

Blackhall Primary School



Head Teacher: Kirsty Martin
(Tel) 0131 336 1023 / admin@blackhall.edin.sch.uk

83 Craigcrook Road
Edinburgh

Friday, 23rd January, 2026



Dear Parents and Carers,

It's been a dreich, grey kind of week and the mud quotient has been quite high. My apologies to washing machines everywhere!

Our children have been keeping things bright, as ever, with lots of singing, poems, dancing and other Scottishness to remember The Bard. Although Rabbie didn't write it himself, I am sure he would have given his blessing to those children who just want a, "dug" or a, "jeely piece". Fun!



Calendar

The table below has an outline for events happening throughout our school year. Please make a note of those relevant to you and your family. Any additions or changes will be made and shared with you as soon as possible.

JANUARY	
Monday, 26th	P6 Girls' Netball Competition at Meadowbank
FEBRUARY	
Monday, 2nd	P6/P7 Wardie Cross Country Race
Friday, 6th Feb	9-10am - Coffee, Chat and Collaborate: Effective Communication
Monday, 9th	P6/P7 Saughton Cross Country Race
Thursday, 12th	P7 School Show at RHS, 7pm.
Monday, 16th – Friday, 20th	FEBRUARY BREAK

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MARCH	
Monday, 16th	P6/P7 Mixed Netball Tournament New Meadowbank
Thursday, 26th	Swimming Gala at the Commonwealth Pool Parent Consultation, 4-7pm
Friday, 27th	Parent Consultation, 1-4pm
APRIL	
Wednesday, 1st April	Parent Carer Council Meeting, 7pm
Thursday, 2nd April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole School to Blackhall St Columba's Parish Church for Spring Assembly (TBC) End of Term
Tuesday, 21st	All return to school
Thursday, 23rd April	Open Afternoon for Parents and Carers – Come in and see the learning!
Week beg 27th	Termly Newsletters home
Monday, 27th	Inverleith Cross Country Race
MAY	
Monday, 4th	MAY DAY HOLIDAY
Tuesday, 5th	No Pupils – Staff INSET
Thursday, 7th (TBC)	Edinburgh Evening News to take P7 class photos
Monday, 18th	VICTORIA DAY HOLIDAY
Tuesday, 19th	Walk to School Week – Sponsored active week at BPS (TBC)
Wednesday, 20th	New P1 Parents and Carers Induction Evening
Friday, 22nd	Sports Day
Friday, 29th	Sports Day – alternative day
Friday, 29th	P5, 6, 7 Reports home by this date

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JUNE	
Monday, 1st	P7 Girls' Netball Competition
Friday, 5th	P2, P3, P4 Reports home by this date
Thursday, 11th - tbc	Parent Carer Council and Parent Staff Association AGM 7-8:30pm
Friday, 12th	"STEaM Ahead in Sports" Event for Parents and Carers
Monday, 15th	P6 Girls' Netball Competition
Tuesday, 16th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P7s to transition day at RHS • New P1 Meet the Teacher Event for new Parents/Carers and children
Wednesday, 17th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P7s to transition day at RHS • New P1 Meet the Teacher Event for new Parents/Carers and children - tbc • New House Captains Hustings
Thursday, 18th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P7s to transition day at RHS
Friday, 19th	P1 Reports – Home by this date
Monday, 22nd	'Blackhall's Got Talent'
Thursday, 25th	END OF TERM OUTDOOR ASSEMBLY
Friday, 26th June	LAST DAY OF TERM

Please note these upcoming key dates:

- **Thursday, 12th February – P7 School Show, Royal High School at 7pm – "The X Factory"**
- **Wednesday, 25th February – Special Meeting in School to discuss playground development.**
- **Saturday, 28th February – Gardening Day in school grounds, 10am-1pm. All welcome!**

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IN-HOUSE HAPPENINGS

Sports! Sports! Sports!

Ms Fey and Ms Rae have been doing a wonderful job of leading our Netball team through practice sessions every Thursday after school and entering the teams in city events. The P6s are off to Meadowbank Stadium on Monday for some passing and shooting fun. Many, many thanks to the parents who are offering their time and their vehicles to make sure the team gets to and from the venue. Good Luck and have a great time!



On the following Monday, 2nd February, it's the turn of the P6 and P7 cross country runners to participate in the event at Wardie Playing Fields. This is where our playground conditions pay off – lots of training moving quickly through muddy conditions!!



Nits! Nits! Nits!



Yes, they are back. And, apparently, they have never gone away. Please don't be remiss in checking your child/children's

heads on a very regular basis. If there is nothing there, this is quick. If there is something there, please treat accordingly. There is no other way to stay on top of the spread. A wee comb, some conditioner, a magnifying glass and a movie... The magnifying glass is for your own gratification if you find something and want to get a closer look. (No? Just me??) The movie is to keep your child occupied while you comb through methodically. Could be part of your weekly routine... Thank you!

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RESILIENCE TOOLBOX



Assembly

We continue our journey through our toolkit to build resilience. This week, we were considering how Positive Relationships can be a very good strategy in helping us to overcome difficult or unexpected events in life.

Our House Captains took the con and led the children through the importance of setting boundaries with friends and making sure we

choose friends who lift us up, rather than pull us down.



Next time, we are considering how important it is to take time to reflect when good things (and unexpected things) happen.



We also heard from our Rights Respecting Schools group who are guiding us towards our Gold Award. We are very hopeful that we can achieve Gold before the end of this school year.

Coffee, chat, collaborate

Last Friday was a great opportunity for parents and carers to share their experiences of support for their children at Blackhall.



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Our next meeting is scheduled for Friday, 6th Feb and this will be focused on effective communication including, "Two Way Play". We will be joined by a member of our Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) team.

Once again, all parents and carers are encouraged to come along, hear what is being shared and join the discussion. (You are also welcome to come along, hear what is being said and have a coffee and cake in quiet reflection, if you don't want to speak!)



STAFFING

Pupil Support Assistant (PSA)

Welcome to Vanessa Pokorska, who has now started with us as Pupil Support Assistant. Ms Pokorska is enjoying getting to know the children, staff and

families of Blackhall and we are very happy to have her as part of the team.

We have also appointed another new member of our PSA team in Mrs Ajitha Thomas who will be taking up her post with us in the coming weeks.

The appointments of Ms Pokorska and Mrs Thomas are bringing us closer to a full complement of support staff but I continue to feel very lucky at Blackhall to have a team of such committed and flexible staff who work hard to support our children every day.

Get well soon!

Facilities Technician (Janitor)

Our amazing Mr McCutcheon is leaving us for a little while from next Wednesday. Mr McCutcheon is heading off to have a much-needed medical procedure that will hopefully



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end the pain he has soldiered through for too long now. Mr McCutcheon's recuperation will take some time and we are all behind him in wishing him a full recovery. I have promised that I will try not to knock any walls down or rearrange too many classrooms in his absence... The Facilities Management team are providing us with a temporary FT until Mr McCutcheon's return.

PUTTING THE UNITY IN COMMUNITY!

Parent Carer Council Meeting – Last Wednesday

Another chatty, sharey, questiony-answery evening with lots being discussed about our playground and all other things school-life related.



The minutes from the meeting and Head Teacher's Report can be found on our website:

<https://blackhallprimary.co.uk/parent-council/>

Our next PCC Meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, 1st April**. All welcome, as ever. Please come along and have your voices heard and questions answered.



Blackhall PSA Meeting

There will be a Parent Staff Association meeting in the coming weeks as well and you will be kept updated on the time and date.

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Playground Proposals - Additional Meeting Scheduled -

Wednesday, 25th February at 7pm

Of course, we continue to work to find an achievable outcome for our muddy, uneven and unplayable playground. Following our October media appearance in Edinburgh Live, we were approached by Ben Di Rollo, a representative of a private company with a proposal for a possible solution.

Mr Di Rollo is going to come into Blackhall on **Wednesday, 25th February at 7pm** to share the potential plans with us. The higher the turnout, the better. Our school community is the first step in widening the suggestion to the Blackhall Community and City of Edinburgh Council.

If you are interested in hearing this proposal and asking any questions, please come along on the **25th February**. There will be reminders nearer the time.



Gardening Day – Spring Preparation!

Saturday, 28th February, 10am-1pm

Our green-fingered gang (and me) is back in action!! The aim of this session is to start to make the big spring progress on the orchard, veg plot, and pond.

If you are available for any part of this morning, you would be made most welcome with a hot beverage and some home-made treats to keep you ticking along.

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The BCSC Fun Day is in the afternoon so why not double your Outdoor Escapades on the day with a digging, sweeping warm-up before heading to Ravelston park for a less labour-intensive afternoon of Blackhall Community Fun!!



No gardening expertise required and I am testament to that!

Mobile Phones in Schools – Survey for Parents/Carers; Staff and Pupils



City of Edinburgh Council is consulting on the use of Mobile Phones (and associated communication devices) in our schools. The consultation process is open to Pupils, Staff and Parents/Carers. Our staff and pupils will be completing the survey in school.

Please click on the link below to complete the Parent/Carer survey:

[Mobile Phones in Schools - Parent/Carer survey - City of Edinburgh Council - Citizen Space](#)

For those of you who may not be aware, Blackhall PS Mobile Phone Policy is found on our website:

<https://blackhallprimary.co.uk/policies-handbook-2/>

The consultation process is open until **Monday, 2nd March**.

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Some Signposts for Support



There is no doubt that nothing is getting cheaper and as much as we try to minimise costs at school, there is often a trip or a special snack or a something that can creep up on us.

Please be aware that there are agencies and organisations that exist to support families who may find themselves struggling to get from one end of the month to the next. These organisations can also support with matters outside the financial and are worth investigating.

<https://www.aberlour.org.uk/>

<https://www.childrenfirst.org.uk/>



Final Words

Faith, Jessica and Sadie shared their thoughts for our newsletter:



"Everyone is really tired and everyone is feeling a bit ill just now. We all feel a bit "meh" because it's January and this is the time when everyone is feeling cold and it's dark... The Christmas excitement is gone. We have been eating all the Christmas chocolate!"

"We were all so happy when we saw our first bit of snow and then it was like, "NO!" when it left so quickly.

"Most classes are getting back into the swing of things and back into the routine of learning, which is good.

"P7s are ready for an Epic Show and then it's the February Break. And we want Steven to win the Traitors tonight and that will cheer us up!"

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I met with the Pupil Council a couple of times in the last week or so and, among all the things they are going to action (except, no, you can't have a slide or a trampoline or a swing...!) they also wanted to start each assembly with a joke.

We agreed the joke and Isla was ready to deliver.



Then – I forgot! Oh no.

I am very, very sorry Pupil Council and I will definitely not make that mistake again. I did promise Isla, however, that the joke would be shared here instead. So, here it is:

"If you are American in the living room and American in the kitchen, what are you in the bathroom?"

"EUROPEAN!" (Don't make me write it out phonetically...)

Have a lovely weekend, everyone and enjoy your haggis, if partaking! (Hope it doesn't ruin your weekend, Jessica, if Steven doesn't win the Traitors..!)

Kirsty

