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Wallace Hall Academy, Primary and ELC

"Together we grow, learn and achieve"

Head Teacher: Barry Graham

January 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

Happy New Year to all of our families, we hope you had an enjoyable holiday and were able to spend the festive season with your loved ones. We are now a couple of weeks into the first term of 2024, and everyone seems to have settled back in well. We have welcomed new pupils in P1, P2/3, P4, P5 and P6 this term, as well as some changes in our staffing arrangements too.

It is lovely to see everyone back in their uniforms and thank you for continuing to support us by sending your child in the suggested PE clothes of plain black leggings/shorts/bottoms, white t-shirt and a school jumper or cardigan.

Our generic information will no longer be included in our letters home but can now be found in our annual Primary Information Booklet that you will find in the Primary School Bag on the main page of our school website: www.wallacehall.co.uk.

Education Scotland/HMI Visit

Our first week back in January was a very busy one as we welcomed four visitors from Education Scotland/HMI to Wallace Hall Primary. It was a very busy few days, with lots of class observations, meetings, focus groups and professional learning sessions. We want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of our pupils, parents/carers, staff and partners who engaged positively with the inspection team. The team commented on the warm welcome that they received, and they were very positive about the ethos, relationships, teaching, staff professionalism and leadership of the school. The full report will be shared with parents/carers when it is published.

ELC Care Inspectorate Visit

Last term, the ELC had an unannounced visit from Care Inspectorate, who are responsible for inspecting the quality of care in early learning and childcare establishments in Scotland. We are very pleased to share that this was a very positive visit and the ELC received a grading of 'very good' for all four areas that were inspected. The gradings are shown below:

How good is our care, play and learning?	Very good
How good is our setting?	Very good
How good is our staff team?	Very good
How good is our leadership?	Very good

Winner of

Silver Rights Respecting Schools Awareness Award 2023

D&G Rural Award Smarter Scotland

The SQA Star Award

Lantra School Project Award – 2013/2018/2020/2022

Scottish Education Award – Enterprise and Employability

World Teamwork Award Winners – World Robotics Festival

First Lego League Robotics Scottish/UK & Ireland Champions



We are delighted for Miss Park and the whole ELC team who work very hard every day to support our youngest pupils, so it was pleasing that their efforts were recognised by Care Inspectorate. Thank you also to our parents/carers who supported the visit by completing the questionnaires or speaking to the inspector.

Staffing

Depute Head Teachers

ELC-P3 Mrs McDiarmid (Mon, Tues, Wed)

P4-7 Mrs Gray

Primary Teaching Staff	
Primary 1	Mrs Smith (Mon-Tue) Mrs Nelson (Wed-Fri)
Primary 2/3	Mrs Renwick (Mon-Thurs) Lynn Smith (Fri)
Primary 3	Mrs Young (Mon-Thurs) Mrs Allsop (Fri)(until February inset)
Primary 4	Mrs Hannah (Mon-Tue) Mrs Henderson (Wed-Fri)
Primary 5	Mrs Graham (Mon-Thu) Miss Robertson (Fri)
Primary 6	Miss Purves
Primary 7	Mr McNay
ASL Teacher (PEF)	Mrs Campbell Mrs Campbell
RICCT	Mrs Smith (Wed-Thurs)
Subject Specialists	Mr Law PE (Tues pm and Thurs)

Primary Support Staff			
Clerical Assistant	Jillian Maxwell (Mon-Thu)		
Early Years Team	Judi Park (Manager)	Kelsey Hiddleston (Deputy Manager) – Mat leave	
	Eilidh Clingan (Acting Deputy Manager)	Jodi Anderson (NN)	Wilma Marchbank (NN)
	Sarah Hastings (EYSA)	Aimee Gault (NN)	
Learning Assistants	Margaret Blackadder	Claire Ritchie	Janet Gray
	Heather Harkness	Margaret Keene	Louise Gates

Safe Internet Use

As we return to school following the holidays, we are aware of the number of children who have received phones, tablets, and laptops as gifts. Whilst these can be helpful for educational and social purposes, they can lead to issues.

The following is a list of good practice measures which will help to ensure your child is safe online:

- Have parental controls or filters installed on your home Wi-Fi and make sure that child friendly settings are in place on your children's devices, for example, Safe Search. You can set this up by contacting your mobile and broadband providers or by checking online.
- Check your child's phone often to see what they are accessing and who they are talking to.
- Snapchat, Tiktok, Whatsapp and Facebook all have an age restriction of at least 13 and should not be used without the supervision of an adult.
- If you choose to allow your child to have a social media presence, please ensure that all pages are private and can only be seen by people you know. Always ensure that location/GPS/map services are turned off, so your child's location is not being shared.

The following sites give further advice and guidance on this:

CEOP – Is my child ready for social media? [social media \(thinkuknow.co.uk\)](https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/social-media/)

NSPCC - Keeping children safe online. [Keeping children safe online | NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe-online/)

Internet Matters [Internet safety advice and information | Internet Matters](https://www.internetmatters.org/)

Thank you for supporting us to ensure that your child as safe possible online.

The 2-18 Parent Council

The next meeting of the 2-18 Parent Council is planned for Monday 5th February 2024.

Our February meeting will be held via MS Teams. Please contact wallacehallparentcouncil@gmail.com for further information.

February Holiday and Inset dates

Monday 12 th February	–	half term holiday, children and staff out of school
Tuesday 13 th February	–	children off, staff development day
Wednesday 14 th February	–	children off, staff development day

Rights Respecting School Award

Our Pupil Rights Squad have identified their key priorities for this session, which include developing loose parts play in the playground, establishing a campaign on an issue that is important to them and creating charters for the playground and the dinner hall.

Last term they sent home a request for donations of loose parts for the playground, these could be a wide variety of things such as pots and pans, lengths of guttering, nature objects (shells, pebbles, pine cones, acorns, conkers etc), log slices, pallets, kitchen equipment such as spoons and tongs, bowls, crates/boxes, tarpaulins and so on. The Rights Squad would be very grateful for donations of any of these items to be handed into the school office.

We are also looking for volunteers to help us to maintain our willow structure in the playground, as it has grown significantly over the past couple of years. If anyone has any skills and knowledge in this area, and would be willing to help out, then please contact Mrs McDiarmid.

Love of Literacy Week

This term we plan to hold a Love of Literacy Week across the Primary School beginning on Monday 4th March to celebrate World Book Day. Children will be involved in several Literacy based activities across the school during this week, including an open afternoon for parents to join their child in literacy activities. A sponsored Big Read is also planned to raise funds to buy books for the school library. More information will follow.

Primary Open Afternoon

This term our Open Afternoon will take place on Wednesday 6th March from 2-2.45pm and all parents/carers are welcome to attend. Refreshments will be served from 2.45-3.10pm in the primary games hall. This is a good social opportunity for parents/carers to meet each other and have a chat.

P7 Residential Trip

This year the Primary 7 residential trip will take place at the Tamar Manoukian Outdoor Centre at Dumfries House. An information evening about the trip will be held on Thursday 1st February 5-6pm at Wallace Hall Primary to share further information. All P7 parents/carers are welcome to attend.

Dumfries and Galloway Cross Country Championships

These will take place on Wednesday 20th March during the school day. More information will follow for those P6 and P7 pupils who are involved, closer to the time.

Termly Overviews and Four Contexts

The next termly overviews and four contexts will be issued on Friday 26th January. Please remember that we welcome any feedback on these so that we can improve our communication with you.

Learning Conversations

Thank you to everyone who took the time to participate in last term's Learning Conversations. The next set of Learning Conversations will be held on 19th and 21st March 2024. More information will be sent out closer to the time.

Celebrating Burns and Scots Language

As part of our work on Modern Languages, classes throughout the Primary School will be celebrating the traditions, language, geography and history of Scotland, and famous figures within it, during January 2024. This learning contributes to the development of a third language study, in addition to English and French, particularly in second level learning in the upper primary. Several primary pupils will be participating in the Dumfries and Galloway Burns Association (D&G BA) and Robert Burns World Federation (RBWF) local and national competitions in recitation, instrumental and handwriting. The interested pupils have begun practising for the competitions. The DGBA competition is on Saturday 17th February at NWCC.

Disabled parking spaces

Some parents/carers are continuing to park in the disabled spaces or in the drop-off/pick-up area outside the primary school. We would appreciate your co-operation in using the main school car park unless you or your child is disabled and have an official blue disability badge displayed inside the front windscreen of the vehicle.

Please note that you should not be using the drop-off area at all between 8.30am and 9.15am and 3pm and 4pm, as per the signage in place along the drop-off bay. This route is only for buses and disabled badge holders at these times.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry Graham'.

B Graham
Head Teacher

Primary Term 3 dates for your diary:

Date	Event and Class
9 th -11 th , 16 th -18 th , 23 rd -25 th January	P4 swimming
17 th January	9:10am-10:00am P1 Stay, Play and Learn - Phonics
22 nd January	Termly overviews sent to parents
26 th January	P7 Enterprise transition day at WHA
26 th January	P4 Burns trip to Dumfries
1 st February	(Still to be confirmed by Dumfries House) 5pm P7 Information session for Residential to Dumfries House.
5 th February	9.30am YMI Performance for P4 parents/carers
7 th February	Chris McKenna leading a Numeracy Day
12 th -14 th February	Pupil holidays
15 th February	Pupils return to school
17 th February (Saturday)	Dumfries and Galloway Burns Association competition at NWCC, Dumfries
23 rd February	Wider Achievement Assembly
27 th February	WHA Social Studies visit to the P7 class
4 th -8 th March	Love of Literacy Week
March	Sponsored Big Read for Library Funds
6 th March	Open Afternoon Literacy Focus
6 th -8 th March	P7 Residential to Dumfries House
19 th March	P7 Health and Wellbeing day at WHA
19 th March	Learning Conversations 3:40pm-6:00pm
21 st March	Learning Conversations 3:40pm-5:00pm, 6:00pm-8:00pm
20 th March	Family Spring/Easter service at the church (more details to follow)
22 nd March	End of Term - School returns on Monday 8 th April

- **Please note these are only for Primary and ELC dates will be shared separately by ELC Newsletter**