



# Firrhill News

Produced by the Parent Council

December 2018



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## S1 & S2 Bike Club

On Tuesday 6 November the new S1 & S2 bike club had a fun lunchtime launch event in the foyer, including a quiz with prizes: a nice bike lock for the winner, and lights, bells and reflective trouser straps for all participants. The smoothie bike was in constant demand, and pupils pedalled hard to create delicious fruit smoothies. Kerr Sproul, Sustrans and Simon Fagan, Edinburgh RC helped at the event, along with school cycle champion Mr Denvir, teacher, and Carolyn Hargest, Environment Group leader. Fruit and fruit juices were kindly donated by Tesco.



**TESCO**

The Tuesday afterschool bike club will include: cycling skills, bike mechanics and fun films, with hot chocolate and popcorn! More details in the weekly bulletin and on the plasma TV.



Kerr Sproul, Sustrans, will lead the next bike club on Tues 4 Dec 3.45 - 4.45 pm in room PSE 2 "Bike maintenance and puncture repair".







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## Firrhill News needs your help!

Firrhill News needs new writers, photographers and an editor.

If you would like to help, please contact [carolyn.hargest@btconnect.com](mailto:carolyn.hargest@btconnect.com)

Carolyn Hargest, parent and Environment Group leader has produced the *Firrhill News* on a monthly basis for nine years! Originally called the *Environment Group News*, with the aim of publicising all the eco work taking place in the school, this was later broadened to include general news. Each issue is checked by staff for corrections and to ensure that any photographs of pupils included have parental permission granted. *Firrhill News* has helped provide evidence towards gaining awards such as the Gold School Sport Award and the Eco Schools Green Flag Award – it was also praised by the school inspectors when they visited! Without new volunteers the publication may stop and be replaced by general updates on the website.

“Pupils, staff and parents can contribute articles and photographs, but the majority has been my own work! *Firrhill News* is a good way to present the school and pupil’s achievements to the outside world. It’s great to share Firrhill’s news and publicise pupil’s achievements and extracurricular activities!” (C Hargest parent).



Thanks to parent Carolyn Hargest for her hard work, and also thanks to Keith Hargest and Sandra Mitchell for their diligent proof reading and Ian Gebbie for posting each *Firrhill News* each month on the school website.



## Eco Book of the Month



This month’s “Eco book of the month” is the RSPB’s *Handbook of British birds*, which is a good book to help with bird ID. An excellent way to start to see more wildlife in your garden is by feeding the birds over the winter months. If possible, also provide water for birds – they need to drink a lot, especially if they eat seeds, which make them thirsty! They enjoy bathing regularly to keep their feathers in good condition. The Eco Committee will organise topping up the school bird feeders on a regular basis, and our bio-pond provides water for drinking and bathing.

Thanks to school librarian Mr Declan McCann for continuing to support the Eco Committee by providing an Eco book of the month.

*The RSPB Edinburgh local group holds lectures at Napier University, £3 entry (refreshments provided). Next meeting is 12 December 7.30pm the AGM, plus members talks and a fun quiz. They organise birding walks and outings. Why not visit one of their beautiful nature reserves? The nearest being RSPB Loch Leven.*



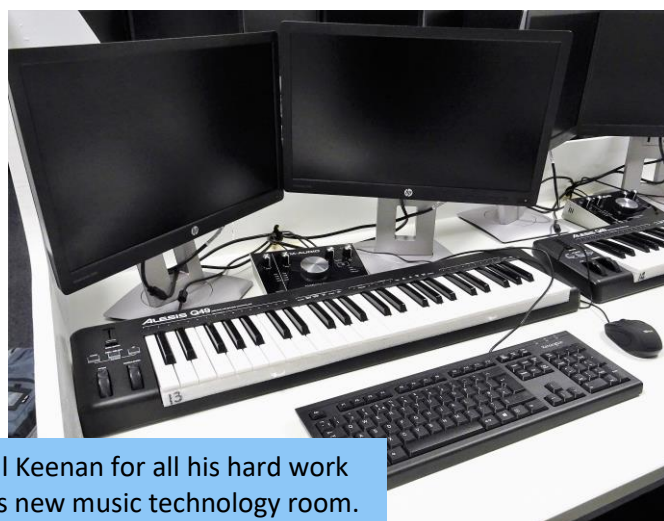
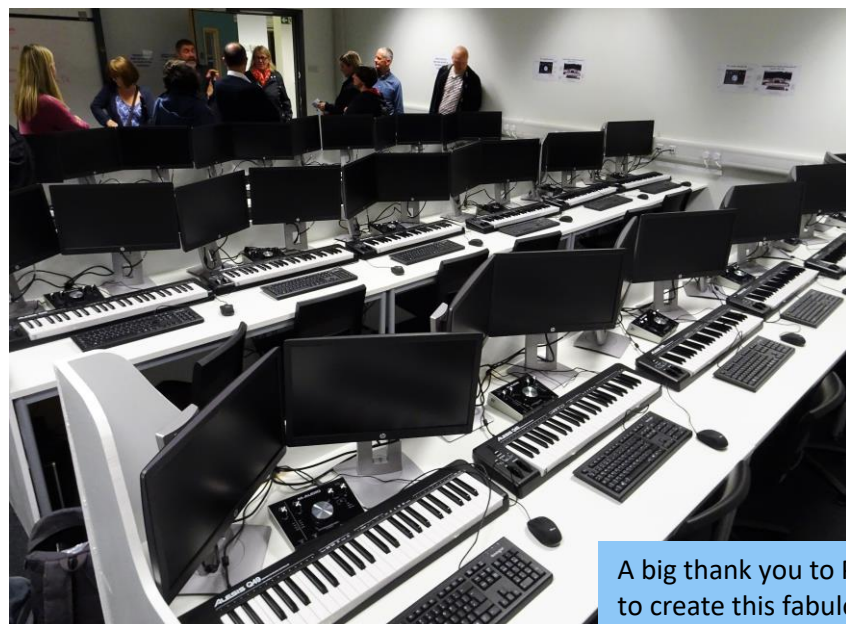
## Music Technology Room

A wonderful “state of the art” music technology room was created during the summer break, thanks to school technician Phil Keenan, who worked endlessly to unpack, fit out and wire up the room with all the necessary keyboards and computers.



Follow on Twitter @FirrhillMusic

On 6 September, after the Parent Council Annual General Meeting, head teacher Graham Hamilton proudly showed parents the impressive new music technology room.



A big thank you to Phil Keenan for all his hard work to create this fabulous new music technology room.





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For more information visit the website:

<http://www.baldybane.org.uk/>



## The Baldy Bane Theatre Company



On 2 October the Baldy Bane Theatre Company visited Firrhill and performed *School Daze* to an appreciative S1 year group.

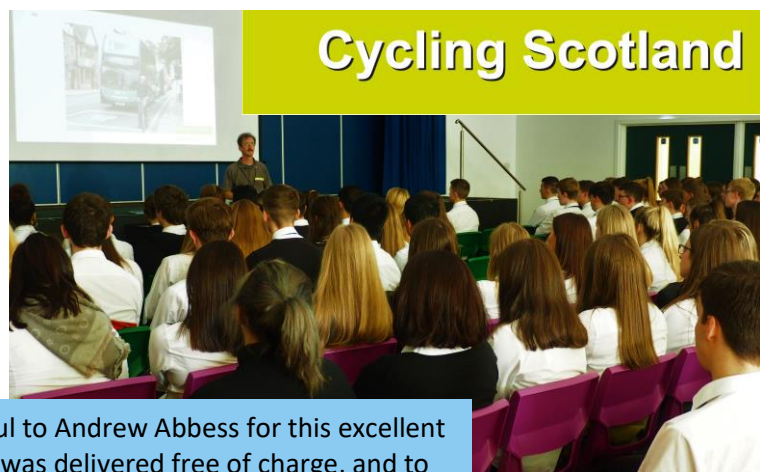


The Baldy Bane Theatre Company, created in 1991, aim to use the arts to inspire and encourage social awareness. It delivers hard hitting dramas about bullying, gender-based issues, internet safety, bogus calling, abuse in teenage relationships, knife crime and road safety. It has been commissioned by Road Safety Scotland to deliver its *Theatre in Education Programme*.

## Learner Driver Bike Aware Training

On 2 October Andrew Abbess, Cycling Scotland, delivered a "Learner Driver Bike Aware" course – an interactive slide presentation – to the S6 year group, many of whom are now learning to drive. The course aims to help young drivers to become more aware of cyclists and, ultimately, become safer drivers. *There is also a practical element to the course, which schools may choose to receive, too.* Mr Hollis gave a word of thanks at the end of the presentation for what had been an informative and helpful road safety lecture. It is hoped that, should funding continue, next year's S6 would receive this training, too.

On 3 October some additional road safety training was provided for the S6 year group at the Corn Exchange.



### Cycling Scotland

Cycle Friendly Secondary School

We are grateful to Andrew Abbess for this excellent course, which was delivered free of charge, and to parent Mrs. Hargest who provided this contact.







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## Green Flag *with quotes about our Green Flag journey from our interim application*



Firrhill was awarded its first Green Flag in November 2016, and in November 2018 an interim application was submitted to renew our Green Flag. Waste minimisation and travel were our chosen topics, plus litter as a compulsory topic. Progress needs to be measured, e.g. by counting pairs of donated glasses or weighing litter.

As a new initiative on the sponsored walk this year Mr Denvir (photo right) and some pupils helped to litter pick along the way!



Community involvement is required: many different community groups have helped us to collect glasses for Vision Aid Overseas, and the Senior Student Council had a community litter pick with Braidburn School and Oxfangs Primary School (SSC pupils pictured above). Our "success stories" are shared via *Firrhill News*, which is posted on the school website and displayed in the foyer. There is an Eco notice board in reception.



The donated glasses are taken to Specsavers Morningside and sent to Africa. See Specsavers staff pictured above.

"Members of Oxfangs community have donated their old glasses and put them in the box in the library. I have been amazed at the number of glasses collected!" said Hazel Deans, Library Supervisor, Oxfangs Library.



"...helping Firrhill High to apply for its Green Flag by recycling old specs for donation to developing countries and running a second-hand book table, encouraging pupils to take a book away for themselves or another", Gordon Jardine, parent.



"In my opinion, Firrhill has been very committed to and fully engaged in working to improve and promote sustainable and active travel options over the last decade, and most recently working to revise the School Travel Plan and encourage cycling," said Mark Symonds, Road Safety and Active Travel Liaison Officer, City of Edinburgh Council, pictured above signing off the Travel Plan on 1 October with Mr Denvir and pupils.

The new Eco Committee and Eco-Schools coordinator Mr McCord will lead Firrhill along our Green Flag journey successfully begun by Mrs Barley, teacher.

"Our Green Flag journey was a great success. We embedded litter picking, energy management and learning for sustainability into the curriculum, worked successfully with outside agencies and our neighbouring schools and improved the recycling of plastic waste from classrooms. We monitored transport to school and encouraged biodiversity by planting and caring for the school grounds. Overall, we raised awareness of Eco Schools and what it stands for across the school, so that our journey can continue from year to year." (Mrs Barley, former Eco-Schools Coordinator for Firrhill)



In addition to the required elements, a lot of gardening work has taken place and this year and several planters were bought and planted up, both at the school and at Colinton Mains shops.





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## Litter Campaign

Pupils and teachers have a rota for doing litter picks in the school grounds, which will be restarting in the new year. The school janitorial staff, employed by Amey, litter pick on a regular basis. Parents in the Environment Group also collect litter when they are in the school grounds. Pupils are encouraged to take their litter home and to consume fewer packaged items at lunchtime.

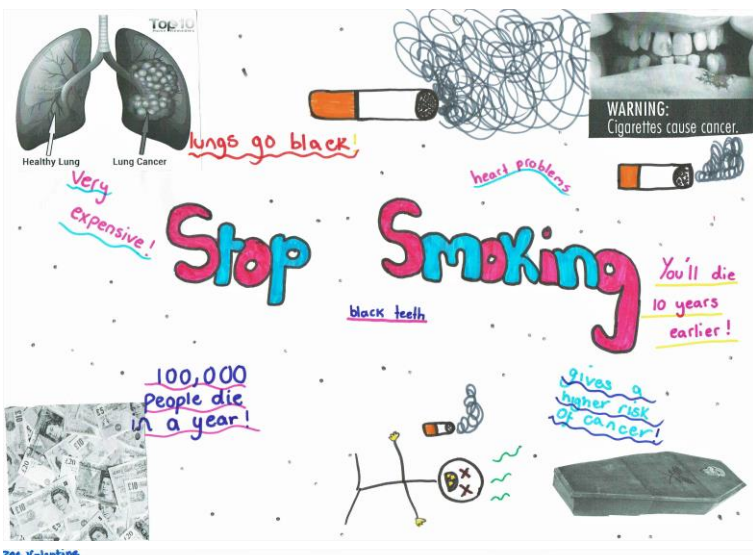


BY: Petra Gold -mc



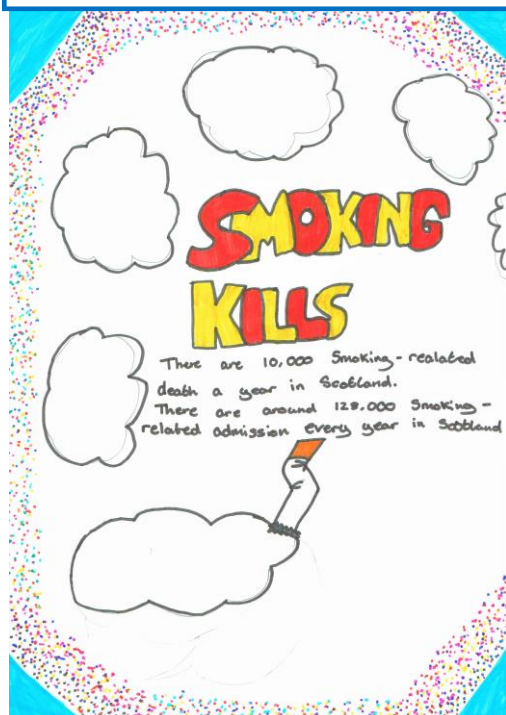
## Anti-smoking Campaign

The posters deliver a clear message about the risks of smoking.



In January Mrs Dunn's and Ms Kerr's S2 PSE classes created some amazing litter posters which the Environment Group have kindly scanned, printed and laminated. There are enough posters to display one in every classroom. This is part of a special focus on tackling litter. Recently, the litter bins near the school have been full and overflowing. The City of Edinburgh Council has been emailed to draw their attention to the problem, and bigger bins have been requested. However, at present they report that there are no bigger bins available. We have contacted our MSPs and local councillors to help resolve this problem!

Please help to resolve the problem by reporting any litter problems to the City of Edinburgh Council via its "Report it" site: <http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/report> You may also use this site to report graffiti, fly tipping and dog fouling.



Well done to all the pupils for making such great anti-littering and anti-smoking posters!

Mr Denvir has been working with pupils as part of Decipher-Assist programme where chosen peer group leaders are assigned roles to help their friends regarding the issue of smoking. The posters will be displayed in every classroom and also on the school's plasma TV.

# SMOKING KILLS

there are over 10,000 Smoke Related deaths a year IN SCOTLAND ALONE



*Don't Smoke. live longer*





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## St Andrews Open Day

For more information visit <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/visiting/visiting-days/ug/>  
College and university open days help pupils to choose their course and decide where they want to study. For more information visit <https://www.opendays.com/> In order to visit St Andrews, prospective students need to book in advance, since it is a small town and places for each open day are limited. Student ambassadors wear red gowns and look very colourful as they lead small groups on walking tours around this beautiful town.



Ambassadors describe student life and its traditions, whilst escorting prospective students around the town, halls of residence and to departmental talks.



St Andrews University was founded in 1413 and is the third oldest university in the UK.

At this time of year, colleges and universities hold open days so that prospective students may visit in order to see if they may want to study there. It is important for S6 pupils to spend time visiting a few places. A visit to the University of St Andrews was certainly interesting and worthwhile.







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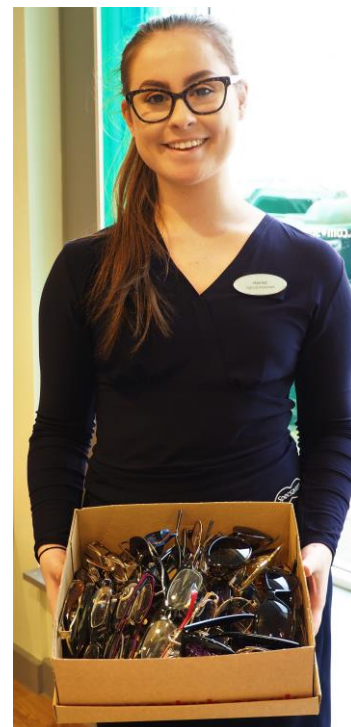
## Vision Aid Overseas

The school is working with the community to collect glasses and sunglasses – prescription or regular – for Vision Aid Overseas (VAO). The glasses are taken to Specsavers, Morningside and sent to Africa, where they are matched to recipients with the closest prescription needs. Last year 360 pairs were collected. We have already collected 493 pairs since then – amazing! Thanks to all who have supported this project!

Specsavers

“The congregation at Colinton Parish Church collect spectacles and sunglasses throughout the year for Firrhill and VAO. As School Chaplain, it is good to have this link between the Church and school and to work in partnership on a meaningful project that recycles, reuses and connects us to the wider world”

(Gayle Taylor, School Chaplain)



## Glow Gold Campaign

September was childhood cancer awareness month, to raise awareness and attempt to better support children and their families battling any of the various forms of cancer.

The aim of the “Glow Gold” campaign is to increase awareness of childhood cancer. Along with increased awareness comes greater recognition of the early signs and symptoms, earlier diagnosis, increased funding, increased research, kinder, more targeted therapy and, ultimately, a change in the prognosis for children diagnosed with childhood cancer.



Throughout September the school displayed this golden child's bike in support of [Glow Gold September - childhood cancer awareness](#). The golden bike is in memory of the many childhood cancer victims who sadly passed away and were not able to enjoy riding their bikes.

Firrhill High School pupil Kira, #Kirathemachine is currently fighting a battle with neuroblastoma. Kira helped to lead this campaign and has spoken about the importance of early detection and intervention. Please donate to any of the many childhood cancer charities, in support of the “Glow Gold” campaign.



Worldwide, special buildings were illuminated with golden light, as part of the campaign.





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## Cricket Success



Alexander Hodge S4 (photo right) is a member of the Boroughmuir Cricket club and has played for both Boroughmuir 1st and 2nd XI this year. He has also captained Eastern Knights U14 side, which represents the East of Scotland!

A number of Firrhill pupils already enjoy membership of the Boroughmuir Cricket Club. The club is currently seeking to increase its Junior Section, which runs on Tuesdays 6.00 - 7.30 pm at Meggetland Cricket Ground. New junior members can join the fun indoor Junior Softball Practices, and more experienced players are welcome to join hardball practices. Cricket is an enjoyable sport for both boys and girls. The club ran a cricket taster session at the recent sports information evening.



To find out more, contact Ed Hutchinson (President) at [boroughmuircc@gmail.com](mailto:boroughmuircc@gmail.com) or text 07989 533834

Follow this link to find out more: <http://boroughmuircc.hitscricket.com/>

## S3 French Cinema trip



Follow on Twitter @MfIFirrhill



*De Toutes Nos Forces* – part of the French Film Festival at the Edinburgh Filmhouse. On Tuesday 6 November, 60 S3 pupils accompanied by four Firrhill staff visited the Filmhouse on Lothian Road to watch *De Toutes Nos Forces (The Finishers)* in French. It is a heart-warming story based on true events. The film is about a teenage boy called Julien who has cerebral palsy. His father works away from home, so they don't have a great bond, until his Dad is fired. Julien discovers a picture in the garage of his Dad who was a former accomplished triathlete, which gives him the idea of competing in the Ironman triathlon with him. His Dad is opposed to the idea at first but Julien's friends help them turn things around. They train long, hard hours but get support from family and friends, bringing the father and son closer together. They complete the race with two minutes to spare, keeping you on edge throughout their journey. It was an uplifting story about resilience and overcoming adversity, which also helped develop our French, particularly our listening skills.

by Nina Jones (3C1) and Lucy Flockhart (3B2)

Thanks to Miss Chevrou who organised this trip for S3 pupils.



## Park Smart Banner

At Firrhill's recent job fair, Lorna Henderson, Road Safety Officer, City of Edinburgh Council, presented Firrhill with a new "Park Smart" banner. The banners are a good way to politely remind motorists to park with consideration, leaving clear access to the PE block for emergency vehicles and pedestrian access and egress.

Firrhill has a new Park Smart banner which is displayed on Braidburn School's fence by the bike sheds. It says "Be a mate don't park at the gate."

Some motorists park inconsiderately by the entrance to the PE block, which may be dangerous to pedestrians. We hope the banner will help motorists to be more considerate.

If, like Lorna Henderson, CEC, you would like to take part at the next job fair, please contact [fhsjobfair@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:fhsjobfair@yahoo.co.uk)

