



Firrhill News

Produced by the Parent Council

September 2016

Pond Garden

Before the summer holidays some senior Firrhill pupils and parents worked to move a ton of gravel from the front entrance of the school into the Pond Garden (to help suppress weeds). Four bags of cobbles were put in the Celebration Garden ready to be placed in the cobble river by the new S1 pupils (after the renovation work is finished). The most direct route was to pass buckets of gravel from the concourse and through a window! Everyone did a great job and it was completed very quickly. The pond is looking nice with plenty of pond life including a frog.



Thanks to the PTA for funding the gravel and cobbles – ensuring both the Pond and Celebration Gardens continue to look really lovely!



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S6 Highlights

The S6 year starts in June with a teddy bears picnic in Almond Dell Country Park featuring football and rounders matches. Also in June there are interviews for positions on the Senior Student Council including: Head Boy; Head Girl; their deputies and House Captains. S6 pupils are encouraged to join committees such as: Eco; View to a Hill (newsletter); the Prom, Interact and Yearbook committee. In August many S6 pupils are "Helping Hands" to help look after the new S1 intake



In November S6 pupils enjoy a Scots Night and in January, along with S5 pupils, a Ceilidh Night at the Corn Exchange - pupils practise their Scottish Country dancing skills beforehand! S6 pupils can buy a school Yearbook, school photos and a leavers' hoodie (featuring the names of their whole year on the back).

Their final day is celebrated with a fancy dress BBQ at Polkemmet Park and later a Commemoration Evening is held at school. The last event in the S6 year is the Prom, this years' prom was at Murrayfield Stadium.



S6 is a special year with many landmark events, leading up to leaving school and the final exams. We wish last years' leavers every success in their chosen destinations and hope our current S6 enjoy a productive and successful final year!





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The Anne Frank Garden

On 29th June, Ethos Day, when pupils can choose to participate in various different activities, Kyle Youngs S5 helped Firrhill parent, Mrs Hargest to tidy the Anne Frank Garden. The flower beds were weeded and a generous amount of mulch applied, to help suppress weeds. The planters were planted up with some hardy plants - sedum, ladies mantle and pink Heuchera and then watered. The metal planters get warm on sunny days and need watering to avoid drying out. The Anne Frank Garden is located by the Pupil Support Base and was created on June 12th 2014 which would have been Anne Frank's birthday had she still been alive. It features the Anne Frank tree, which is a weeping cherry tree with a commemorative plaque beneath. The tree is surrounded by daffodils and lily of the valley, there are two crescent shaped flower beds with roses, daffodils and Heuchera; a lovely bench donated by Tiphereth; three rectangular planters and crocuses naturalised in the lawn.



Thanks to the Parent Council for funding the mulch



Thanks to Mrs Hargest who donated plants



The Anne Frank Garden which commemorates the life of Anne Frank and all Holocaust victims also provides the school with a lovely spot for reflection and relaxation during fine weather.



Other Ethos Day activities provided by the school included: Alton Towers – see photos @firrhistory <https://twitter.com/firrhistory>; sporting activities; S6 pupils teddy bears picnic; the Royal Highland Show and lots more.



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Vietnam Expedition 2018 (for current S4 & S5 pupils)

On 22nd June Firrhill High School launched the latest S5 & S6 expedition which will take place in June 2018 to Vietnam, it is 28 days duration, priced £4,225 (pupils will be encouraged to fundraise). The trip is an opportunity to experience adventure in an exotic location, to help others - working with Volunteers for Peace Vietnam (VPV) and to gain valuable life lessons as a team member. The excursion is run by Outlook Expeditions and their expertise will help ensure the safe running of the project.

OUTLOOK EXPEDITIONS

The expedition is for pupils who will be S5 & S6 in 2018 with Mr Owen as link teacher



Destination facts

Religion - Buddhism

Culture - friendly and welcoming not war torn!

Geography - Flat delta & central highlands

Climate - Tropical (South) Monsoon (North) warm dry (October to March)

Language - Vietnamese and French

The parents' information meeting on 22nd June was well attended but to be viable the expedition needs a good response. Places are limited and an initial deposit is required. Sign up by October (see Mr Owen).

The expedition is not a holiday but provides an opportunity for personal development. All pupils will gain self-confidence & team work experience. Participation in an expedition is great to include in a personal statement or CV. There is flexibility regarding itineraries between the groups but all itineraries will include:

- participation in a community project
- experiencing Vietnamese culture
- a jungle trek (visiting traditional villages)
- rest and relaxation in Halong Bay (above)

There are a number of school trips scheduled each year for most year groups each of varying duration and cost. All with specific educational aims.



The project work may involve teaching children and repairing or refurbishing village schools. Previous expedition destinations include Bolivia and Venezuela

See new posts @FirrhillHS twitter



We are grateful to the staff for providing this amazing opportunity for Firrhill pupils



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SMESU Explorer Scouts - Cambodia Expedition

Scouts on twitter @SMESU

In July 2016 after 18 months of preparation a group of 44 explorer scouts and their leaders travelled to rural Cambodia for a month long development expedition. The group included a large number of Firrhill pupils and former pupils. They camped in the village of Banteay Kabalchin and worked with local craftsmen to build a new two classroom school. The scouts also taught locals about Scotland, organised a sports day for children in the community and met with local Buddhist Monks. Afterwards they enjoyed some well-earned sightseeing, rest and relaxation!



The old school building (below) was very overcrowded with over 200 pupils



In October three scout leaders (right) visited Phnom Penh in preparation for the expedition. Thanks to the Scout Leaders for their hard work enabling the scouts to do this amazing expedition

The scouts' video for their crowdfunder giving site <http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/smesucambodia/>



The Explorers prepared in the UK training in woodworking, bricklaying, team building and fund raising over £10,000.



South Morningside Explorer Scouts Unit (SMESU) meets in Fairmilehead Parish Church on Mondays. There is a waiting list to join - visit their web page for more details.

The aim of the expedition was to have a positive impact on the local community whilst developing their own skills, values and outlook.

PoI Pot and his Khmer Rouge regime, contributed to making Cambodia one of the poorest countries in the world. The new school built by the scouts is a tremendous gift for the community and also a positive and life changing experience for all involved



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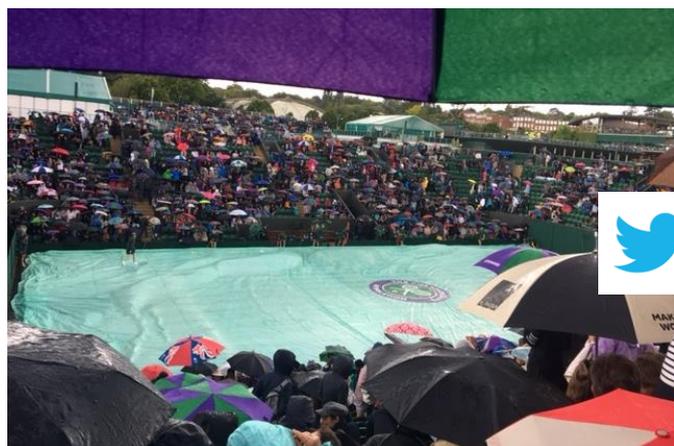
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Wimbledon Tennis Trip @FirrhillPE

Firrhill received free tickets for Wimbledon on 1st July as part of The Tennis Foundation's new "School of Tennis" scheme in partnership with Tennis Scotland.



At the end of term eight Firrhill pupils accompanied by staff members, went to Wimbledon to watch some tennis. They flew there and back in the one day! Although there was a lot of rain they managed to see most of the Dustin Brown v Nick Kyrgios match. They also enjoyed some strawberries and cream and had a great day out.



Follow @FirrhillPE twitter account - PE and sport information is put on this account - it is up to date, useful and informative. Mrs Carmichael says "It would be great if we could increase our number of followers". Also see @FirrhillHS @firrhistory