

## Trinity Learning Community Digital Festival

*On Friday 6 February, Victoria Primary School hosted a Digital Learning Festival. Teaching staff from the Trinity Learning Community came together for an afternoon of inspirational workshops which showcased the ways digital was being used to underpin learning and teaching.*

Workshops were led by teachers from the learning community schools alongside Edinburgh Learns Development Officers. Workshops were based around highly effective digital practice, offering a range of ways to use digital to enhance learning and teaching using digital technologies.

Staff were given time to engage in discussion and share with colleagues

how digital learning was used in their own classroom.

The sessions offered included, using animation in Keynote, Accessibility for All, Creativity with iPads. One of the most popular workshops 'Constructing activities that are learner-led', explored how digital tools can play an essential role in establishing a culture of leadership of learning and high-quality teaching. Christie Whittle from Edinburgh Learns Digital, talked staff through practical digital approaches paired with the Inquiry Learning Cycle. Feedback from the staff was positive. Jennie (P2 teacher at VPS) said it was a useful opportunity to meet other colleagues who are willing to share their experience in a hands on, interactive, fun and engaging manner.

**Yasmeen Naeem**  
**Depute Head Teacher**  
**Victoria Primary School**



**Norry Leonard from Victoria Primary School delivering a session on using iPads creatively**



## Youth Ocean Conference in Paris

In November 2025, six National 5 pupils from Craigroyston Community High, along with pupils from four other Scottish schools, represented Scotland at the prestigious Franco-British Youth Ocean Conference in Paris. The conference, held at the French Development Agency, was a flagship event for France's 'Year of the Sea' and served as a simulation of UN climate negotiations (COP). Working in bilingual teams with French peers, the students stepped into the shoes of global diplomats to debate urgent environmental issues, including:

- \* Plastic pollution in the world's oceans.
- \* Rising sea levels and their impact on coastal communities.
- \* Deep-sea mining and sustainable fisheries management.

The trip was a resounding success, allowing pupils to use their French language skills in real-world diplomatic scenarios while building international friendships. Participants engaged in 'corridor

discussions' to form alliances and deliver opening speeches that outlined their national priorities. This experience provided a unique platform for young leaders to contribute to global climate policy, bridging the gap between classroom learning and international activism. The adventure will continue with the National 5 pupils being Language Leaders for our cluster primaries.

**Sarah Macrae, Acting Curriculum Leader of Modern Languages  
Craigroyston Community High School**



Michelle Amayo, Joy Cikaitoga, Amelia Stacherska, Ayla Aksoy  
Maria Olasek, Vivian Isaac



Our visit to board a Bateau Mouche and see the monuments of Paris by night along the Seine

# St Mary's (Leith) Becomes Star of the Sea

After a thorough community consultation and approval from CEC's Education, Children and Families Committee, St Mary's (Leith) RC Primary School has officially changed its name to Star of the Sea RC Primary School. Star of the Sea is a special title for Mary and strengthens our connection with our parish church – St Mary, Star of the Sea. The name change was also proposed to avoid confusion with St Mary's RC Primary School, another denominational school in Edinburgh.

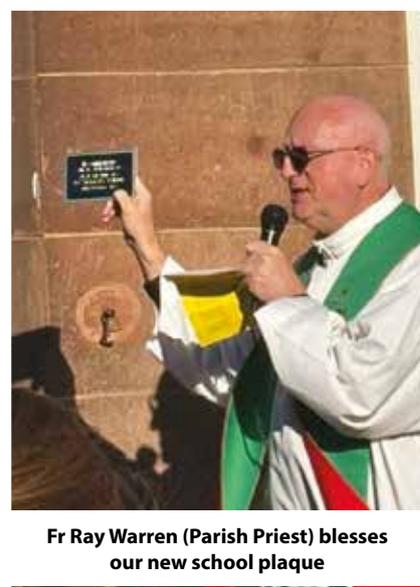
To mark the occasion, we held a celebration day in October. Pupils came to school in party clothes and enjoyed a range of fun activities in class. We also held a re-dedication ceremony, supported by our Parish Priest, Fr Ray Warren, and attended by parents, and the whole school community. During the ceremony we blessed the school with holy oil, sung our new school hymn and presented the inaugural 'Star of the Sea Superstar' award to a pupil who consistently displays our school values. Our new school signs were installed the night before, proudly displaying our new identity.

Although it has taken a little time to get used to the change, our school community has embraced it with enthusiasm.

**Fiona McDonnell, Head Teacher**  
**Star of the Sea RC Primary School**



**Miss McDonnell (HT) presents Leon Cuper (P7a) with the Star of the Sea Superstar Award**



**Fr Ray Warren (Parish Priest) blesses our new school plaque**

## St Mary's (Leith) Becomes Star of the Sea



The school community gathered outside for the re-dedication ceremony



One of our new school signs

## Community Partnership to Support Oracy and Develop Cultural Capital

Prestonfield Primary School has been developing the cultural capital of its learners by hosting its annual Scots poetry recital. This event celebrates language, heritage, and community. The occasion, held in a nearby hotel, provided pupils with an authentic and memorable platform to engage with Scotland's rich literary tradition.

In the lead-up to the recital, learners explored classic and contemporary Scots poems, developing their understanding of dialect, rhythm, and storytelling. Through performance, pupils built confidence, oracy skills, and a deeper appreciation of traditional Scottish culture. For many, standing up to recite poetry in Scots in front of 400 people

was a powerful experience that strengthened their understanding of Scots dialect.

Hosting the recital in the local hotel extended learning beyond the classroom and reinforced the school's strong community links. Families, staff, and community members gathered to support the children, transforming the event into a shared celebration of local culture. The hotel setting added a sense of occasion and demonstrated to pupils that their learning is valued within the wider community.

By blending literacy, heritage, and community partnership, this created an enriching experience that will have a lasting impact on our learners. Children and families were treated like 5-star guests at the hotel with refreshments and a piper to greet them.

**Jenny Hennessy, Head Teacher  
Prestonfield Primary School**

## When Learning Earns a Standing Ovation

*This month, a Film and Screen showcase at the Filmhouse provided a powerful example of how learning, community and creativity can come together in a public space. Young people shared work created as part of the Film and Screen curriculum with families, peers and partners, celebrating progress, agency and achievement beyond the classroom.*

The quality of work on display was exceptional. Across animation, sound production and experimental filmmaking, learners demonstrated creativity, technical skill and confidence. Several pieces stood up as excellent by any standard, including independently produced stop-motion animation and sound production described by partners as being at college level.

One young person shared their views live with the audience and, supported by Speech and Language Therapy, used their Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) device to say they 'felt proud' – a moment that powerfully captured the importance of accessible, inclusive approaches to participation and achievement.

The event created meaningful connections between learners, families and partners, reinforcing a shared sense of belonging and pride. The screening concluded with a well-deserved standing ovation for the young filmmakers, reflecting the impact and quality of the work they shared.

Sincere thanks to colleagues from Screen Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority, Artlink Edinburgh and Speech and Language Therapy, as well as to families who came to celebrate alongside the young people. Events like this are central to building a strong, inclusive learning community.

**Kevin McPhee, Teacher, Film and Screen  
We Matter Team**



**Kevin McPhee**

# Capital Theatres Performances

*In December, we received an offer from Capital Theatres that we simply could not refuse. They were providing free performances of an immersive theatre experience to special schools across the City of Edinburgh, and we were delighted to accept the opportunity for Woodlands.*

The only challenge was finding a venue large enough to accommodate the staging for the production. This is where Currie Community Centre came to our rescue. We contacted Louise Scrivens and the Board of Trustees to ask whether we might hire the theatre space for two days, and thanks to their generosity and support, this exciting opportunity became possible.

As a result, 32 of our pupils were able to experience Brrr – a sensory installation with live performers, specifically designed for learners aged 10+ with complex needs.

Our young people were introduced to the experience by Hayley Earlam, the creator of Brrr, who then led them into the Currie Community Centre theatre space, transformed into a magical winter landscape complete with an inflatable igloo.

Hayley and the performers guided our learners through a wintry world of dance, music and video. There were no spoken words or script, yet the level of engagement and interaction was extraordinary and truly joyful to witness. Our pupils were given the freedom, space and time to explore and enjoy this experience alongside professional dancers and performers, in a way that was meaningful and accessible to them.

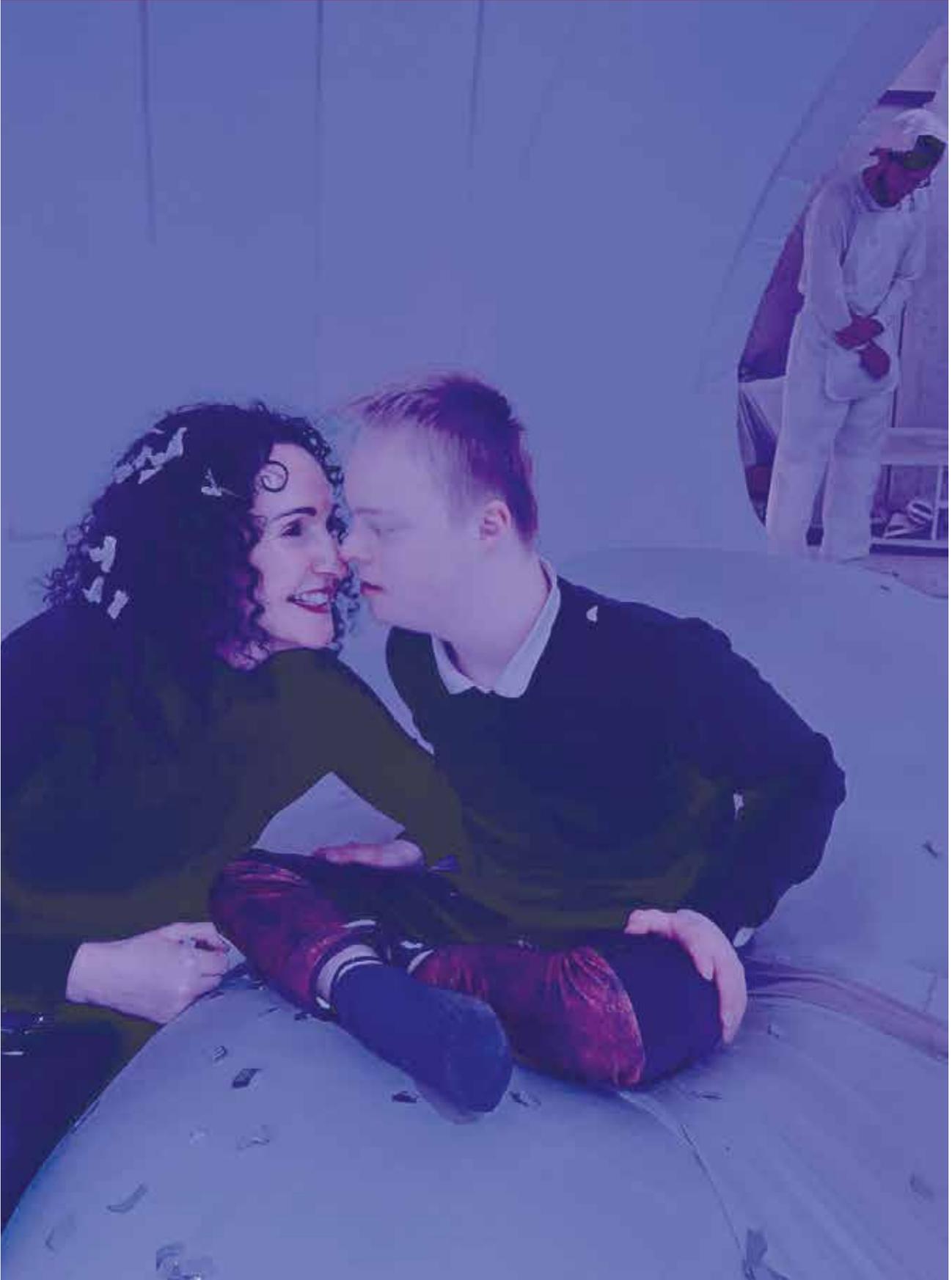
We are immensely grateful to Capital Theatres for offering such a wonderful opportunity, and to Currie Community Centre for so kindly providing the space to make it possible. Being able to access this experience right here in Currie meant a great deal to us and enabled more of our young people to take part.

Our heartfelt thanks go to both Capital Theatres and Currie Community Centre for helping our learners to be part of something so special.

**Rhoda MacDougall**  
**Head Teacher**  
**Woodlands School**

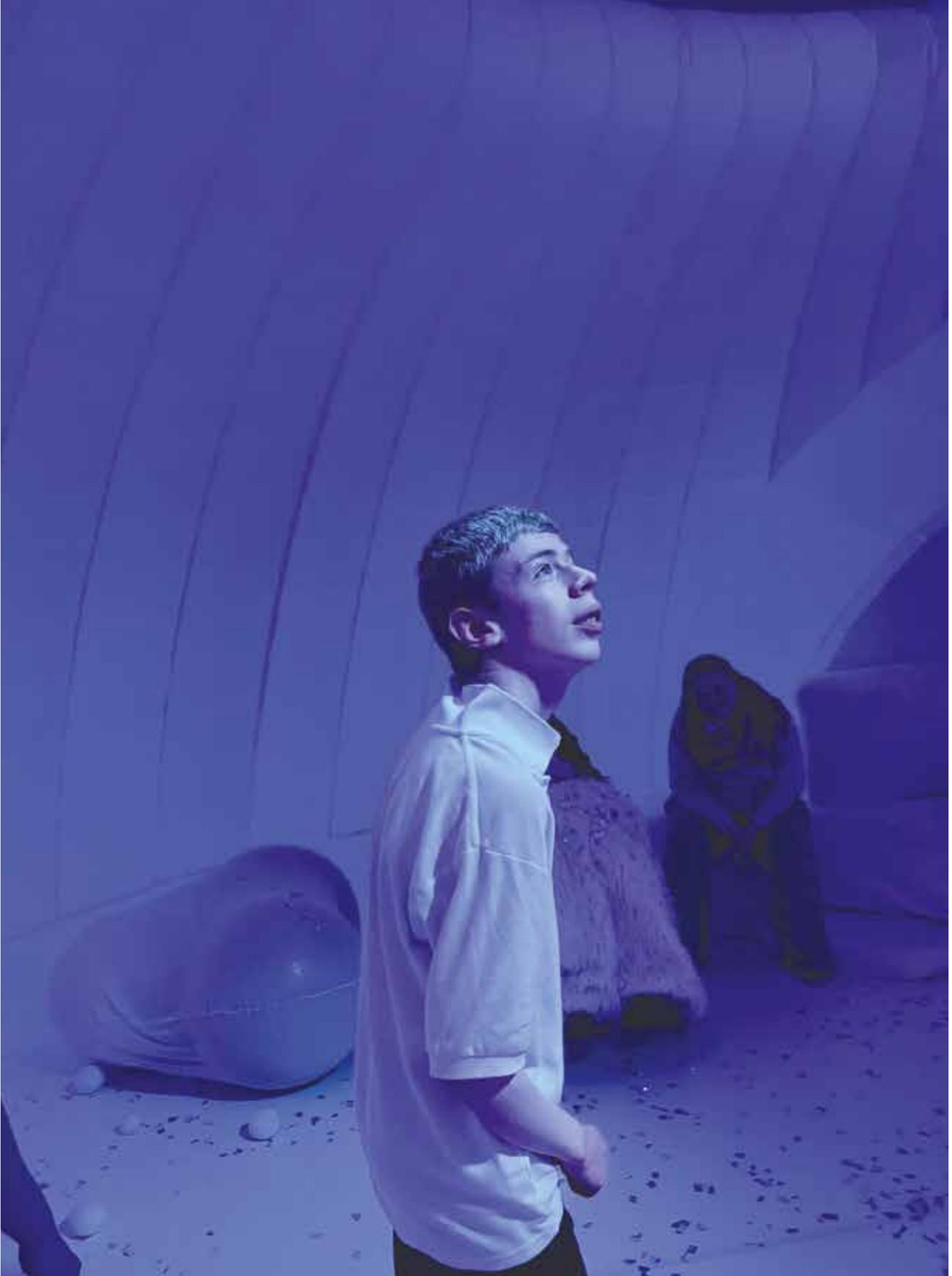


## Capital Theatres Performances



**Miss McGarvey and Sam**

## Capital Theatres Performances



Cameron

# Balerno Learning Community is Golden

*The Balerno Learning Community is celebrating after all four of its schools – Balerno High School, Dean Park Primary School, Ratho Primary School and Kirknewton Primary School – achieved Gold Level Rights Respecting Schools status. Balerno is the first Learning Community in Edinburgh to achieve this across all schools. This is the highest level of recognition awarded by UNICEF UK and exemplifies the strong working relationships and shared vision across the schools.*

The Gold award recognises schools where children's rights are fully embedded across school life. Assessors across the four schools highlighted a strong, shared culture of respect, inclusion and wellbeing, with children confident in understanding their rights and using this knowledge in their daily lives.

Across the learning community, pupils report feeling safe, listened to and valued. Children know that trusted adults will take their views seriously and support their wellbeing, helping them to talk openly about their feelings and access help when needed.

Pupil voice plays a meaningful role in shaping school life, with children influencing decisions about learning, wellbeing and the school environment through councils, leadership groups and pupil-led initiatives. This helps pupils see that their ideas can lead to real and positive change.

Our rights-based approach also strengthens inclusion and equity, fostering empathy, kindness and respect. The accreditation reports highlighted that through learning about local and global issues,



children across the Balerno Learning Community are developing as confident, compassionate global citizens who are empowered to stand up for the rights of others.

This shared achievement reflects a strong commitment across the Balerno Learning Community to ensuring children's rights are recognised, promoted and lived every day.

**Nicola Kurth, Head Teacher  
Dean Park Primary School**



**Ratho RRSA Pupil Group**

## Balerno Learning Community is Golden



Balerno RRSA Pupil Group

At Dean Park Primary School  
all staff, parents and carers are:

# DUTY BEARERS

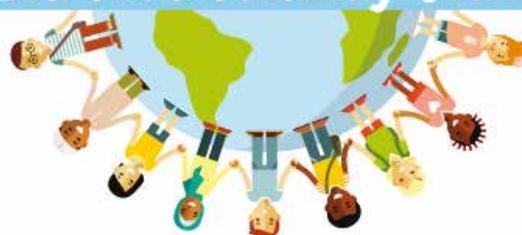
They are accountable for ensuring  
that children experience their rights.

### The ABCDE of Rights

- A Rights are for ALL children (universal)
- B Rights are there at BIRTH (inherent)
- C Rights CANNOT be taken away (inalienable)
- D Rights DO NOT have to be earned (unconditional)
- E All rights are EQUALLY important (indivisible)



Dean Park Primary School



## Seasons for Growth for Parents and Carers

*The Seasons for Growth education programme is well established in many schools across Edinburgh, supporting children and young people dealing with change, loss and grief. Training and support of staff 'Companions' who facilitate the programme is overseen by the Educational Psychology Service (EPS).*

The EPS has been working in partnership with the Parent and Carer Support and Family Wellbeing team, to extend our Season's for Growth offer, piloting delivery of parent and carer workshops across the city. An initial cohort of staff have been trained, and courses are beginning to be rolled out, accessible through schools, learning communities and city-wide.

The Seasons for Growth Parent and Carer Programme aims to help adults better understand and learn the most effective ways to support their children and young people navigate significant life changes, such as death, divorce, or separation. It provides tools to strengthen emotional wellbeing, foster resilience, and improve communication skills, allowing parents and carers to support their children through these challenging times.

For further information or details on future parent and carer courses contact:

[EngagingFamilies@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:EngagingFamilies@edinburgh.gov.uk)

For further information on Seasons for Growth Companion training courses contact EPS:

[Seasonsforgrowth@ea.edin.sch.uk](mailto:Seasonsforgrowth@ea.edin.sch.uk)

**Andrena Graham, Parent and Carer Support Development Officer**

## Wild Scooter Lessons at Prestonfield Primary School

Prestonfield Primary School, a Legacy I Bike Sustrans school, is rolling out a fresh approach to active travel by leading wild scooter lessons in local community green spaces. Working in partnership with Sustrans, PE Teacher, JP Mason has been ensuring pupils are taking their learning beyond the playground and into nearby parks and paths, exploring how to scoot safely and confidently on natural terrain.

A key part of the project has been teaching children how to assess risk. Before each session, pupils helped to identify potential hazards such as uneven ground, loose gravel, slopes and shared paths. This hands-on risk assessment encouraged thoughtful decision-making, awareness of others, and a better understanding of how different surfaces affect movement and control.

Scooters were chosen as an inclusive and practical option. They are often more accessible and significantly cheaper than bikes, making them a realistic alternative for many families. For children who may not yet feel confident cycling, scooters provide a supportive stepping stone into active travel.

Through the wild scooter lessons, pupils developed essential physical skills including balance, coordination and spatial awareness. Just as

importantly, they built confidence, independence and a sense of connection to their local green spaces.

Alongside this work, the school supports families by offering regular free bike maintenance and safety checks (Dr Bike). These sessions help ensure bikes are roadworthy, safe and comfortable to ride, removing practical barriers that can stop families from choosing active travel. By providing simple repairs, tyre checks and safety advice at no cost, JP Mason helps build confidence among parents and carers, making cycling and scooting a more accessible and reliable option for everyday journeys.

**Jenny Hennessy, Head Teacher  
Prestonfield Primary School**



# Edinburgh Schools Strike Gold

*The SportsScotland School Sport Award is a national initiative that helps schools continually improve the quality and quantity of physical education and sport, both within and beyond the curriculum. It also encourages strong partnerships between schools and their wider communities. The award aims to place young people at the centre of decision making, planning and delivery, while supporting schools in ongoing development.*

Schools begin by completing an online self-assessment, which identifies whether they are operating at Bronze, Silver or Gold level. The Gold Award recognises schools that embed high-quality physical education and sport at the heart of their ethos, planning and practice.

Queensferry High School is the latest Edinburgh school to achieve Gold, reflecting its commitment

to physical wellbeing and its strong culture of leadership, participation and personal growth through sport. Having previously earned Gold in 2020, the school has expanded its offer with a wide range of clubs, competitive opportunities and community partnerships. Recent developments include an S1–6 sports committee bringing together Young Ambassadors and Sports Captains to strengthen pupil voice.

Edinburgh's Gold Award schools include Longstone Primary School, Broomhouse Primary School, St David's RC Primary School, St Joseph's RC Primary School, Leith Walk Primary School, Leith Primary School, Canal View Primary School, Abbeyhill Primary School, Carrick Knowe Primary School, Currie Primary School, Prestonfield Primary School, Trinity Academy, Broughton High School, Castlebrae High School, St Augustine's RC High School, Queensferry High School and Pilrig Park School, the city's only SEN school to receive this distinction.

Pictured are staff and pupils from Queensferry HS who took part in the annual Sportathon, organised by pupils on the School Sport Committee with support of the PE Dept, to raise funds for kit, equipment and transport costs for team fixtures.

**Tammy McKinlay, Active Schools Manager (Sport and Physical Activity Unit)**



# Gold RRS Report

*Gracemount Primary School are proud to achieve Gold RRS status, recognised for our sustained and embedded commitment to children's rights across the whole school.*

Our report stated, leaders at all levels demonstrate a strong and visible commitment to children's rights, firmly aligned with the school's vision and values. This is underpinned by high-quality professional learning, ensuring staff confidently and consistently model rights-respecting approaches.

Relationships across the school are characterised by mutual respect and trust, with learning about rights clearly influencing positive interactions and behaviour. Parents highlighted the impact of

rights-based learning, commenting that 'children know they have the right to be heard and to feel safe. They know they can get help if they need it.'

There is a strong culture of inclusivity and respect, understood and articulated by the wider school community. The school's Young Interpreters spoke enthusiastically about sharing their language and culture and spoke of their joy of being 'seen'.

Children actively advocate for themselves and others, becoming pioneers for positive change.

Our achievement was celebrated through a whole-school event, including an extended break time, music and a fitting 'Gold' biscuit bar, acknowledging our collective effort and success.

Looking ahead, pupils are keen to contribute to the regeneration of the Gracemount Community Mansion, ensuring their voices help shape decisions that benefit them, the local community and future generations.

**Pamela Kirkmali, Principal Teacher  
Gracemount Primary School**



Whole school celebration

## Gold RRS Report



Moaz Ibrahim, Jessica Johnson, Rueben Prime, Emily Stewart, Katie Laing, Alex West, Daniel Ramsay Ritchie, Brian Ross



Ibrahim Ali, Devesh Sharma, Joey Duncan, Ross Campbell



## Stockbridge Primary P7 Looks Through a Telescope at Lagganlia 2025

*Last December, in a clear dark sky, P7 pupils from Stockbridge Primary School were playing tig when they were called over to a patch of grass by a man called Scruggs to look through a telescope.*

It was showing the visual effects of shooting stars and shapes made from a nebula. We used the iPad to direct the telescope to a nebula called Pacman. At first, it started off as red dust and then the telescope

generated the full picture of the the multi-coloured nebula by layering the picture once every ten seconds. We were able to see into the places in the galaxy that would take astronauts hundreds of light years to reach. Scruggs also showed us how to recognise a shooting star in the still image and capture an enhanced image of the moon. We want to give praise to Scruggs and all the Lagganlia instructors for giving us such a wonderful and inspiring opportunity to see things we have never seen before.

**Rafe and Lachlan, Pupils  
Stockbridge Primary School**

# P7 go to Lagganlia

*This is such an important trip for P7s all over Scotland. It is an amazing opportunity where you can learn new skills, grow your independence and have lots of fun. P7 at Stockbridge went to Lagganlia on 1 December and it was a once in a lifetime experience.*

We did activities from gorge walking to skiing. It wasn't just the activities that built skills for life, it was also being away from home and learning how to deal with different situations independently. It was not just the activities that were fun and challenging it was also being in a dormitory with your friends.

We learnt new skills such as

- \* Independence
- \* Resilience
- \* Courageousness
- \* Teamwork

Some pupils were ecstatic to go to Lagganlia and some were nervous but everyone faced their fears. This is even more important because of the Scottish residential education bill that makes sure that all children in Scotland get the opportunity to go to a residential camp.

We live in such a beautiful country, full of nature so this experience is even more special for P7 pupils. By the end of the week P7 had fun, tried new experiences and faced their fears.

**Ella Evans**  
**Pupil**  
**Stockbridge Primary School**



## Gold Rights Respecting Schools Award at Buckstone Primary School

*Buckstone Primary School is proud to have achieved the Gold Rights Respecting Schools Award from UNICEF UK – the highest recognition a school can receive. This honour reflects the dedication of our whole school community, especially our pupil-led Equalities Group, who have been central to driving this work.*

Children's rights shape everything we do at Buckstone. Pupils not only learn about their rights but actively practise them through leadership, decision-making, and daily learning. Highlights of our journey include our neuro-inclusion project, new anti-bullying guidance shaped by every class, and our weekly Article of the Week videos for families. We are especially proud of pupil-led events such as our Rights Protest, promoting Article 42, and our Fun 31 afternoons celebrating the right to play.



**Class P4NH alongside their teacher, Gillian Nicholson  
Equalities Lead at Buckstone**

UNICEF praised our strong, strategic approach, noting that rights are embedded in daily planning, interactions, and the school's ethos.

As our pupils said: 'I'm so proud we achieved this amazing award' and 'Being in the equality group means a lot to me... I'm so proud to have Gold.'

We celebrated last term with a pupil-led Fun 31 morning and a whole-school singalong, and we look forward to continuing our journey as a Gold Rights Respecting School.

**Gillian Nicholson, Equalities lead and P7 teacher, Buckstone Primary School**



**William Rogers, Sophie Turner, Zoe Dixon, Hera Shikuku, Lucy Denyer, Ewan Johnston, Arya McGeever, Isla Deeley Iyanu Ashimolowo, Struan Smith, Idris Jones, James Fairfield, Isla Black and teacher, Gillian Nicholson, Equalities Lead at Buckstone**

