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Weekly Update 18 August

## **Back to School**

It was lovely to welcome our young people back to school after the summer holidays. As always, some of them seem to have grown several inches over the summer! Our new S1 pupils have made a good start and there have been lots of smiling faces though the week and excited chat about new subjects and experiences. Year group assemblies were held on Wednesday, and Mrs McKay used these to talk about the learning opportunities on offer in the school and the importance of being open to new ideas and approaches. Young people were also reminded (or introduced to in the case of S1!) our school values – Respect, Learning, Confidence, Opportunity and Community – and the fact that we are all part of one team, Team Porty.

## **Exam Success**

We are pleased and proud to report that our overall exam performance was very positive last year. As always, there have been some outstanding individual performances and a number of departments have seen improvements. While data is still provisional, early indications show that we have had our best ever results for the number of S4 pupils who achieved five or more awards at National 5 with 51% achieving five or more awards at A-C. We also had a best ever result for the number of young people achieving 5 Highers at A-C by the end of S5 with 18%. Attainment in S6 also improved across the board. Against the backdrop of a our school move and inspection, this is a real testament to the hard work of both young people and staff and the support of parents.

## **Staffing Update**

As always, we welcome a number of new staff to Team Porty at the beginning of the new session:

- Mr Alexander – Teacher of Maths
- Ms Alexander – Pupil Support Assistant
- Ms Brisley – Teacher of Modern Languages
- Ms Graham - Pupil Support Assistant
- Ms Hand – Teacher of Maths
- Mr Kuryluk – Teacher of Business Education
- Mr McCreath – Teacher of Geography
- Ms McGarrigle – Teacher of Music
- Mr Meyer - Teacher of Modern Languages
- Ms Milton - Pupil Support Assistant
- Ms Neilson – Teacher of Physical Education
- Ms Wells - Teacher of English
- Mr Whitelaw – Teacher of Learning Support

## **A Biodiversity Garden – Every Vote Helps!**

The Tesco Bags for Help project is a competition that invites communities to pitch their ideas for projects; the winner receiving a total of £4000 pounds to fund their project. We are pleased and proud to announce that our proposal for a biodiversity garden at Porty has been accepted as one of three to be put forward for a store vote. You can vote for the winner when you shop at Tesco in Musselburgh. We urge you to take a little time to vote for our project as it will benefit many departments in the school.

The garden will be a safe, accessible learning space, enjoyed by pupils and teachers alike. The Biology department hope to use it to show the cultivation of crops, along with the Food Technology department. The Art department will be able to use it as a calming, place to work and may also use it for inspiration. The CDT department will contribute by providing compost bins and bird boxes and the FTT department planting and harvesting crops. The garden will also provide a calming learning space for any pupil.

As the proud holders of 6 green eco-schools flags, we are sure that the eco committee will oversee the maintenance of the garden. Another benefit to the biodiversity garden is engagement with the community our school is a part of. The garden will also be a source of pride for our school as it is something we can achieve, be grateful for and learn from. This is why we hope that any shopper at Tesco will help us to achieve our goal by voting for our project.

## **School Uniform**

A big thank you to parents for their support of our school uniform policy. Our young people look very smart as we start the session. Please remember that there is assistance available for families who find costs a challenge and all enquiries will be handled in strict confidence.