

Dear Parents,

We hope you all enjoyed a wonderful festive break. Thank you so very much for all the lovely kind sentiments you shared with staff expressing your appreciation of their hard work. Please believe...these really do mean a lot. Thank you

This year brings many wonderful experiences for Cowgate. We look forward to our imminent inspection, which will I am sure will bring both celebrations and challenges. All of which we will positively embrace.

One of my challenges for 2008 is to write the proposal for my doctorate. Dr John Davis from Edinburgh University and I plan to sit down early in January to discuss the details - watch this space ☺

Staffing

You will see many new faces around the centre this month, some staff appointments (as mentioned in our December newsletter) and many new students. We welcome B'Ed students from Moray House, School of Education, HNC and NC students from Stevenson College and later this month we warmly welcome pupils from Portobello High School who will be on workplace experience.

The current students have been placed throughout the centre. We have asked them all to bring in a photograph of themselves and to write an explanation of who they are and where they are from and place it on the door of the play / classroom they are working in. So please look out for these.

Lesley-Anne leaves us this month to go on maternity leave. We wish her well and look forward to hearing the wonderful news in the near future.

Parental Consultations

A reminder that parents consultations are due to take place on 28th January. Please write your name and the time the suits you on the notice of the play/classroom door.

Curriculum Evening

The Curriculum Evening in February will be on the Curriculum for Excellence. We look forward to sharing the good news on the process so far. The staff in the Sala Infantil have already introduced the Curriculum for Excellence terminology into their planning for a period of time, so parents in this space will already be familiar. We will keep you well informed about this February event. The February newsletter will provide more details, check also notices around the building and the parents' forum on the website.

A good book

I got an interesting book for Christmas, which Jane found out about at her Forest School Training, 'How Babies Think' by Alison Gopnik, Andrew Meltzoff and Patricia Kuhl. This really is a wonderful read, I hope you don't mind if I share the review from Times Literary Supplement with you.

'From birth babies already know a staggering amount about the world around them, and learn at a phenomenal rate. Babies understand the principles of movement, recognise distinctions in alien languages that adults cannot hear, and have definite preferences between visual and auditory stimuli.

With wit, style and lucidity, this remarkable synthesis of philosophy, psychology, computing, linguistics and neuroscience reveals to a general audience for the first time just what babies know and how they learn it.

Read this book for its rich description of what babies start with, how different it is from where they end up, and some of the steps in between'. (TLS)

Many of the major theorists in early education are drawn on throughout, a good thought provoking read.

Pets

We are very happy to support families taking pets home. We have received many requests from families to take pets home, please know we are very happy to support this. Speak to room staff or staff at reception.

What's In A Name Tree

Please can you bring in a photograph of your child and an explanation of your child's name for the tree? The trees are having a seasonal update ☺

Physical Resource Pack for Nurseries

We will soon be receiving a pack with practical and useable activities and lesson plans to promote health and physical activity.

Warm wishes

From Lynn and all the staff.

Eco-Tips for 2008

How can I REUSE my waste?

- *Instead of throwing useful things away offer them to other people. You could advertise them online, in local newspapers or take them to a car boot sale.*
- *Unwanted items such as clothes, furniture, bedding etc can be taken to local charity shops.*
- *Instead of accepting new plastic bags every time you go shopping try reusing old ones or purchase 'Bags for Life' from your supermarket. Although made from plastic 'Bags for Life' can be used over and over and many stores replace them for free when they wear out.*
- *Reuse drink bottles by refilling them.*
- *Take packed lunches to work/ school in a reusable container.*

How can I REDUCE my waste?

- *Purchase a compost bin, available in different sizes, at a subsidised rate. For more information call 0845 077 0756 05 visit www.wasteawarescotland.org.uk.*
- *Try using washable nappies for your children. For more information on trial packs and nappy lending kits call 0131 555 4010 or email realnappies@changeworks.org.uk or visit www.changeworks.org.uk for further details.*

- *Reduce the amount of unwanted mail you receive by writing direct to the sender indicating that you do not wish to receive direct marketing material from them or by registering with the Mailing Preference Service to remove your details from 95% of direct marketing lists. To register free of charge either visit www.msponline.org.uk or ring 0845 703 4599.*

Tips from Lorraine.