



# Firrhill News

Produced by the Parent Council

November 2018



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## Sports Information Evening

On Thursday 6 September Firrhill held its annual sports information evening. Ms Emma Anderson, Curriculum Leader, Health and Wellbeing, highlighted the school sports ethos, the sports wristband system (which for £20 allow pupils to join as many sports clubs as they choose, with the exception of the hockey club, which is run entirely by parents and paid for separately) and the school's sports tour. Head Girl Sophie Gardener gave an introduction, and our Young Ambassadors Josef Pechar, Heather Tring, Jessica Knox and Catherine Harper together helped to lead the evening and presented a film featuring interviews with some of the school's top athletes, after which volunteer awards were presented.

The pupil interviews in the video:

Magnus Tait – athletics  
Lucia Rizza – tennis  
Michael Denvir – kayaking  
Jenny Baxter – netball

Henning Kleinow – basketball and Parkour coach.

*Volunteer awards were presented to:*

*Parents – Lynne Cameron and Diane Jeffery (contribution to hockey)*

*Teacher – Mr Owen (contribution to football)*

*Pupils – Jenny Baxter and Lucy Forbes (contribution to netball)*

As there are a lot of options available, all pupils are encouraged to make the most of the opportunity and try out a few clubs to see which they prefer.



The information stalls in the concourse included: Heart of Midlothian Amateur Swimming Club, Boroughmuir Cricket Club, Camanachd Shinty Club, Merchants of Edinburgh Golf Club, Napier Knights American Football Club, Firrhill Hockey Club, The Orienteering Club, The Edinburgh Road Club and the Environment Group, which promotes cycling and offers cycle training. Later, in the gym halls and outside on the astro-turf, a variety of sports clubs offered free taster sessions.







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## Sports Information Evening (cont'd)



Thanks to Firrhill staff for organising the sports information evening and to all who supported this event. Thanks very much to the Young Ambassadors for their all their hard work!

On Tuesday 6 November a Bike Club is starting after school including a quiz with prizes and the "smoothie bike", see Mr Denvir for details.







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## Hyacinth Bulb Planting

On Wednesday 5 September three S1 pupils helped parent Mrs Hargest to plant 100 early flowering indoor hyacinths, to be sold at the Christmas concert and Christmas market. Delft Blue hyacinths have an amazing fragrance. Special bulb compost containing charcoal was used to help prevent mould and fungus. There was no need to water when planting, but the pots will be watered during the autumn when the compost becomes dry. The pots were all reused pots, available free from Damhead Nursery. (They did need to be washed before use though!) The pupils made sure the bulbs did not touch each other or the sides of the pots. The bulbs need to have about 2 cm showing above the compost. They were firmed in gently (to help them grow upright) and will be kept in a cool dark place, safely away from nibbling mice! We planted 33 pots and look forward to enjoying them at Christmas.



The pots of Blue Delft hyacinths will make great Christmas presents! Do buy one to support the school's eco work – only £5 per pot!



Thanks to the Parent Council for funding the purchase of the bulbs, the Environment Group for funding the compost and to Mrs Hargest for organising the planting.





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## The School Travel Plan

On 1 October the 2018 edition of the school Travel Plan was "signed off". Signatories included: Mark Symonds, Road Safety and Active Travel Liaison Officer, City of Edinburgh Council; Mr Denvir, School Cycle Champion; Mr McCord, Eco Coordinator; Lorna Norman, Active Schools Coordinator; pupil representatives; and Mrs Hargest, Environment Group leader.

The school Travel Plan, produced in October 2013, needed to be updated. A pupil travel survey, designed with pupil input and help from the CEC Road Safety Officer, was carried out during December 2017 – January 2018. There was an excellent response rate, with 331 pupils out of a school role of 1,186 taking part. The Travel Plan is based on the results of the survey and can be used as supporting evidence when requesting changes to improve sustainable or active travel.



Here is a link for the revised Travel Plan: <http://firrhillhigh.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Travel-Plan-Firrhill-High-School-Sept-2018.pdf>

**Firrhill High School**

**Travel Plan**



September 2018

We have recorded the need for: higher priority in gritting the roads and pavements near the school in winter weather; larger litter bins; better timing of the No 400 bus; and live bus tracker information. Barriers to cycling included the need for quiet routes, secure cycle sheds and lockers for cyclists. The Travel Plan includes information about safer cycling routes to school, how to plan a bus route and where to buy a good second-hand bike! Most importantly, it includes a number of action points which the school and the City of Edinburgh Council are committed to address.

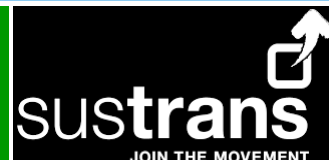
Already – as a result of following up action points – the road to the rear entrance of the school has been resurfaced, an additional grit box has been added, new cycle signage and a dropped kerb leading to the old City Hospital grounds are planned, and the bike sheds are being repaired with metal mesh to replace broken Perspex. New signage and integral door locks will be added.



*Pupils met Mark Symonds, Road Safety Officer, several times to design the Travel Survey, analyse the results and make decisions about the Action Plan.*

It is great that the school has dedicated time and effort to revise the Travel Plan. Thanks to the Environment Group for their role in organising the surveys, meetings and writing the Travel Plan! The Travel Plan will help the school as we complete our Eco School's Green Flag interim application, with transport as one of our chosen topics, and as we work towards becoming a Cycle Friendly Secondary School.

**Cycle  
Friendly  
Secondary  
School**



Report any problems such as, litter, graffiti, fly tipping and dog fouling to the City of Edinburgh Council via its "Report it" site: <http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/report>

Development funding of £1,000 has been granted from Cycling Scotland for 32 lockers for cyclists. The bike club has been granted £180 of "sponsored walk money", and Parent Council funding will be requested for a "Dr Bike" session and a Rural and Urban Training Scheme bike mechanics course or a velodrome trip.



On 10 September the school bike sheds were measured for repairs, which will be funded by Sustrans and the City of Edinburgh Council.

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THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL





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## Cycle Routes

The new Travel Plan includes suggested routes from Firrhill's feeder primaries, which may be used for P7 rides to Firrhill.



The Longstone route (above & left) starts at Redhall Grove, turning into Redhall Drive along Kilncroft Side. The summer route crosses the Lanark Road by footbridge, and continues through the Dell, up Katesmill Road, Paties Road, Elliot Road and Elliot Park, joining the mixed-use path at Colinton Road. *The other Longstone route follows the canal to Allen Park, taking Craiglockhart Road North and over Craiglockhart Avenue to Craiglockhart Road and Elliot Park.*

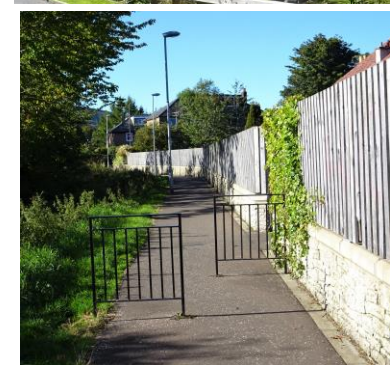
Parents are welcome to bring their children and try out the routes in a led ride with Stella Thomson and Carolyn Hargest. Please contact [carolyn.hargest@btconnect.com](mailto:carolyn.hargest@btconnect.com) to book a suitable time.



The Bonaly summer route (above & left) goes through Dreghorn Woods, has a short section on Dreghorn Road, to Redford Walk, to the Adam's Well estate. Via Dreghorn Bank, it takes the mixed-use path by Colinton Primary, crosses Colinton Mains Drive and continues along the Braid Burn to Oxgangs Road North. *The alternative Bonaly route goes via Dreghorn Loan, Redford Drive, Thorburn Road and Redford Avenue.*

All these routes are great bike rides! Why not try them out and explore your local area?

The Pentland route (see below & below left) follows Cockmylane, crosses Oxgangs Avenue via the Braid Burn, past Oxgangs Community Centre to Firrhill Drive and Firrhill Crescent.



These routes are in the school Travel Plan: <http://firrhillhigh.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Travel-Plan-Firrhill-High-School-Sept-2018.pdf>





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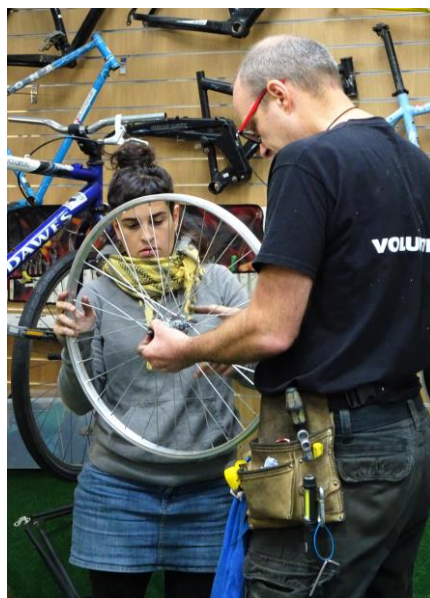
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## The Bike Station (250 Causewayside, Edinburgh 0131 668 1996)

The Bike Station sells refurbished bikes and parts at a fraction of the cost of a new bike. The Bike Station also runs bike maintenance classes and supervised fix-your-own bike sessions (with use of tools £6 per hour, the last entry being one hour before closing). When buying a bike, a good fit is really important – getting the right size frame, adjusting the saddle to a comfortable height, and ensuring the handlebars are not too far for a comfortable “reach” (for this reason, girls may prefer ladies’ bikes).



The Bike Station accepts donated bikes and accessories to refurbish and sell.



“I recently visited the Bike Station with my eldest daughter, Alice, who wanted a bike for her daily commute at university. She bought a refurbished Revolution Courier Nexus – its eight-speed Nexus hub gears are very easy to use and it has puncture-resistant Kevlar tyres! There are lots of great bargains, e.g. bike bags, mud guards and bells – it is an Aladdin’s cave of cycling treasures, all at very modest prices, with profits going back into the charity. It is superb – well worth a visit!”  
C. Hargest, Environment Group leader



Tues – Fri 8.00 am – 7.00 pm  
Sat 10.00 am – 5.00 pm  
Wed 8.00 am – 8.00 pm  
Closed Sun & Mon







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## All Shook Up

Photos by Ric Brannan Photography

During the first week of September several Firhill pupils starred in the LYAMC (Lothian Youth Arts & Musicals Company) production of "All Shook Up" at the Churchill Theatre. This musical adaptation of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, inspired by and featuring the songs of Elvis Presley, had everyone jumping out of their blue suede shoes with classics such as "Heartbreak Hotel", "Jailhouse Rock" and "Don't be Cruel". Set in 1955 in a square little town, in a square little state, the story follows Chad, a guitar-playing young man who changes everything and everyone he meets in this hip-swivelling, lip-curling musical fantasy.



LYAMC is one of Scotland's leading amateur youth musical companies. Founded in 1988 its main objective is to make musical theatre fun for youngsters ages 8-25. If anyone is interested in joining, auditions are held each year. Please get in touch via the web: [www.lyamc.com](http://www.lyamc.com)



LYAMC currently has a company of 120 individuals. This year's cast included eight Firhill High School pupils: Aaron McKay, Andrew Hamilton, Hannah Steel, Laura Steel, Lindsay Goodall, Matthew Steel, Rebecca Steel, Ruairaidh McKay. One of the principal characters was played by Firhill's very own Matthew Steel. Matthew played the part of Dean, the mayor's son, for whom the path to true love was a rocky one.

An amazing production – very well done to all performers!

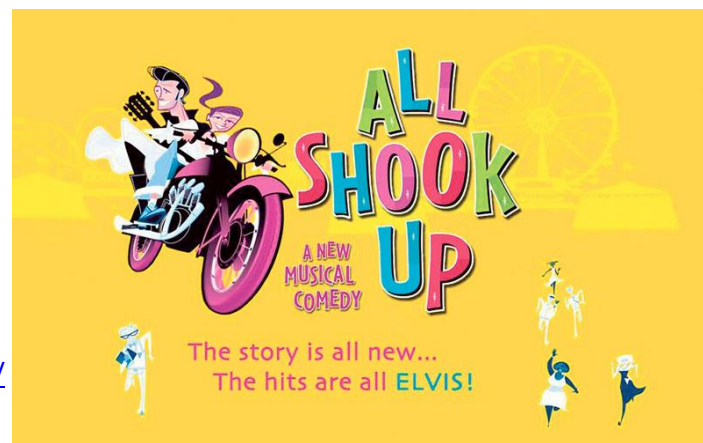
"An extremely talented group of kids."  
(Murray Smith)

### All Shook Up

★★★★☆ Energetic:

"There is a spirited tunefulness to LYAMC's All Shook Up that makes it cheerfully compelling", said Hugh Simpson All Edinburgh Theatre.com: <http://www.alledinburghtheatre.com/all-shook-up-lyamc-2018-review/>

"An enjoyably cheesy feelgood romp." (Hugh Simpson)







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## “A Time to Write” (writer-led workshops in the school library)

On 13 and 19 September school librarian Mr McCann invited poet Ryan van Winkle and author Lari Don to host two writer-led workshops for S1-3 pupils. The aim of the project “a Time to Write” is to encourage pupils to have fun in coming up with ideas for stories and poems.



Thanks to author Lari Don and poet Ryan van Winkle for leading these informative and entertaining workshops, and to school librarian Declan McCann, who organised both events.

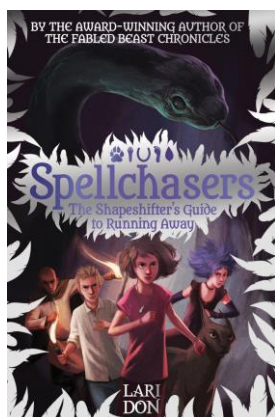
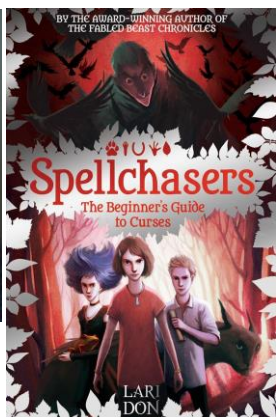


Lari Don talked to pupils about writing techniques and “how to keep your reader wanting to know more”. She turned “coming up with story ideas” into an adventure – where group members were encouraged to start their own stories and share them with other pupils.

Ryan van Winkle worked with a group of pupils to challenge their ideas about what could count as a poem. The whole group worked together by swapping around ideas about places, people and situations, to make some extremely funny and silly poems together.



These workshops aim to develop more confident writers.



Ryan van Winkle is an American poet, live artist, podcaster and critic. His first collection of poems, *Tomorrow We Will Live Here* (2010), won the Crashaw Prize. His second collection, *The Good Dark*, won the 2015 Saltire Society Poetry Book of the Year award. Van Winkle was the first Reader in Residence at the Scottish Poetry Library.

To read “One Year This Door Will Open” by Ryan van Winkle, follow this link to The Scottish Poetry Library <http://www.scottishpoetrylibrary.org.uk/poetry/poems/one-year-door-will-open-0>





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## The Parent Council AGM



**Parent Council meetings**  
12.11.18  
21.1.19  
23.4.19  
10.6.19



The Parent Council Annual General Meeting included a summary of the year by Chairperson Fred Bell. The Secretary, Julie Darling, gave a short report as did the treasurer, Margaret Douglas. The working group leaders spoke about their groups and achievements over the past year and aims for the coming year. All groups expressed a wish for new members to join them. Fred Bell thanked all the parents who had helped over the past year, including some members who had stepped down.



**Working Group meetings**  
26/11/18  
25/2/19  
13/5/19

Working groups: Health & Wellbeing, which runs a parenting course; Business & Enterprise Group which helps with "Meaningful May" and organises the Job Fair; the Environment Group which works on the Eco Schools Green Flag, promotes cycling, tends gardens and writes the *Firrhill News*; and the Communications Group which updates the parent sections of the website.

The Parent Council welcomes new parents/carers to our meetings and working groups, either to listen or to contribute opinions. You do not need to be a member to attend and please feel free to leave early or arrive late without embarrassment – we understand that our children may need to be collected from clubs and there are commitments to be juggled!

