



## Skene School News Spring 2014

*Working Together, Learning Together, To Be The Best We Can Be*

Here is the winner of our logo competition, which was designed by Elia Gagliardi in P5. Thanks to all the children, parents and staff who voted. The criteria the children were asked to meet were that the logo should take the same theme as our old logo, ie the Dunecht towers, but bring it up to date in their own way. It was to be circular so that it could be easily used as both the school uniform logo, and on our paperwork. Pupils, staff and parents came up with the new vision statement above, which I will add to the version of the logo which we use for our paperwork.

### School Buses and Car Park

As you are aware, we have had a few ongoing issues regarding transport and safety in and around the school car park. The bus company suggested they may be late coming to pick children up in the afternoons due to the amount of parent traffic. After discussion, two representatives from Aberdeenshire Council Pupil Transport Unit came along to observe at 3pm one day for an hour. They were happy that buses and taxis had sufficient room to enter and park (there is one big space marked off in yellow for the big bus which parents should avoid blocking access to). They chatted to the bus drivers and concluded that there was space and time for the buses to arrive at school at 3.25 on schedule.

To be clear, the top part of the car park where cars first enter has traditionally been the parent and visitor car park, and the next section beside the gates is the staff car park. The black barrier railings are there for the children's safety, and **no children or parents should access the playground by opening the black delivery gate**, or block access to this by parking in front of it. All children and parents should walk round the outside of the playground to get to the car parks, and children should not be allowed to climb on these safety railings or in the trees and garden areas, even when parents are supervising.

The Pupil Council are currently working to improve our road safety situation (see Community Time groups). Thank you for your co-operation with this very important matter.

### In the classrooms



P1-3 had a great term working on their project "When The Rains Come" which was based on a book set in Malawi. We used it to investigate many different areas of the curriculum, including Health and Wellbeing, particularly looking at the children's rights in the story, language, maths, art and design, drama, technology, outdoor learning and RME. Christianity and Islam are the two main religions in Malawi, so we learned a bit about both. We really enjoyed finding out about Islam from Mrs Akinade, who came in for 4 weekly sessions to tell us stories of Islam, and we learned lots of facts about Muslims. We all thought Qadirah looked beautiful in her hijab and Abdulrahman amazed us all by letting us hear some verses of the Q'ran in Arabic. P1-3 also started a science project, which kicked off with a great day out to Satrosphere where we thought about experiments and fair testing. We all had a look at the world through a bubble – parents please get in touch if you would like me to email you the picture of your child in their bubble and I will do my best. We will be continuing on a science theme after the Easter holidays.



P4-7 had a very busy term with their Victorians project running alongside their Wheels project, not to mention the Winter Olympics. We are having a bit of a problem uploading their photos, and therefore their class information, along with one of their reports on the Victorian Experience, will be put on the website. Working in partnership with engineers Anton Booth and Scott Clark from Wood Group, P4-7 have almost completed the building of their kit car, and have made a really interesting book about their experiences which will be on display at reception for you to have a look at. They will be racing the car on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> of June, when schools from across Aberdeenshire will come together to compete, in everything from who can get the fastest lap time, to who has the best pit crew suits! All spectators are welcome, so do come along if you fancy cheering them on!



### Community Time Groups

The **Pupil Council** and the **Eco Group** have continued their excellent work on the School Travel Plan. They met with Joanna Stewart from the Transportation Unit and have now put in a bid for various improvements to the school car park and playground, including signs and markings indicating what the different areas are for and which path children and parents should use when entering and exiting the school. They have also applied for money towards transport costs for children to go into Westhill on a Road Safety activity. Plans are afoot to have different markings put down on the playground which can be used for both play and learning experiences, showing how to cross the road safely, stop at junctions on bikes, follow a path home etc.



The **Fairtrade Group** marked Fairtrade Fortnight's Go Bananas focus by having a taster day. Children could come along at playtime and buy a sample of Fairtrade bananas dipped in yummy Fairtrade chocolate. We all thought the bananas and chocolate were a success for the Fairtrade farmers.



The **Rights Respecting School Group** and the **Fairtrade Group** worked on organising our Malawi Day for the UNICEF Day for Change 2014. We all met in the car park in Kirkton of Skene for our walk to school, with carrier bags instead of schoolbags as children in Malawi would have to, and walked along together with some family and friends to have our porridge together, sitting on the floor of the gym hall. We used no electricity for our classes that day, so it was a bit dark! Thank you very much to Lorraine and Mrs Milne who cooked up and served the porridge, with Mrs Milne even putting on her special African apron for the occasion. P1-3 made abacuses with recycled bottle tops and sticks, which they used for maths and music, just like the ones in the Malawian school photos, and P4-7 made toy cars out of recycled water bottles. Both classes also had to do without table and chairs for the day, as the classrooms they had seen photos of in Malawi didn't have any furniture in them. There were no toys to play with in the playground, and no computers in the classrooms. Everyone chose a new African name for the



day too. Some of the new P1s and their parents dropped in for our open morning to see what we were up to. We learned a lot about children's rights, and what we actually needed or could do without, and we all had great fun.

### Our Community



The week before the holidays, we had a lovely morning when Kirkton of Skene Playgroup came along to school for some Easter activities. The



whole school split into mixed age groups to work with the children from the playgroup, show them round, look after them, and have some fun. We had a Treasure Hunt round the school grounds and some craft activities inside. The P1-3 class then joined the playgroup children to have snack together. The behaviour and attitudes of the children were fantastic, with some of the older boys and girls especially working hard to make sure the younger ones enjoyed themselves. Mrs Eadie, the playgroup manager was really impressed. We thought the playgroup children did really well too since some of them were really tiny! Mrs Eadie was to be spending a day with us in P1-3 the first week back after the holidays but her new baby decided to make an early appearance! We send our best wishes to Mrs Eadie and her family.



We had another lovely Easter Service at Skene Parish Church, with lots of stories, singing and awards. As usual our thanks go to Misses Campbell and Stewart for organising and delivering such a thoughtful but fun service.



### Dates for your diary

Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> May	Parents Information Evening, 6pm – Active Literacy and Technology
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> May	Whole school trip to Tesco – Farm to Fork Trail
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> May	Parent Council meeting – 7pm Skene School Staff Room
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> May	DLite (Distance Learning Initial Teacher Education) student Mrs Laura Murray joins the P4-7 class for 4 weeks
w/c Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> May	Westhill and Skene Primaries P7 Residential Trip to Barcaple
Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> May	Provisional P1 Induction Day 1 and New P1 Parents Meeting
Saturday 31 <sup>st</sup> May	“Take The Plunge” swimming event, Westhill Swimming Pool
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June	First of 4 weekly swimming sessions for P4-7 pupils ending 24th June
Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> June	Provisional P1 Induction Day 2
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> June	Provisional P1 Induction Day 3
	Provisional date for Sports Day, 1.45pm (existing P1-7 only)
Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> June	Green Goblin Kit Car Race Day, Alford
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> June	Provisional P1 Induction Day 4
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> June	Pupil reports sent home
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> June	New P1 Parents’ Information Evening 6pm
Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July	Chantelle’s Assembly, Skene Parish Church, 2pm
Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> July	Last day summer term
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> August	First day Term 1 2014/2015 session