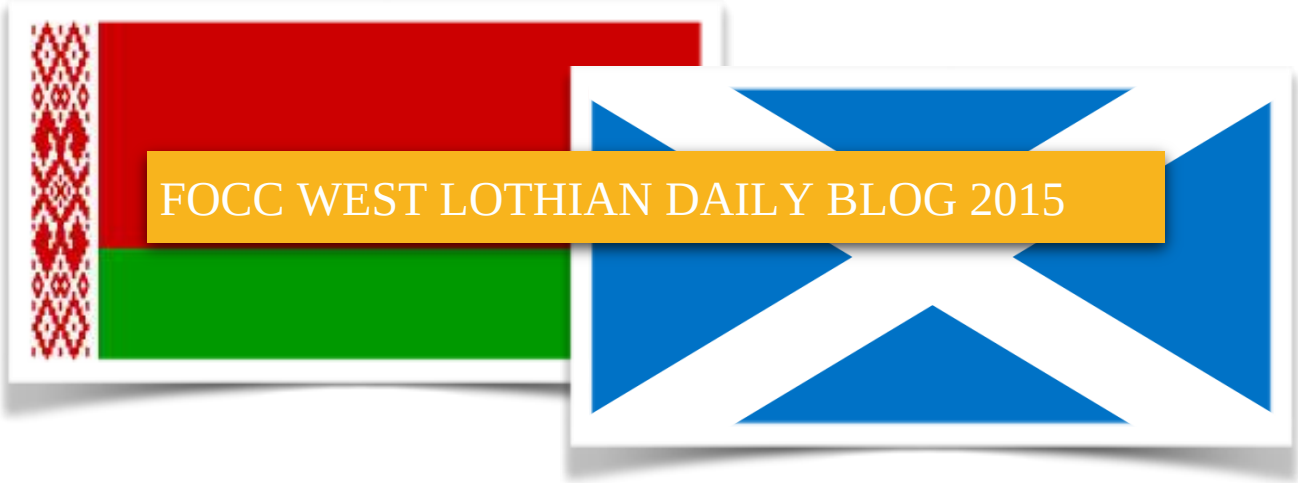

Tues 1 September

Back to school day/Swimming

Today was back to school day in Belarus after 3 months of summer holidays for the children. Unfortunately for our children, even although they are with us in Scotland, today was also back to school day. So they arrived at the hall this morning with their school satchels and school books. After the usual play time during drop offs the children lined up with their satchels on and made the short walk to school, or the classroom we have set up for them just along the corridor. This is to distinguish between the play room and the classroom.
Lessons seemed to go well today, but today is more of a ceremonial day in Belarus where children take flowers to the new teacher and get used to their new classroom, new books and maybe even new friends in their class. It was much the same for our children, without the flowers, at this point ☺

After lessons they enjoyed a nice packed lunch.

The afternoon saw the start of our swimming lessons for the children, kindly donated by our friends at Excite Broxburn. The children enjoyed a period of play in the pool before the serious lessons began.
Chris took the lessons. There was lots of splashing, walking in the water, swimming with armbands and floats etc until they got more confident. Some were very apprehensive to begin with, but good progress was made. It's a very important part of our programme. Its so warm in Belarus in the summer that children do play in open water and we have had siblings of children in our groups who have drowned as a result.

The children came back to the hall after swimming to make some thank you cards for us to hand out to our activity providers during the visit. Some lovely designs.

Yulia and Lena were also given a bunch of flowers each, as the children were not able to do it earlier to mark 1st September, back to school day.