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Firrhill News

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Bird Nest Boxes

On Tuesday 19 February, Keith and Carolyn Hargest, parents, cleaned out the school nest boxes. Although this is not essential, it is good to remove old nesting material and wash the boxes with hot water and allow to dry as tiny parasites can multiply in old nests and may harm chicks. Last year, three of the school's boxes had been successful, with evidence of nests. There were droppings in two more boxes, showing that birds have used them to shelter or roost in. Unfortunately, some nest boxes needed repair as the glue, wood and fixings had not lasted, and some had disappeared. The boxes bought from the RSPB Local Group and our school's enterprise group are well built, sturdy and easy to clean out!



Five nest boxes had been used: two for roosting, and three had nests inside.



Why not put up some nest boxes in your own garden? It is a great way to see more wildlife!



One new box was added, making a total of 15 boxes.



Nests of moss and twigs were found in three of the nest boxes. Also, two hibernating 2-spot ladybirds were seen.



The Big School's Bird Watch

The RSPB's annual *Big Garden Bird Watch* (BGBW) encourages people to record sightings of birds (and the number of a species seen together at any one time). It can be done in your garden or local park. The results are submitted and provide a useful record of sightings. The BGBW took place during the weekend of 26-28 January 2019. The Big School's Bird Watch is a linked event which encourages schools to take part, enjoy watching birds and learn about nature <https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/>

On an overcast day in early February, teacher Mr Murray and some pupils took part in the Big School's Bird Watch. They walked around the school grounds for an hour and recorded the birds they saw:

- 6 gulls
- 1 blackbird
- 5 wood pigeons
- 2 magpies

These sightings were sent to the RSPB and form part of a useful databank.



Thanks to teacher Mr Rory Murray and the pupils who took part in the Big School's Bird Watch!