

Newsletter –March/April 2022

Welcome to our latest newsletter. The run up to the Easter break was fairly intense as our teaching staff prepared all of our senior pupils for the impending SQA exams. It is yet another example of moving towards a greater sense of normality, after having had no SQA exams in 2020 and 2021. This is most welcome. Going forward we are hoping to start organising more school trips at home and overseas for next year as coronavirus recedes.

In this edition of the newsletter we will update all parent/carers on:

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Appointment of new staff

The month of March was very busy appointing new staff, who have either just joined us or will be starting with us in August. The following appointments have been made:

- **Technical technician** – Mr Ferguson started with us in April.
- **Senior technician** – Mrs Reid started with us in April.
- **Biology** – Ms Shirlaw, our current NQT, was successful at interview and will join us as a permanent member of staff in August.
- **Design Technology** – Ms Gaskin, our current NQT, was successful at interview and will join us as a permanent member of staff in August.
- **Heath Food Technology** – Ms Ross, our current NQT, was successful at interview and will join us as a permanent member of staff in August.
- **Mathematics** – Ms Malcom will join us from Clydebanks High School on a permanent basis on Monday 16 May and Mr Truesdale, our current NQT, will join us as a permanent member of staff in August.
- **PE** – Ms McNicol will join us in August from Robert Burns Academy in East Ayrshire as a permanent member of staff in August.
- **Support for Pupils** – Mr Bradley, who has been a temporary member of staff with us this year was successful at interview and is now a permanent member of staff.

We still have some long-term temporary positions to fill to cover for staff who are going on maternity leave and these will be advertised soon with a view to getting people in post for August.

SQA

Our S4-6 pupils are now on study leave. For some of our S4 and S5 and all of our S6 pupils Friday 29 April was their last formal day as a pupil attending classes within the school. The day was a lovely day with the pupils getting their shirt signed; taking photos; chatting with their teachers and saying their goodbyes. The pupils conducted themselves in an exemplary manner and I could not have been more proud of them. The current S6 have been a lovely year group and it was appropriate that their last day should be one of celebration and happiness.

We are now in the middle of the SQA exams. As a school we feel we have prepared our senior phase pupils very well for the exam diet. All pupils and parents/carers have been made aware of the final estimates for pupils in subjects for their SQA exams. As I have said to all S4-6 at assemblies, as a school traditionally our pupils exceed their SQA estimates so there is still time to improve upon their estimate if they feel that they can do so.

This year the system is different and more akin to the system from many years ago with appeals. The appeals system was abolished about 9-10 years ago and replaced with a system called marker review. In my view this was a mistake but the appeals system is being used this year. This means if a young person under-performs relative to what we feel they are capable of, we can send 'demonstrable evidence' to support an appeal. This does not necessarily mean that there will be an upgrade but it does give schools an opportunity to provide 'alternative evidence' to support an appeal e.g. evidence from assessments carried out across the session. Further details of the system being used can be accessed via the SQA website.

COVID Update

From Monday 1 May the approach to COVID has changed. I sent a letter out to all parents/carers on 1 May from Professor Jason Leitch outlining these changes. It is worth noting that the issue of testing will cease and this can be problematic as people will be unsure whether or not they have COVID or some other virus. This means there is a possibility that people will feel well and want to return to school but can still be positive. In some senses this is similar to those who have been asymptomatic with the virus. The guiding principle is that people should not return if they have a high temperature and when they do they should wear a face covering and seek to socially distance themselves from others where they can, though it is recognised that this can be challenging in a school context.

As a school we will no longer be recording pupil and staff absence using a specific COVID code as has been the case over the past year or so.

Proposed new school

On Friday 1 April I had a Teams call with various partners who would be involved in the design and building of a new school. This included:

- Representatives from East Dunbartonshire Council's Education and Major Assets teams.
- Representatives from **McLaughlin and Harvey**, construction specialists.
- Representatives from **Holmes Miller**, architects.
- Representatives from **The Learning Crowd**, education design consultants.

The purpose of this initial meeting was to begin to scope out some ideas and suggestions for possible inclusion in any new school build. This was followed up with face-to-face meetings in the school on Thursday 28 April with the following groups of people:

- The school's senior leadership team
- Principal teachers of curriculum
- Principal teachers of guidance & support for pupils
- A focus group of pupils from S1-6.
- Teaching and support staff
- Members of the parent council

The nature of these meetings was to give a presentation on what the possibilities could be in a new school and to hear the perspectives of different stakeholders in the process. It was made clear that this was merely the beginning of a process and that there would be lots of meetings in the months and years to come.

As part of the process three of the DHTs in the school accompanied me on a site visit to the new Boclair Academy, which is scheduled to open in August 2022. Whilst it is in many ways still a building site, it allowed us to see some possible options in reality rather than as a design or drawing. We will also be visiting other schools that have been completed and have been open for a while e.g. I will be visiting Harris Academy in Dundee which is a school of equivalent size to our school. There will no doubt be other visits by various people over the coming months to see what the possibilities are.

To date there has been no confirmation of a site for the new school. This will go to council in due course and thereafter the council will engage in the planning process before work on the construction of any new build takes place.

New Timetable

Our new timetable is scheduled to start on **Monday 6 June**. Our new S5 and S6 pupils will be given a date to come in and collect their timetables nearer the time and details will be put on their Teams pages in due course.

I hope you enjoy the rest of the newsletter, in particular the outstanding achievements of many of our young people who continue to bring huge credit and recognition to the school through individual and team endeavours. Well done to all of them!.

Parental Engagement - We believe in you

As part of our ongoing initiative to promote and celebrate our school values, we have created a mural, on display at the stairs in the school front foyer. This mural distils our aims, vision and values to a simple and positive message - 'WE BELIEVE IN YOU' a message that we will be championing amongst all members of our school community to ensure that we are both ambitious and inclusive in everything that we do. Thanks go to both Mrs Campbell and Mr McEwan for leading these initiatives, as well as all the other staff and pupils that have been involved in the creative process. To support this we are launching a video that reinforces this message. Look out for this at next sessions prize giving and on the school YouTube channel!



Communications

The Parental Engagement team have been working hard throughout the year to update the way we as a school engage with you as parents and guardians. During the month of March the Parental Engagement committee organised and hosted two focus groups with parents of the school, relating to communication with home. This was supplementary to the parent survey offered and completed by two hundred parents of the school.

The combination of quantitative and qualitative parental feedback regarding communication will allow the school workstream to take stock of our methods of communication, with a view to streamlining our delivery of information. We will keep you up to date of changes made following feedback.

Can I thank all parents who responded to the survey, and particularly those who gave up their time to contribute to the focus groups. Your feedback is much appreciated.

Celebrating Pupil Success

Scottish Schools Cross Country

On Thursday 3 March 8 pupils represented Lenzie Academy at the Scottish Schools Cross Country Championships at Hopetoun House. Approximately 1600 pupils took part representing schools from all over Scotland.

I am delighted to report the following achievements of our pupils



In the Girls under 14 race, Skye S placed 33rd out of 308 competitors.

In the Boys under 14 race, Angus F placed 11th, Alex MacI placed 85th and Ruaraidh B placed 142nd.

In the Boys 14-15 race, Archie W placed 18th and Angus M placed 7th and as such he has been selected to represent Scottish Schools in the International cross-country team race in Wales, a fantastic achievement.

In the Girls 15-17 race, Olivia M placed 46th which is excellent considering she is not turning 15 until the summer.

In the Boys 15-17 race, Crawford S placed 10th, just missing out on qualifying for consideration for the International team race.



Congratulations on these fantastic achievements.

Celtic youth football

Finlay H in S3 is part of Celtic's youth setup and has been invited along to the Oriam centre in Edinburgh for Scotland under 16's trials. This is a tremendous achievement even just to reach this stage.

ED Basketball

The East Dunbartonshire S1 3v3 basketball tournament took place on 16 March. I am delighted to inform you that the Lenzie teams finished in 1st, 2nd and 8th place.

The winning team consisted of Ruairidh B, Elliot C and Lucas D. Congratulate to everyone who took part.



Lenzie Hockey

On Monday 28 March the Lenzie Hockey Club had their first match since the club restarted after Covid. They played against a team from Douglas Academy, and I am delighted to report that Lenzie Academy won 8-2!

It was a fantastic team performance with everyone playing to their best ability

Congratulations on their first win as a team.



S1: Samuel B, Alex F, Alistair B

S2: Harneet K, Xander C Angus M

S4: Oliver B, Ilana M, Kyle F, Arran D, Gregor S, Cameron B, Adam C

Girls Rugby



Congratulations to Zoe P and Lucy R who both competed in the winning teams at the Girls Rugby Scottish Cup on Sunday 27 March at Murrayfield.

Zoe was competing at u16 level and Lucy u18. Congratulations to both girls

S1 Football Academy

Lenzie Academy PE department launched their S1 Football Academy in April, funded by McLaughlin & Harvey Construction Ltd. Pupils take part in a weekly morning football session (Tuesday 7.45am – 8.30am) coached by 1st Touch Football Ltd. Pupils then have a healthy breakfast provided by our own Health and Food Technology department.



Ruaraidh of S1 said “The first sessions were very fun and engaging and helped me to develop my football skills. It was also great to stuff my face with healthy food before period 1! Thanks to everyone who helped organise this club”

Fundraising

£2250 Raised for DEC’s Ukraine Appeal by Fantastic Fundraising Efforts



Through various different events and activities throughout the week beginning Monday the 21st of March, a superb total of £2250 has been raised throughout Lenzie Academy for the Disasters Emergency Committee. This will support their vital work in the current humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, who are “In Ukraine and in neighbouring countries providing food, water, shelter and medical assistance,” for the many refugees that are sadly in dire need of such aid. Pupils and staff have been getting involved in various activities and events, such as a dress down day in the Ukrainian colours on Friday the 25th, a bake sale and guess the teddy bears birthday. Such activities were organised by the Captaincy team with the help of staff. Also of particular note was the astounding sum of £600 raised by the National 5 retail class who sold hand-made Easter hampers, aided by the kind donation of Easter eggs by the Lenzie Co-op and decorations gifted by staff and their family members.

Pupil Equity Funding – Supports for pupils

Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) is additional funding from the Scottish Government allocated directly to schools and targeted at closing the attainment gap. This funding aims to ensure that all young people have equal access to educational opportunities. Funding can be used at the discretion of the school to provide targeted support for young people within the Broad General Education (S1-S3) who are living in SIMD areas 1-4.

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is a tool the Scottish Government use to identify the geographical areas in Scotland where people are most likely to experience disadvantage across different aspects of their lives including income, employment, health, education, access to services, crime and housing. It is important to note that SIMD ranking is based on geographical postcode and thus identifies deprived areas, not people.

Lenzie Academy has used some of this additional funding to purchase uniform items, stationery/organisational materials and hygiene products. There is a QR code outside of the upper and lower offices in the school. Pupils can scan this code and it will take them to a Microsoft Form that they can complete if they require any of these materials. Materials will then be issued discreetly to pupils where appropriate. Whilst these materials are primarily there for S1-S3 pupils living in SIMD areas 1-4, we appreciate the current economic climate is challenging for many families. Your child should speak to their Guidance Teacher in the first instance if any additional supports are required and we will try to accommodate this where possible.

We would also like to appeal to all of our school leavers who may have school resources that remain in good condition but are no longer required, and could be donated to provide support for younger pupils. We would particularly appreciate school blazers and scientific calculators. Other resources which would be helpful are study materials (textbooks/revision guides) and stationery materials (notepads, folders, etc.). Any resources can be handed in to the school office.

If you'd like more information on PEF or SIMD, please see the relevant section of the school website - <http://www.lenzieacademy.e-dunbarton.sch.uk/school-info/pupil-equity/> or contact Miss Provan – office@lenzieacademy.e-dunbarton.sch.uk

Pupil Zone

The Maths department have recently launched Pupil Zone, an online learning resource available through Glow. This gives pupils access to a carefully curated bank of resources and notes, tailored to how courses are taught within Lenzie Academy. Currently the Higher course and selected National 5 resources are available and we will be working to continually grow the courses available over the coming months.



While this is a project that is in the early stages of development, it has already proven to be a highly valued and well used resource for pupils working towards SQA exams; we've had nearly 4500 hits in the last month. Pupil Zone can be accessed through the tile on the school launch pad when pupils log on to their Glow account.

PE Sponsorship

The PE department asked local businesses and parents if they would be interested in providing sponsorship money to help support some of our many extra-curricular activities. The cost of strips and additional sporting equipment relies on regular sponsorship or fundraising as these costs cannot be covered by educational budgets.

We were delighted with the response, and the PE department and the pupils would like to publicly thank all our sponsors for the funds they provided.

We have been fortunate to be able to replace all our school football strips. This has allowed us to create a unique Lenzie Academy strip where all teams will wear the same design in school colours.

Football strips were funded by:

S1 - Sims Property Consultants	
S2 – FEM Building Design	
S3 – Brewin Dolphin Financial Advice	
S4 – Lenzie Academy's Parent Teacher Association	
S5/6 - McLaughlin and Harvey Construction Ltd	



Many of our sponsors have a personal connection to Lenzie Academy and recognise the wider benefits of being part of a school sport team. They appreciate the value team sports have on an individual's physical and mental wellbeing, but also how it can help prepare young people for the world of work. Sport can help you learn how to individually shape and influence outcomes as part of a team and understand the importance each person can have in contributing to shared goals!



In addition to football kit, the PE department have purchased some new equipment for our School of Rugby thanks to funds donated by Kelvin Valley Turf



And finally we have been very fortunate to have a Concept2 rowing machine donated to our fitness area. Mr Steventon (parent) wished that when he was at school, someone had sat him down on a rowing machine. He found out at 40 that he was good at rowing and often wondered whether this was a chance missed. He now teaches people how to row through online workouts on YouTube, (www.rowalong.com). He decided to donate a Concept2 rowing machine to Lenzie Academy as it's a fantastic way for pupils to enjoy and discover an aptitude for rowing. Hopefully, a star rower who otherwise would have been missed will begin their journey because of this!



Developing the Young Workforce update

Scottish Apprenticeship Week – 7-11 March 2022



In March, Lenzie Academy provided opportunities for pupils interested in pursuing an apprenticeship after they leave school to find out more about the various apprenticeship routes, as part of Scottish Apprenticeship Week (SAW). Virtual sessions were hosted from various employers throughout the week. Pupils from S4-6 used their PSE lessons to sign up to an event of their choosing. Based on Labour Market Information (LMI) industries were chosen that represent the interests of pupils and the industries that will dominate the employment market in the future. This included a session from the SSERC, who are an education service specialising in apprenticeships in STEM industries. CGI – one of the world's largest IT and business consultancy firms also delivered a session on apprenticeships in digital technologies. Energy solutions company Drax delivered a session, where they discussed the future of Net Zero Energy. For those interested in childcare and early years, the Glasgow based Tree House Nursery delivered a session, where pupils heard directly from a current apprentice as he shared his experiences.



If you wish to see the show reel from some of the other industries on offer, please visit <https://www.apprenticeships.scot/scottish-apprenticeship-week/>

If your child is interested in an apprenticeship in the future, they should visit <https://www.apprenticeships.scot/> for information on Foundation, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships. Apprenticeships are a very valuable and increasingly popular career route for school leavers.

Tell your child to keep an eye on their year group Teams page, school website homepage and Twitter for updates on apprenticeship and job opportunities.

****If you or someone you know works for a local enterprise that can offer employer engagement with young people (this can be career talks, workshops, application and interview advice or work experience) please get in touch with Ms Byres. It is always helpful to have as many employer links as possible to widen the scope of opportunities for our young people!***

Coming up S4 & S5

During exam leave, S4 and S5 pupils with two exams or less will be given enhanced provision in school. Part of this will cover DYW and preparing for their future. This will include virtual workshops from InvestIN and McLaughlin & Harvey construction as well as learning how to lay out a CV, cover letter, personal statement and preparing for interview. We hope this will be a valuable input for our young people, many of whom will be looking to leave school over the next year.

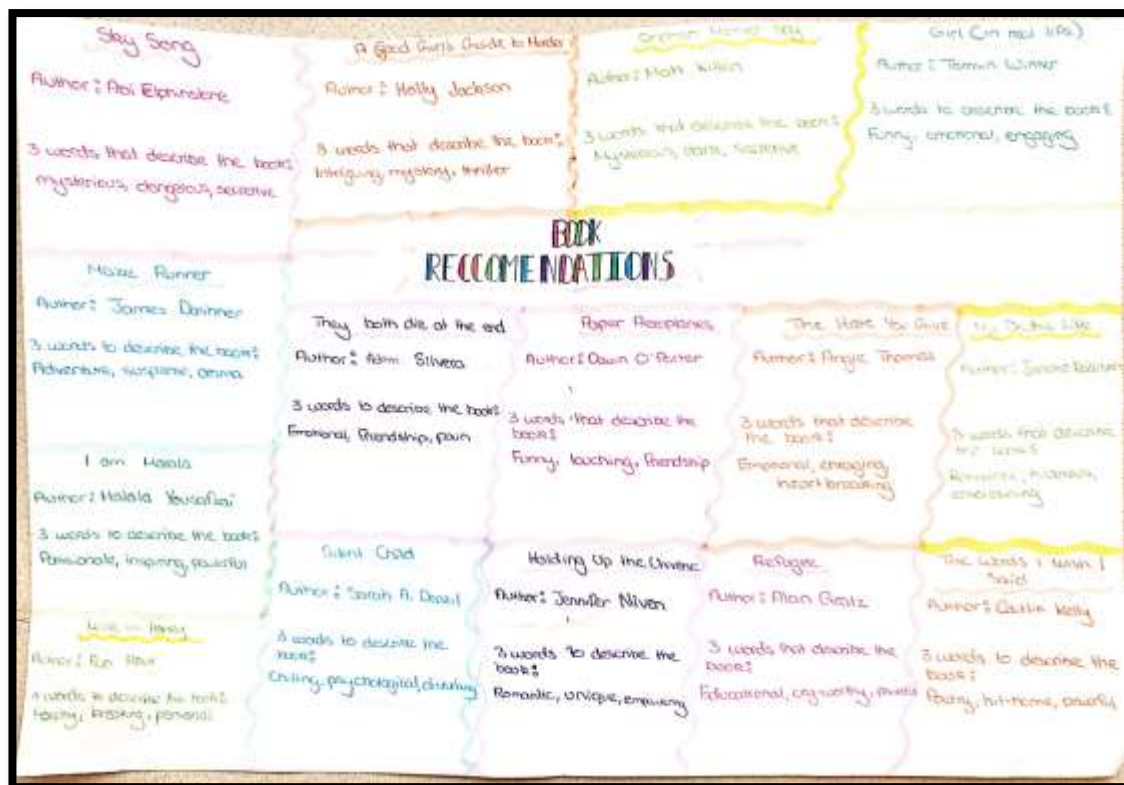
S3 Elective

As you may be aware, after S3 pupils make their option choices, they will take an elective in the place of their dropped subjects. This year we are offering an elective focusing on DYW and Skills for the Future. For many pupils, this will give them an early opportunity to learn how to construct a CV, cover letter or job application and build up their profile on My World of Work. InvestIN will also deliver virtual sessions on employability skills, time management and impressing at interview.

We hope all pupils will get a lot out of these sessions.

Reading Schools

Lenzie Academy is making final preparations for Reading Schools accreditation - a national programme organised by Scottish Book Trust. A group of our S3 pupils has created a book recommendation poster to help show more staff, parents, and pupils some of the books that have been particularly popular with teenage readers recently. The pupils have summed up each book in three words to make it an easy reference poster!



Youth Achievement Awards and Wider Achievement

Wider Achievement at Lenzie Academy is an area where our school values are addressed in many ways. Working together, Mrs Davidson the Principal Teacher of Wider Achievement and Caroline Shirreffs our Youth Worker encourage as many pupils as possible to “work with others and for others” which is our school’s commitment to the #iwill pledge.

Platinum Youth Achievement Award – Emily Giffen

One of last year’s school captaincy team has just been awarded Youth Scotland’s Platinum Youth Achievement Award. She had been working on this Level 7 award from the age of 16 but the completion and submission of the folio was delayed due to the pandemic. Emily is the first young person in an East Dunbartonshire school to achieve this award. It required 30 hours of training and 60 hours of volunteering, leading other young people. Emily did not let neither her dyslexia nor Covid hold her back making great use of her ICT skills both in training and with online youth work. She organised her presentation in her own garden with a socially distanced audience which she videoed as evidence and edited all parts of her folio with Caroline’s online help from Aberdeen University where she is currently studying. Youth Scotland has recognised that Emily’s folio of evidence is an excellent example of good practice.



Dynamic Youth Awards are the entry level youth award that a number of different groups of pupils are in the process of working towards during May. DYAs have one challenge which we are using to develop skills for learning life and work. Each pupil must identify up to 4 individual targets and then create a folio of evidence to demonstrate their progress. Achievement of a DYA may lead to a Bronze Youth Achievement award and ultimately to a Platinum Youth Achievement Award like Emily.

Easter Eggstravaganza

This was a follow on from the Support for Learning 'Teenage Treats' at Christmas campaign. It was a collection of Easter eggs and treats that were collected and donated to our Local Foodbank and Women's Aid. It was a massive success thanks to all of our pupils, families and staff. Both charities were delighted, and Women's Aid advised that they had an upcoming family Easter party and would use the donated goods for this. Thanks to all who helped make this such a success.

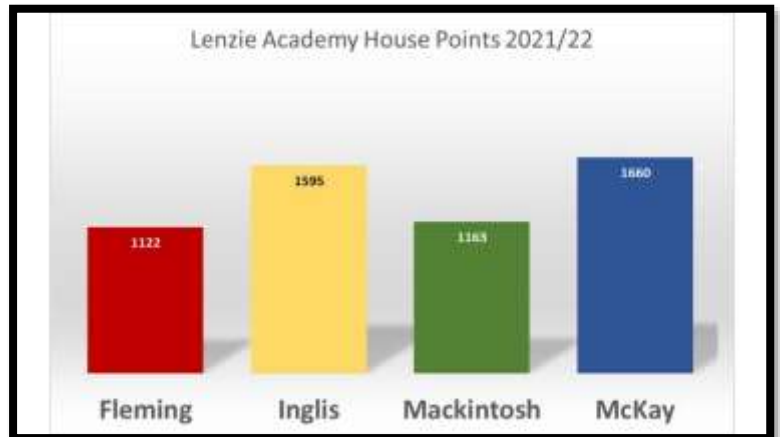


House Update

Throughout the session, pupils have been taking part in a range of House activities, trying to gain valuable points which count towards winning the House cup at the end of the year.

Mr. McKenzie has been keeping us updated with the scores and the winning House has changed often over the course of the year. Pupils (and staff) are always keen to find out how their house is doing.

Just last term we had two Inter-house Bake-Off Events (one in the BGE; the other in the Senior Phase), the February Fitness Challenge in PE, our monthly S1 competition and the regular update on merits awarded to pupils for continuous hard work, exceptional effort or completing an outstanding piece of work.



The next big event will be the **Inter-House Challenge Week** which will run from Monday 9th - Friday 13th May. Pupils will get the chance to represent their house in a variety of ways - taking part in class activities/competitions/a range of events. Some events will be during class time over a period of two; others will involve the whole year group competing in events in the assembly hall or on The Bridge.

More information about the week, the activities involved and which year groups will be participating will be issued via Teams, during PSE classes and at assemblies. But to give you a flavour of some of what is happening.....there will be inter-house football, rugby, hockey and basketball, "Ready, Steady Cook", sustainability and renewable energy activities, a selfie treasure hunt, a Maths challenge for S1 and a Stock Market challenge for S2.

Good luck to everyone who is competing - and may the best House win!!

[PTA House Colour Raffle](#)

Pupils, families, and staff kindly donated hamper items matching their house colours to be entered into the raffle. Thank you to the PTA for all of their help with this.

The total points for each house were:

Inglis - 84
Fleming - 54
MacKay - 45
Mackintosh - 25

The winners were:

1st place - Alice O - 5MK2 - received a 15 item prize
2nd place - Mya G - 4FL2 - received 10 item prize
3rd place - Ruby B - 5IG2 - received 5 item prize

Mental Health Awareness Week

This year we will be celebrating 'Mental Health Awareness Week' from the 13th to the 20th of May. Mental Health Awareness week started 21 years ago and each year has a different theme. The theme for this year's event is 'Loneliness'. The week will focus on raising awareness of the impact of loneliness on mental wellbeing particularly in light of people's experiences during lockdown. Research has found that during the lockdowns loneliness was 3 times that of pre-pandemic levels. A group of S3 students including; Amy H, Matthew MacP, India S, Ria P, Maya P, Elizabeth T, Ailsa C, Hope McK, Melissa T and Olivia O'H, are organising a range of events including a quiz, a worry box and wellbeing sessions to mark this important occasion.

Parents Portal

Reminder that Parents Portal is now live! Many of our parents have signed up to East Dunbartonshire Council's new way schools and families communicate with each other through the new online service called **parentsportal.scot**. It's an online portal designed to be a one-stop shop for a number of school-related activities and will create a new digital relationship between you and us. This exciting development is intended to make communicating with one another easier and more efficient.

We have now added the ability to view reports for Senior Phase pupils. With more services to be added in the future, here are just some of the other things it will help you do: make online payments (cashless catering), report an absence, view your child's attendance and timetable, look at our twitter feed, update your contact details and get latest news from us.

You can access the new Parents Portal via the Scottish Government's secure online account called **myaccount**. There is more information and FAQs on the **school website** and on the **Council website** too.