Rights Respecting School Steering group, are excited to launch our new One World Challenge. Classes will explore different countries, learn about global issues and think about how we can make a difference.



Each class has chosen a country and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). Over the coming months, classes will take part in a series of fun challenges, earning points along the way!

The competition will finish with our One World Challenge final in June. Classes will showcase their learning and compete for a range of awards. But this isn't just about winning. It is about learning about each other, understanding our world and discovering how we can make a positive difference.

We are look forward to showing off some our learning at our November Parent/ Carers event, which will be happening on Wednesday the 18th of November at 1:30pm.

One World Fair

@ Pilrig Park School
**Wednesday 18th
November
1:30pm till 2:25pm**

SAVE
THE
DATE

Your paragraph text



COME FOR AN
AFTERNOON OF
REFRESHMENTS AND
GLOBALCITIZENSHIP



Equalities Work at Pilrig Park School

On the back of our two-year running success (!!!!!) in winning the Saroj Lal Award, this year Pilrig Park School continues to show our commitment towards creating an Equalities driven school community for all pupils and staff.

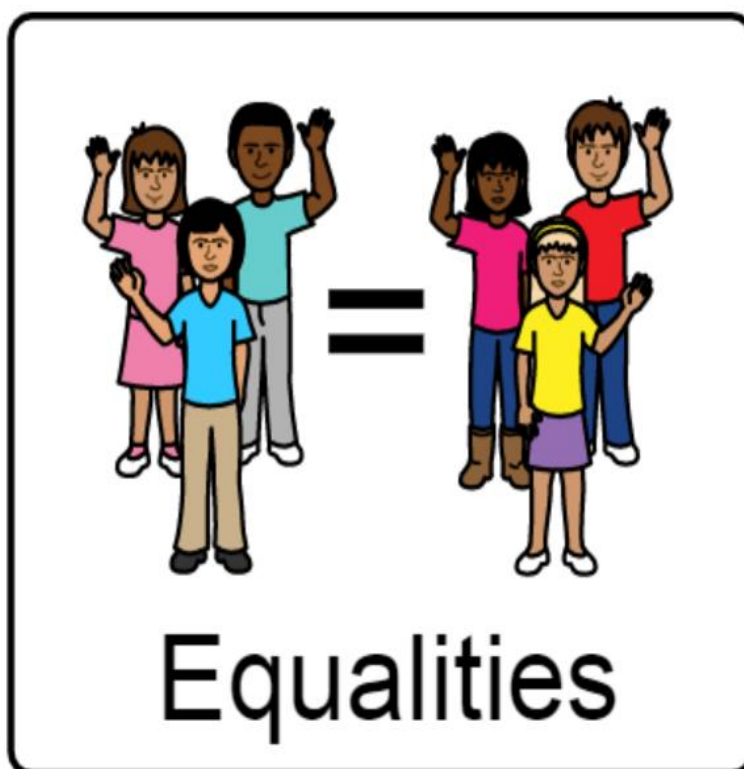
We will highlight our work through these aims:

- Taking advantage of city-wide opportunities to showcase how we celebrate equal rights, honour dignity, and champion respect for all at our school
- Sharing success throughout our school
- Taking part in competitions to showcase all our work
- Creating an Equalities Policy for Pilrig Park School
- All pupils to engage in our *One World* project.

You will have read about our success in the Black History Month Photography Competition! Well done again to our winners – your work was amazing and we are so glad that the competition judges agreed!!!

We look forward to taking part in more competitions like this as they arise in the year that allow our pupils opportunities to use their voice to share important messages. Pupils are currently busy learning about equalities around the world through our *One World* project. We are excited to share some of our learning with you at our *One World* fair next term.

Miss Morrison
Equalities Co-Ordinator



Parent Council



The Parent Council are delighted to have paid for the whole school Christmas 2026 and summer 2027 silent discos.

After some behind the scenes work with the bank account we are now starting to think about the school year ahead. New members, spectators and passersby are very welcome.

Our Parent Council is friendly, informal, and completely pressure-free! We meet just a few times a year to chat, share ideas, and help make Pilrig Park School the best it can be for our young people.

There's no homework, just useful conversations.

Why come along?

- 💬 Share your views on what matters to our young people and our school
- 🤝 Meet other parent/carers and build connections
- 💡 Hear what's happening in school from Ms O'Hagan, Head Teacher
- 🌈 Help make a positive difference for our young people

All parent/carers are welcome. You don't need to commit to coming every time. Just pop in when you can.

Next meeting:

Monday 26th October at 5.00pm on TEAMS. A link will be sent out in the morning of the meeting.

Contact us by email pilrigparkparentcouncil@gmail.com

Look forward to seeing you soon,

Hugh, Craig and Aicha

Pilrig Park School Parent Council

Celebrating 19 Years of Creativity, Energy and Dedication from Mr Ferguson

After an incredible 19 years at our school, we are saying a very fond farewell to Catriona Ferguson, our much-loved Art and Principal Teacher as she takes early retirement.

Throughout Mrs Fergusons time with us, she has brought enthusiasm, creativity and an infectious energy to her role as Art Teacher. She has also made a huge contribution to school leadership, serving as a Principal Teacher for many years and even taking on a short stint as Acting Depute Head Teacher.

Her contribution to school life extends far beyond the Art room. She has been the driving force behind so many of our memorable parent and carer events, including our IDL November events: Festival of Kindness, Celebration of Culture and This Is Me. These events have created wonderful opportunities for our learners, families and wider school community to come together and celebrate.

For more than 13 years, she has also organised our much-loved Burns Lunch, going the extra mile to arrange for the George Watson's pipe band to perform and give our learners an authentic Burns experience. Her passion for creating special experiences for our pupils has also helped lead the school to become double-time winners of the Sajar Lai Awards and multiple winners of the Edinburgh Bus Stop and Christmas Windows Competition over the years.

It is almost impossible to list everything she has done for our school. So much of her work has happened quietly, behind the scenes and without fuss – the everyday creativity, organisation, ideas, encouragement and care that have helped make our school the place it is. It is this unseen work that will be felt most of all when she is no longer at Pilrig.

After 19 years of giving so much to our school community, Mrs Ferguson certainly deserves her next adventure. We will miss her enormously, but we wish her a very happy, relaxing and well-deserved retirement and all the very best for the future.

Thank you for everything – and especially for making school life that little bit more colourful!



The queen of our assemblies Mrs Ferguson, at her very last assembly.



Mr Mitchell, who is now responsible for our assemblies (he has very big shoes to fill!) put together a beautiful farewell video from all the staff and pupils for Mrs Ferguson. Needless to say, there were a few tears.

An enormous thank you from everyone to Mrs Ferguson for all the amazing assemblies she has coordinated over the years. You will be missed.