

THE GARTCONNER GAZETTE



Dear Gartconner pupils, parents, carers and staff!

THE LATEST EDITION OF GARTCONNER GAZETTE IS OUT!

Welcome to the second issue of our newspaper, which has been created by the Gartconner Parent Council and PTA to keep us all well connected, particularly at the moment!

In this issue, you will learn more about our incredible recent fundraising, hear from our lovely P7s, get some ideas for summer activities and get a long overdue glimpse of our kids school artwork.

Thanks so much for everyone's contributions. We really hope you enjoy!

In this issue

Welcome | page 2

P7s Flying the Nest | page 3-4

PTA News | page 5

Parent Council News | page 6

Getting to know you | page 7

P2 Garden Fun | page 8-9

Gartconner Loves to Bake | page 10-11

Gartconner Loves the Luggie | page 12-13

Gartconner Loves Summer | page 14

End of Term Calendar | page 15

Gartconner Gallery | page 16-18

We Need Your Help! | page 19

WELCOME

It is lovely to see a second edition of the Gartconner Gazette and I would like to thank the parent editors for pulling the summer edition together.

It has certainly been quite a year with great triumphs and, at times, great sadness. Losing a wonderful staff member, Wilma, so unexpectedly was such a shock for us all and we miss her warmth and care every day. As we say goodbye to this school year, we will keep her in our thoughts with a special and lasting dedication to her memory. Wilma had a can-do attitude, and nothing was too much trouble for her when it came to helping the staff and children. I know that she would be very proud of our youngsters and would have marvelled at how well they have responded to the challenges that they have faced this year. Every challenge thrown at them has been met with that same can-do attitude and from the difficult mix of home learning and in-school learning, we have seen them tackle these head on.

We have not yet been able to open our doors to families and friends but there is a chink of light. We have provisionally planned next year with the hope that we will be open and back to normal. It will be a rich and full experience for the children and, if able to, we will celebrate all their successes in person with you. I can't wait for a concert, a Harvest Festival or, for that matter, any celebration!

A big focus for next year will be on learning for sustainability as we need to take advantage of the wonderful local environment around us. During lockdown, I think many families took time to walk around our local area and can better appreciate the open spaces surrounding the school. It is easy to take this for granted so I would love to give the children opportunities to explore the fields and paths around the school to really get the best out of our local area.

If the story of 20/21 was a tale of struggle and triumph against adversity then 21/22's story will be one of hope and a celebration of community, people and relationships. We can't wait to get started and I hope that the first day of the new term will bring more certainty and a renewed enthusiasm and energy for us all.

Paul Manley
Head Teacher

“...2021/2022's story will be one of hope and a celebration of community, people and relationships...”

FLYING THE GARTCONNER NEST



With our P7s about to fly the primary school nest, we hear from some of them on their hopes and dreams for the future and where we'll see them next, plus some wise words for their fellow students...

My dream is that I would like to make a Nickelodeon cartoon with my drawings and become a famous artist. Although I'm sad to leave Gartconner Primary, I'm really excited about taking part in art at high school – **Andrew**

My dream is to become an actress or a singer because I love to be a drama queen and I love to sing whenever I can. I will really miss the teachers that supported me through the years and all my friends at Gartconner – **Aya**

“ We will miss the teachers and support staff and we will really miss all the playground games we have played ”

My dream is to become an actress because I love watching movies and tv shows. When I start high school I will miss being in one class with all my friends and I will miss the teachers who helped and supported me -
Eilidh

I want to be a pilot because I want to travel across the world to see famous landscapes. My number one place to go to is Japan. I will miss my classmates but most of all I will miss all the staff because they have helped me the whole way - **Nathan**

Their advice for surviving primary school...

Our advice is to respect your teachers and other members of staff. Treat everyone the way you want to be treated. Work hard and be supportive towards others. Always try your best, even if you are struggling and don't be afraid to ask you teachers or friends for help. Always be yourself and always believe in yourself!

Wishing our wonderful P7s all the very best with their next big adventure!



PTA NEWS

Over £2000 raised by local community after vandals damage

Never has it been easier to see that just one small action can make a positive change, than with the example of our very own Gartconner parent, Julie Houston!

We were all upset by the news that over the course of several months, vandals had caused significant damage to areas such as the kids play equipment, benches, AstroTurf pitches and the school garden. Because of this, coupled with the school having limited funds to make repairs, Julie was impassioned to set up a 'GoFundMe' fundraising page to try and raise some money for "our kids to be able to enjoy their playtime again."

As Julie said, "After just getting back to some normality after a year of disruption... our kids deserve a safe place to play, now more than ever before." This clearly struck a chord with everyone who read or heard about it.

Knowing that the damage caused was valued at around £2000, the target was set. What seemed at first to be a big target was within a few days seemingly in touching distance, thanks to the unprecedented response from our local community.

Julie became a minor celebrity, talking to local press and politicians about the issue and why she felt impassioned to take action! Incredibly we reached – and exceeded – our target of £2000.

In an extraordinary turn of events, with support from Councillor Stewart MacDonald, Councillor Susan Murray and Rona Mackay MSP, East Dunbartonshire Council eventually agreed to pay for the repairs and replace equipment, allowing the funds to be used in other ways to benefit our children's wellbeing.

With that in mind, Alana Callaghan, Chair of the PTA said, "We have greatly appreciated all the support from the parents/carers and the community as a whole with the vandalism matter and we are hoping that it will contribute to a larger playground project for all of the children to enjoy."

A massive thank you to everyone who played a part in making this possible – every link shared, every person told has gotten us to a point where we can make the facilities even better than they were before. The PTA will be focussing on how to make the most of the funds in the new school year. Watch this space!

The PTA is led by Gartconner parent Alana Callaghan and is primarily concerned with fundraising and either helping with or organising events being held at Gartconner. If you would like to find out more about the PTA, please email gartconnerpta@gmail.com

PARENT COUNCIL NEWS



Latest meeting highlights

- The Sexual Health and Relationships Initiative was offered for comment.
- Learning loss: Much less significant for P1-3 than evident from the first lockdown. P2s are most affected, due to disruption experienced at such a key stage of learning whilst in P1.
- Lateral flow testing is in place, twice per week for members of staff.
- Schools will submit reports for parents in the final term.
- The roof of the gym hall is being replaced as is the flooring. The MUGA pitch is to be replaced in summer.
- Concerns about privacy with the new residential development beside the school were raised. Mr Manley offered reassurance that there are always adults present to supervise in the playground. There is also a plan for a larger fence to be installed around the MUGA pitch.
- EDC has agreed to install four safety barriers on the pavement along Waterside Road to Braes of Yetts development. Traffic calming measures were also discussed.
- Possible continuity of teacher for classes in the new school year was discussed. This will be given consideration when staff joiners and leavers are clear.
- P1 for the 2021/2022 session will require 2 classes.

Next meeting end June

Your opinion matters!

Want to feel more involved in decisions that affect your child?

Join the Gartconner Parent Council or raise an issue for discussion by contacting
gartconnerparentcouncil@gmail.com

What is a Parent Council?

The Parent Council at Gartconner meets about four times a year and gives parents the chance to be involved in policy decisions from the school or on a local council level and address any concerns or make suggestions. All schools are required to have a Parent Council. The meetings are led by our Chair, Gartconner parent Pamela Lucas, and a main feature is the head teacher's report, where Mr Manley updates us all on what has been going on at Gartconner behind the scenes. On the left you'll find some of the topics we discussed at our most recent meeting.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

For our second teacher interview, Mrs Gilmour, who teaches class P2, has kindly volunteered to answer our questions. Let's get to know her better!



For how long have you been teaching and what motivated you to become a teacher?

I have always loved working with children and knew early on that this was a career I was interested in. My mum is a teacher so I think it is in the genes! Before I became a teacher I studied illustration at Glasgow School of Art and then went on to work in a publishing house. My love for stories, writing and drawing was something I knew I would be able to explore through teaching and the creative minds of children!

What do you like best about teaching?

Teaching is a creative job where no two days are the same. I love encouraging children to be excited about learning and striving to do their best. There is nothing better than watching the light bulb go on for a child who has been working hard on something and it finally clicks.

What do you do in your free time to relax and recover from your job as a teacher?

As many will know my husband and I have a black labrador called Rupert who is my pride and joy! I love to take him out on runs and love a bit of wild swimming.

Have you ever taught a lesson that did not turn out in any way you expected it to?

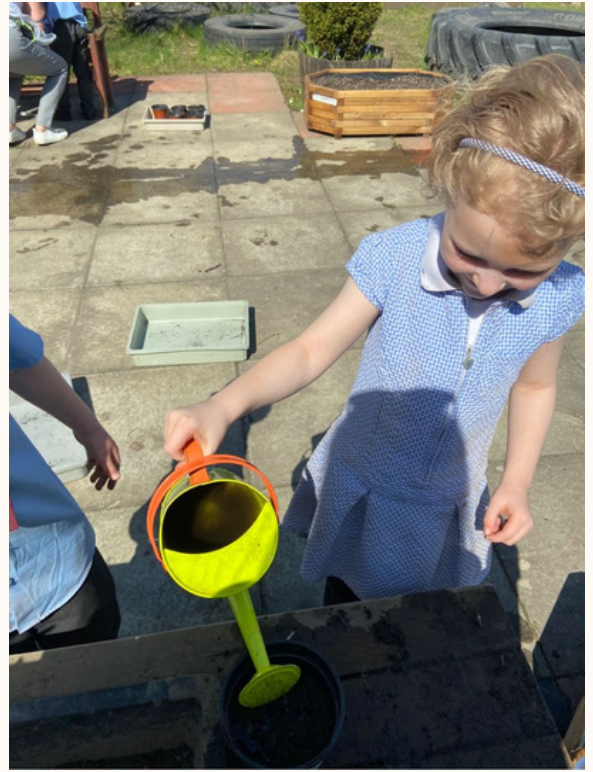
Last year I had the pleasure of teaching P5 (current P6) for part of the week. We were reading the novel "Iron Man" by Ted Hughes and working on writing descriptions. Just as I was reading a chapter all about the Iron Man eating up the telephone wires and gobbling up tractors, the diggers arrived next door to start demolishing St Agatha's. This of course was not planned but perfectly timed to see what it looked like when the buildings were torn apart by the huge 'Iron' arm of the digger.

P5 produced some of the best writing that day and I nearly burst with excitement.

Thank you Mrs Gilmour!

P2 GARDEN FUN

Primary 2 give us a look at the fun they've been having planting sunflower seeds in the school garden!





We can't wait to see the fruits of their labour!

GARTCONNER LOVES... TO BAKE RASPBERRY AND WHITE CHOCOLATE MUFFINS!

by Alison McKenzie

Hopefully we are in for a summer of sun and plenty of fun outdoors, but in case of the odd rainy day, the kids could get stuck into this super easy recipe for Raspberry and White Chocolate Muffins. These tasty morsels are the best of both worlds - great for lunchboxes, but also delicious served warm with a scoop of ice-cream for dessert!

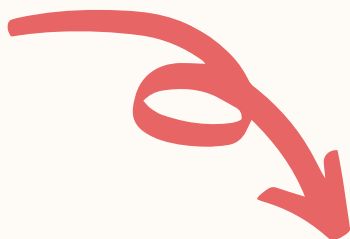
Ingredients

300g self-raising flour
 150g caster sugar
 1 large egg
 50g vegetable oil (or sunflower oil, or olive oil)
 250g milk
 1 tsp vanilla extract
 150g raspberries (fresh or frozen)
 100g white chocolate chunks or chips



Method

- 1 Pre-heat the oven to 180°C, or 170°C if using a fan oven and line a 12 hole muffin tin with paper cases.





- 2** In a large bowl add the caster sugar to the self-raising flour, and stir together. In a separate bowl lightly beat the egg, then add in the oil, milk and vanilla extract, and mix together. Pour the liquid ingredients into a well in the middle of the combined flour and sugar, and gently fold the mixture together. The batter will be slightly lumpy, take care not to over-mix.
- 3** Gently fold through the raspberries and white chocolate. Once again, take care not to over-mix.
- 4** Spoon the mixture into the paper cases, filling $\frac{2}{3}$ to the top. Bake for 20-25 minutes, until lightly golden, and a skewer inserted into the muffin comes out clean. Allow to cool in the tin for 5 minutes, before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

Delicious!

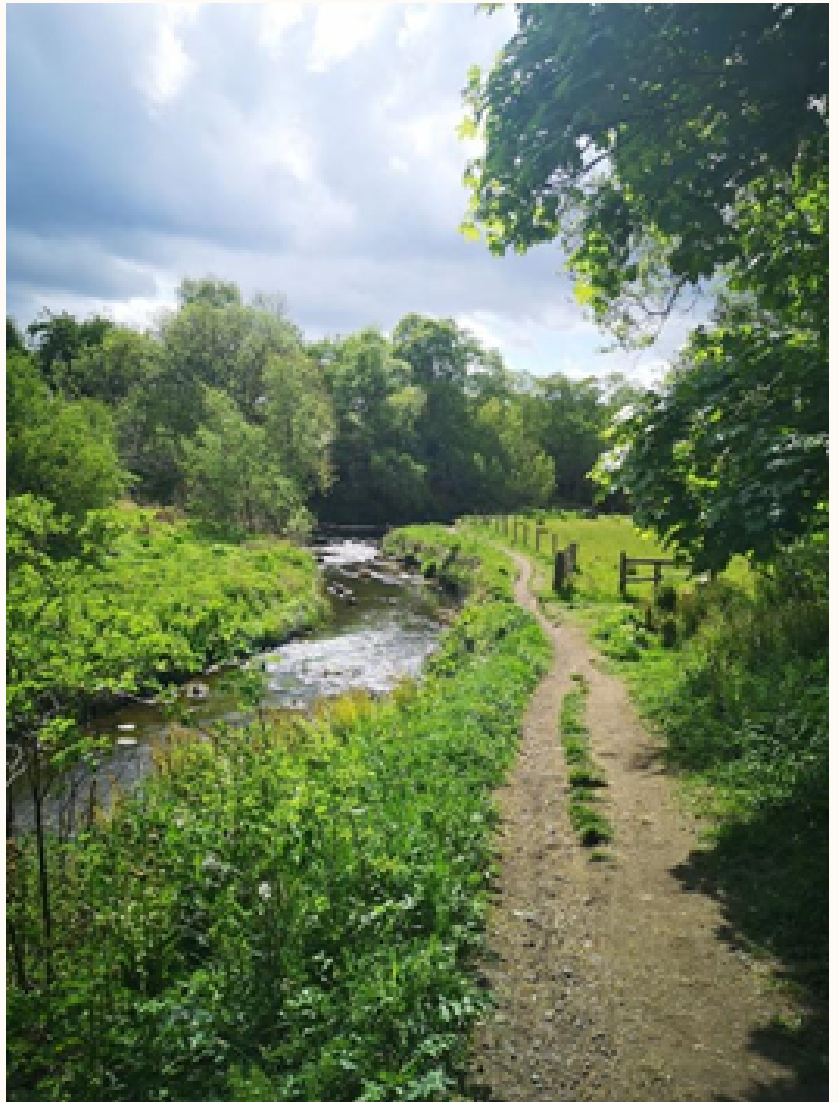
GARTCONNER LOVES... THE LUGGIE

by Alison McKenzie

We are so lucky to have the Luggie Water on our doorstep and it has been a real haven for many of us over the last year and a half, during some stressful and uncertain times over lockdown.

The Luggie Water burn begins in North Lanarkshire and gathers pace in its final stretch in East Dunbartonshire through the old village of Waterside, to the centre of Kirkintilloch and on into the River Kelvin just north of Kirkintilloch.

The wonderful diversity of life that the Luggie supports includes plant life, fish, birds, bats, and a huge array of minibeasts, as well as deer, fox and even otters have been spotted here.



Have you
been to the
Luggie
Stepping
Stones?

Luggiewatch

Luggiewatch - if you have not heard of them before - is a wonderful community of local people that care about the environment we live in and promote community spirit through looking after and enhancing our Luggie and its' surroundings. They also aim to encourage young people to grow up loving this place.

They regularly hold litter picks to keep our Luggie clean and healthy for all those who live here; humans, birds, animals, insects and fish alike. Sadly, the need for regular litter picks has increased over the Lockdown period with more visitors using the area for recreation.

Before the pandemic hit they would regularly hold educational events such as bat walks and of course the Gartconner Primary Luggie Walk. We're all looking forward to these resuming in the not too distant future!

I met up with Deborah (Chair of Luggiewatch) and Jim Carmichael, two of the founding members of Luggiewatch, to find out more about what our parents and students can look out for around the Luggie over the coming Summer holidays...

We really hope the school can get back to enjoying the Luggie and our local areas in the new school year!

If you don't follow Luggiewatch on **Facebook** already, please take a look at their page as it is a great resource for the area and is a good way to keep in touch with upcoming events including those all-important litter picks.



Summer fun

- **Spot** interesting plant life, fish, birds, bats and a huge array of minibeasts, as well as deer, fox and even otters!
- **Join in** an arranged Luggie litter pick!
- Safely **pick up** litter that you notice while you are out and about. However, only under the supervision of an adult.
- **Flex your photography skills** and get featured in the annual Luggiewatch calendar, full of beautiful images from in and around the Luggie taken by local residents. Submissions are via Facebook.

Please also remember that whilst our Luggie is incredibly beautiful, flowing water can also be very dangerous so make sure your children are always supervised around the water.

GARTCONNER LOVES... SUMMER

Another year of holidaying in the UK has uncovered loads of local delights. How many of these have you ticked off your lockdown bucket list?

Clackmannanshire Tower Trail

A fun day trip around local towers and castles of Clackmannanshire!

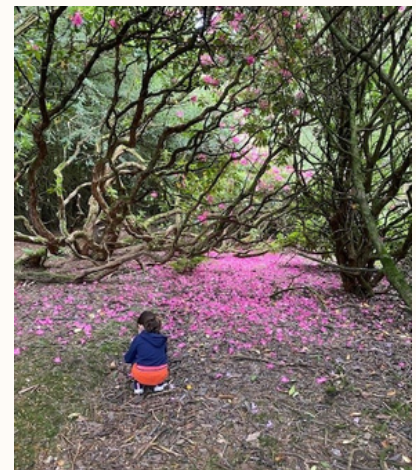
www.clacks.gov.uk/visiting/towertrail



Croy Hill Roman Head - Pullatur

A fun walk to a new, massive Roman monument as part of the Antonine Wall Heritage Project.

www.antoninewall.org



Gartshore Estate - Kirkintilloch

A stones' throw from the school, a beautiful woodland walk through an old estate. Continue up Gartshore Road and the entrance is on your left hand side.



Boden Boo Beach - Erskine

Perhaps the closest beach to Kirkintilloch! A woodland and riverside beach beneath Erskine Bridge.

forestryandland.gov.scot/visit/boden-boo

YAY, IT'S SUMMER AT GARTCONNER!

Here's a quick reminder of the end of term events, bearing in mind that there could still be some short-notice changes! Keep your eyes peeled on SeeSaw for updates.

Tuesday 15th June

P7 Trip Bearsden Ski Centre

Thursday 17th June

P1-3 Sports Day - kids to come wearing their house colours. Contact the teacher if you haven't heard which colour to wear.

Friday 18th June

P4-7 Sports Day - see above re. house colours!

Monday 21st June

Whole School Fun Day - dress as you please!

Tuesday 22nd June

School Prize Giving

Wednesday 23rd June

P7 Graduation - best uniform to be worn! Report cards will also be issued.

Thursday 24th June

Last day of the school year. School closes at 1pm! All kids finish at 1pm including bus users. Buses will return the usual amount of time after school finishes.



GARTCONNER GALLERY

We've all missed being able to wander the school, taking in all the magnificent artwork the kids have created! Mrs Burns brings us her recent highlights...





"If you truly love nature, you will find beauty everywhere"
-Van-Gogh

"A picture is a poem without words"
-Horace





WE NEED YOUR HELP!

There are so many ways to get involved at Gartonner!

Become a member of the Parent Council

If you would like to support the school in its work with pupils and represent parents' views, please get in touch with the Parent Council by sending an email to gartconnerparentcouncil@gmail.com



Share ideas, time and skills

Hopefully, the PTA will get to organise more fun events and fundraisers for the school in the new school year. If you are interested in sharing your time and skills, send an email to gartconnerpta@gmail.com

Contribute to our newspaper

Do you have a great topic or fancy contributing a story or ideas? If you would like to be part of the next issue we'd be delighted to hear from you.

Please get in touch with Jo joanne.marwaha@gmail.com and Ali alison.e.mckenzie@gmail.com



Have a fantastic summer!