



Firrhill News

May 2019

Produced by the Parent Council

Follow on Twitter @firrhillrrsa

Gold: Rights Respecting Award

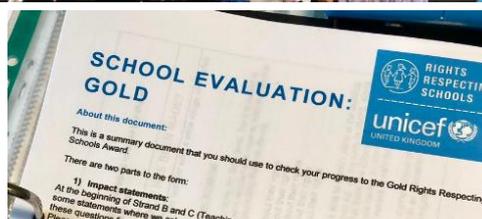
On 13 March Unicef UK's RRSA assessors visited Firrhill to meet pupils, staff and parents to assess our progress towards achieving the Gold: Rights Respecting Award. Everyone worked hard to be ready for the assessment. The RRSA group, led by teacher Mrs Kerr, have introduced lots of events focussed on the Rights of the Child over the past three years. On 12 April we became a Gold Rights Respecting School.



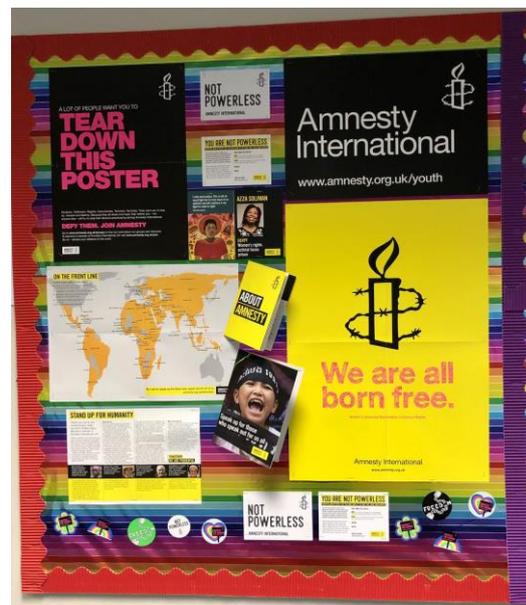
Members of the Eco Committee met the RRSA assessors. There is significant overlap in the elements both groups cover. Particularly as this year the Eco Committee has chosen global citizenship as one of its three topics, the others being school grounds and litter.



Special events included: food bank collections, Purple Friday, the book swap / give-away, Rag bag recycling unit, Holocaust Memorial Day assemblies, the anti-bullying and anti-littering campaigns, promoting "International Women's Day", Amnesty International, LGBTQ+ rights and more!



Well done to pupils and staff – on 16 April Firrhill became a Gold Rights Respecting School.



Gold: Rights Respecting is the highest stage of the Rights Respecting Schools Award. It is granted to schools which have fully embedded children's rights throughout the school and its policies, practice and ethos.



Firrhill News

Produced by the Parent Council

May 2019

Peru Expedition

In June 2020 there is the opportunity for 30 of our current S4 and S5 pupils to go on an exciting expedition to Peru, led by Outlook Expeditions. The expedition, run by Modern Studies teacher Rebecca Davidson, costs £3,995. All pupils are expected to work hard to fundraise for their trip. At present, the exact dates are subject to flight times that have not yet been released. The itinerary will include: trekking, exploration and volunteering, followed by rest and relaxation. Whilst some elements are still to be confirmed, what is guaranteed is: a physically challenging expedition, a degree of culture shock and an experience of being at altitudes of 3,500-4,700 m.



OUTLOOK EXPEDITIONS

The project phase will be volunteering with the “Azul Wasi” project for formerly homeless boys and girls. This was set up by a policeman in Cusco who wanted to create an alternative to the correctional facilities where street children often ended up. The pupils will help expand the accommodation space, but also teach games, English and help the children with their homework.

Peru is a Catholic, Spanish-speaking country. There are four geographical regions (east to west): the arid Pacific coast, altiplano desert interior, the Andes and



Thanks to our dedicated staff team who have made this fantastic expedition possible.



There are four phases: acclimatisation, trekking, project and rest and relaxation.





Firrhill News

Produced by the Parent Council

May 2019

Vision Aid Overseas

Before the Easter break, Firrhill High School had its annual glasses and sunglasses collection for Vision Aid Overseas.

We also have several glasses collection boxes placed in the community: Oxgangs Library, Colinton Parish Church, Swanston Brasserie (the home of Swanston Golf Club) and Oxgangs Primary School. Since last Easter we have already collected 710 pairs of glasses and sunglasses. This is an amazing total and a simple way to reuse and recycle our unwanted spectacles whilst helping others.



2013	35 pairs
2014	86 pairs
2015	110 pairs
2016	150 pairs
2017	280 pairs
2018	360 pairs
2019	710 pairs



Vision Aid Overseas



Please donate your unwanted glasses to VAO – leave them at reception for Mrs Hargest. Your donation will change lives!

The Anne Frank Garden

The Anne Frank Garden looks at its best in spring when the daffodils, narcissi and crocuses flower. It is also a lovely place for relaxation and quiet reflection in summer.

Thanks to Mr Murray and the Nurture Group pupils who re-oiled the bench in the Anne Frank Garden. It looks fantastic!



In the school grounds, there are areas that were created by and are looked after by pupils, with staff and parental involvement. These are: the Pond, Anne Frank and Celebration Gardens and the meadow. Parents who would like to help should email carolyn.hargest@btconnect.com



Firrhill News

Produced by the Parent Council

May 2019



Follow on Twitter @FirrhillPE

Under 16's Football

Firrhill High School's Under 16's football team put in a great performance against Preston Lodge in the League Cup semi-final, winning 6-2 on Saturday 27 April at Newbattle High School. The goals came from Kevin Essah, Jacob Gordon (2), Corin Brown and Glen Lorimer (2). They were well supported by fellow pupils, parents and staff. The final will take place on Friday 10 May against Portobello High School and will be played at Spartans Academy.



Congratulations to the team on this great win! We wish them the best of luck in the finals!



Thanks to Susan Bailey, parent for these great photos!





Firrhill News

Produced by the Parent Council

May 2019

“Vegan Leather” pencil case

Stella Thomson, Environment Group member, has made a great little case from bicycle inner tubes. This “vegan leather” case is easy to make and lined with tartan. It has a lovely feel to it and can be put to various uses. Why not try to make one, too?



Stella has lots of inner tubes, so if you would like to make a case from reused inner tubes please contact: carolyn.hargest@btconnect.com



Carolyn Hargest, Environment Group leader, said “this lovely case is a great way to reuse old inner tubes!”

Healthy Vegan Curry

Ingredients

- 2 medium onions
- 2 tins of chopped tomatoes
- 1 tin creamed coconut
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped finely
- 1 inch of root ginger peeled and grated
- 2 tablespoons of paprika
- 2 teaspoons coriander
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 3 tablespoons tomato puree
- 300g green lentils (wash but no need to soak)
- 1 tin of kidney beans
- 1 tin of chick peas

It is important to think about the journey your food has taken. Try to buy food which is in season and produced locally.

Optional spices

- 1 teaspoon garam masala
- 1 bay leaf
- 10 peppercorns
- 8 cardamom pods
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ¼ teaspoon chilli powder, or more!

This curry is a great way to enjoy a vegan option – why not eat more meat-free meals for health and environmental reasons!

Method

- Fry the onions in olive oil until soft.
- Add paprika, the finely grated root ginger and chopped garlic. Stir and fry for a few minutes.
- Add the other spices, tomatoes, creamed coconut and lentils, and fast boil for 10 minutes, stirring (so it doesn't stick).
- Add drained, rinsed, chick peas and red kidney beans.
- Cook the lentils until soft (this varies depending on the freshness of the lentils, but may take 30-40 minutes).
- If mixture begins to look too dry add more tomatoes, water or creamed coconut.

Serve

- with brown basmati rice. Some wild rice can be added, for texture and colour.
- Simply rinse the rice in a sieve, then boil in a pan until cooked, drain and serve.



The recipe is very flexible, so many of the additional spices may be omitted!
Vegetarian option: gradually add 2-4 tablespoons of plain yoghurt.
Meat can also be added: brown first, then add after the onions and cook until tender – check meat is well cooked before serving!

Thanks to Jacqueline Sharland for her authentic curry recipe.

If you have a vegetarian recipe you could photograph and share, please email Isabel Wright: wrightisabel@yahoo.co.uk



Firrhill News

May 2019

Produced by the Parent Council

Follow on Twitter @FirrhillPE @HarmenyAC

Finlay's Running Success

Finlay Ross S2 is a member of Harmeny Athletic Club. He has recently returned from competing at the Scottish International Athletics Board International XC Championships in Dublin. This competition took the top eight runners from Scotland, Ireland, England and Wales. Finlay was delighted to be part of the UK team, which took home the silver medal.

The weekend in Dublin followed further recent wins for Finlay, including:

- 23 February: Finlay won the U13 boys at Lindsays National XC championships in Falkirk.
- 2 March: he won the Scottish Schools XC at Hopetoun House.
- 17 March: he won in the U13 category of the Young Athlete Road Races at Ingliston.

Any pupil interested in athletics – running, jumping or throwing, should contact harmenysec@gmail.com for further information (spaces are available).



Congratulations to Finlay on these great wins! We wish him every success in future competitions.





Produced by the Parent Council

Firrhill News

May 2019

The Environment Group

The Environment Group is one of the Parent Council's working groups. Its current aims are:

- to help the school with its Eco School's Green Flag award;
- to help the school to promote safe cycling among pupils and to achieve the Cycle Friendly Secondary School Award;
- to initiate interdisciplinary learning projects within the school relating to the environment.

Each year the Environment Group achieves a lot! It produces the *Firrhill News* each month (originally called the *Environment Group News*), which aims to record the eco work done by the school. In November we helped Firrhill achieve its second Eco School's Green Flag award. In February we helped the school become a Cycle Friendly Secondary School. It helped the school to work towards the Gold: Rights Respecting Award.

Activities include: gardening – weeding and planting and general care of the three gardens created by the group:

- Pond Garden – located by the green house.
- Anne Frank Garden – in autumn we planted a crab-apple tree in memory of Otto Frank (including a plaque) and repaired the Anne Frank tree's plaque.
- The Celebration Garden was created when Firrhill celebrated its 50th anniversary – a protective stainless-steel topper was added to the "50 trees" sculpture.
- Taking part in the Urban Pollinator project by creating an **annual meadow** (at the rear of the school) – now needing some attention and would ideally be made into a perennial meadow in a new location – any volunteers?
- Planting four **wooden planters** by the school main entrance and three **metal planters** in the community by Colinton Mains shops – funded by the Pentlands Neighbourhood Group Community Grant Fund, with a contribution by the Parent Council paying for the large planter by the school and some compost and mulch.

In the school grounds we **feed the birds** and provide **nest boxes** (which ideally, should be cleaned and emptied each year). We sell plants and **hyacinth bulbs** (planted in pots by pupils) at the Xmas concert and Xmas Market, to raise funds for eco work. We have obtained six **picnic tables**, all situated by the main entrance, funded by the PTA and Parent Council. We helped organise litter posters to be drawn by PSE classes for an **anti-litter campaign**, and these posters along with some **anti-smoking** posters were printed and laminated then displayed in every classroom in the school and on the plasma TV screen.

We helped the school take part in, and work towards gaining the **Cycle Friendly Secondary School Award**, which was achieved in February 2019. The initial assessment took place in December 2017. Part of this work was helping to update the school's **Travel Plan**, meeting pupils and the Road Safety and Active Travel Liaison Officer, followed by the school taking part in pupil and staff travel surveys. The analysed results form the basis of the updated plan, with action points, that when implemented, will lead to increased **active travel**, local road improvements and reduced litter and graffiti in the local area.

We organised a free outing to the film *Divided* and the school took part in the Adventure Syndicate's "**Match the Miles**" challenge. It came 5th out of 10 participating schools gaining, the reward of a free showing of the film *Divided*. A free "**Learner Driver Bike Aware**" course was organised for S6 pupils, and our Pupil Cycle Champions were accompanied on a **training day** in Glasgow. Cycle Trainer and Cycle Ride Leader qualifications were obtained by two group members who helped with Bonaly Primary School's transition cycle ride. Three types of **cycling careers** were represented at the Job Fair. A new "**park smart**" sign is displayed at the vehicular entrance to gym. The school **bike sheds were repaired** and integral keypad locks fitted. Funding has been granted from Cycling Scotland's Development fund for **lockers for cyclists**. The Parent Council has funded a **RUTS mountain bike course**, some additional lockers for cyclists and a "Dr Bike" session. Some of the school's sponsored walk money will provide tools and bike-related fun events for the new **bike club**. The school takes part in the annual national "**hands up**" travel survey.

Other eco work in the school includes: buying a quach to be a new **Environment Award** which will be presented at the Celebration of Achievement; reintroducing the "**Eco book of the month**"; **litter picks** (now embedded in the curriculum); **waste minimisation** – recycling of plastic, reduced energy use, the new **Rag Bag textile and shoe recycling unit** at the rear of the school; our six-monthly **book swap / give-away events**; and **Vision Aid Overseas glasses/sunglasses collections** (plus reuse of glasses cases). We have also helped with the PTA pop-up thrift shop.

This work has all been possible due to **parent volunteers!** Several Parent Council members will be leaving in 2019, as their children leave school. To continue/develop this fantastic eco work, **new helpers are needed**. If you could help the Environment Group with even a single task from this list, or for more information please contact carolyn.hargest@btconnect.com





Produced by the Parent Council

Firrhill News

May 2019

Follow on Twitter @FirrhillArts

Resonate Concerts



The annual series of Resonate concerts – now in the seventh year of the partnership between the City of Edinburgh Council’s Instrumental Services (IMS), Youth Music Initiative (YMI) and Queen’s Hall – took place on 14-28 March. Many Firrhill pupils performed in these concerts – some Firrhill pupils from the Edinburgh Schools’ Wind Ensemble (directed by Graeme Hodge) are pictured backstage here (photo left, and below). Unfortunately, no photography is permitted during the concerts. Pupils rehearse every week prior to the concert, and the standard of performance is extremely high.



Firrhill’s Soul Band (photo right) also gave a fabulous performance in the Resonate concert series.

Thanks to our IMS teachers, and well done to all the talented pupils who took part!

PTA Quiz Night

Please put this date in your diary for a great night out!

Firrhill PTA Fundraising



QUIZ NIGHT

When?

Friday May 3rd 2019 at 7:30pm

Where?

**Colinton Bowling Club
(Redford Road)**

How much?

**Tickets £12 each
including baked potato supper**

prepared by MacKenzies

How do I get a ticket?

Email: ruth_gebbie@yahoo.co.uk



Trampoline Success

Tom Sorenson, a member of Flyers Trampoline Club, took part in the Scottish Gymnastics Championships in March, achieving gold in trampoline and qualifying for the British team.



Follow on Twitter @FirrhillPE



Well done, Tom Sorenson, for qualifying for the British team!

Reagan Pine		Banchory Trampoline		DMT Cl
7.6	7.9	7.5	7.9	9.6
		Total		25.10
				49.75
				3
1	Thomas Sorenson	Flyers TC	26.95 27.15	54.10
2	Finlay Brooks	Tiggers TC	26.20 26.30	52.50
3	Reagan Pine	Banchory Trampoline	24.65 25.10	49.75
4	Ruaridh Davidson	Dundee Uni TC	23.15 24.10	47.25





Firrhill News

Produced by the Parent Council

May 2019

Follow on Twitter @FirrhillArts

Band Night

The annual Band Night concert took place on Tuesday 26 March. This event featured many of the school bands: the Senior Wind Band, Junior Wind Band, Soul Band, Big Band, Jazz Octet and Ceilidh Band. It was a great event!

Thanks to Chris Small who took these photos of the concert.

If any parent/carer can provide photographs of school events for possible inclusion in *Firrhill News*, please email:

wrightisabel@yahoo.co.uk

Thanks very much to Carolyn Hargest, Environment Group leader, for all her time effort, often providing both text and photographs, of many school events, for articles in *Firrhill News*.



Thanks to Firrhill's Instrumental Music Services staff and music department teachers for organising this excellent concert. Well done to all those who took part!

The music included:

Junior Band: a mix of John William music, theme from *Peter Gunn*; Senior Band: theme from *The Simpsons*, *Georgia*, medley from *The Greatest Showman*; Big Band: *Smells like Teen Spirit* by Nirvana; Ceilidh Band: repertoire included *Caledonia*; String Ensemble: *Bohemian Rhapsody*; Percussion Ensemble: *Penguin Café*.

