

Day 1 Monday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2018

After a great first weekend our first day in our new venue has started well.

We went over the rules and safety with the children. There was much hilarity as Kenny posed as a stranger and tried to abduct a child with the lure of sweets. The first ones going willingly until they realised they were to resist and shout to raise the alarm. After some road crossing practice we made some thank you cards and Lynn, an artist arrived to do some work with Alexei using water colour and acrylic paints. A nice gentle start to the month with children well behaved.

We had a lovely afternoon at Beecraigs Country Park, with the sun splitting the sky and temperature at 22 degrees it made for thirsty work. Water and juice breaks briefly interrupted play on all the equipment.

Alexei, Lilya, Tania and Lynn had a short spell looking at highland cows and sketching them before joining the others for play. Then it was back to base for some games before home time.

A good start to the visit!





## Day 2 Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018

It was another great day at Bathgate Academy, definitely a favourite visit with the children. Starting off in the pool there was splashing, dunking, floats flying and general mayhem. Alexei (Liosha) was having a great time soaking his Mum and just being one of the kids. After a quick snack we split into two groups, one to the science department and the other to music then we swapped over before a crazy lunch that included a bat somehow getting into the dining hall a creating chaos. The children were then handed their rucksacks full of gifts and toys. As it was a bit chilly we decided to head back to Oatridge instead of the park, the children emptied their new rucksacks and we had a good old swap session of the contents. We did go out to play in the grass area but again the sun hadn't quite broken through so some went back inside and the hardier souls stayed out for a while longer.



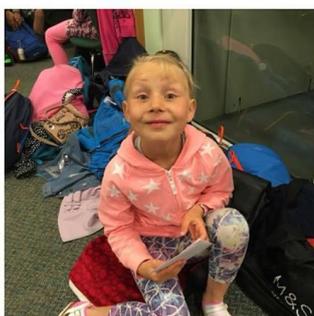
Day 3 Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2018

Today began with an English lesson from Chris. They were learning about “doing” various activities. He is playing football, she is reading etc. The children then did a little practise for their party sketch before going for a lovely walk in the sun & visiting the animals round about the agricultural college. In the afternoon we had great fun playing different games outside. Archery, uni-hock, sack racing, egg & spoon race & the 3 legged race. We finish off practising some more songs & playing board games inside.



Day 4 Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2018

So, today, the fourth day of the children's visit, took us to our wonderful, kind friends at Specsavers who, as always, were very generous to the children. This year, there were 10 children needed glasses. Sasha Gebbie was devastated he didn't need them and kept asking if they had made a mistake!! After being presented with their £10 gift voucher for The Entertainer, we stopped for a short spell at Eliburn Park to let off some steam before their visit to Bathgate Dental Spa. Our friends at St John's Church provided some much needed homemade soup, a few games and a little bit of Scottish dancing! Meanwhile, at the dentist, most of the children required very little or no treatment at all, except our little trouper, Marina, who was so brave during the extraction of a rather large back molar!! All in all, a great day with our little stars.



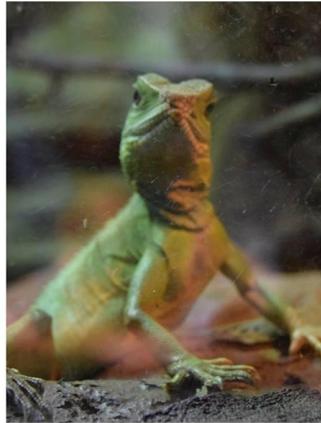


Day 5 Friday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2018

Friday started with English lessons with Chris. He has split the group in two for ease of teaching. There was great concentration on the faces and good question and answer sessions with both groups.

We then made our way to Five Sisters Zoo. It was very warm and sunny but this is Scotland so we made sure we covered the big open areas with the lions and bears before the rain started. After lunch we had an animal handling session, I think the Royal Python was delighted to get back in its cage in one piece, then we saw a Madagascan cockroach and pygmy hedgehog. A quick venture into the rain and we reached the reptile house then before it really started pouring we had an hour in the soft play. In the photos you'll see one of a section of rope with ants on it and a bird taken just as it flew off, these are the first showing of our new photographer Zarina, really good captures, well done Zarina





Day 8 Monday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Week 2 started with English lessons with Chris, one group identifying and drawing animals, other group learning about foods. After snack we headed to the National Museum of Flight in East Fortune. First stop Concorde Experience, all kids loved the walk through experience. Lunch was enjoyed in the education centre before we headed to the Fantastic Flight Hanger, this was a huge success with everyone. Here the kids learned about design, balance and skills required to fly aircraft. Brilliant day had by all.



Day 9 Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2018

The day started with the children practicing a song for their party sketch. Then it was off to the swimming pool! Lots of fun to be had in the water, even though the water was a bit on the “cool” side! We then headed to the dance studio, where the children practiced a routine for the family party. Photo opportunities were restricted, as “it was a secret!!” To finish off the day, we stopped off at a park on the way back to base. The sun was out and the children took a few minutes out from play to enjoy an ice lolly. They should sleep well tonight!



Day 10 Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018

It was a nice morning for a walk to Uphall Primary school where we were given a great welcome. We played some games outside and some crafts and games inside. We enjoyed a snack break and a break for school dinner. After lunch we enjoyed a party with the children including pass the parcel. The children and adults were all given a nice gift bag from the pupils and staff, each child was presented theirs by their buddies for the day. We then enjoyed a nice walk back to our base in the sunshine. Sasha boy was a casualty at school but joined us later after a visit to hospital. A huge thanks to all at the school who put a lot of work into organising a very interesting day for us.





Day 11 Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Our day started with an engaging english lesson from our charismatic english teacher, Chris. The kids love these English lessons and have a great deal of fun as they learn. Today's lesson was about shopping. The main activity planned for the day was the much anticipated annual trip to M&D's fun park. The children enjoyed every ride in the park, especially the ones where they got wet! It was a scorching day, with a temperature of 23 degrees, which called for a round of ice creams mid afternoon. The kids had an absolute blast. The day was filled with laughter, screams of joy and big, big smiles. We returned to the hall at 4.20pm for some much needed cool drinks. A wonderful day was had by all.



Day 12 Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2018

After lessons with Chris first thing and a visit to Specsavers for some to pick up glasses, we headed off to Silver Sands beach at Aberdour. We met up with the RNLI Lifeguard at the beach and 15 brave wee souls put on wet suits and swim caps then, after a lesson on the beach, took to the freezing water of the Forth to learn how not to panic and how to save themselves should they fall into the water. This was an off-the-cuff arrangement following a chance meeting yesterday when Janice and I were at Aberdour and met the Lifeguards. They had two schools booked in for today but both had cancelled so we took advantage to give our kids valuable lessons in saving themselves should they be in such a position. Some decided the water looked too cold and were happy to watch or play in the sand, Nastya decided about two yards into the water that it was definitely too cold, whilst Liosha took advantage of the chance to paint a coastal scene. After lunch the children played games whilst they went in groups to have their 'after' pictures taken. Should be some tired bods tonight after a couple of hectic days. Thank you to the helpers/drivers for today Paul, Yvonne, Bob, Shirley and Alistair.





### Day 15 Monday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Day 15 started with a visit to P5 at Broxburn Primary School. We spent the first hour with Mr Cowan in P5a making Scottish Thistles, followed by juice and snack before going with the rest of the school for playtime. After playtime we spent time in P5b with Mr McIntyre where we took part in a scavenger hunt which was created in Belarusian and English all children loved identifying the objects. Sasha Currie and Maxim Barnett enjoyed seeing their Scottish brothers and sisters. We returned to Oatridge for a quick lunch before heading to Linlithgow. We walked a small way round the Loch although the castle took over as the main attraction. We were then very lucky to have a tour around St Michaels and Luda explained the story of Mary Queen of Scots. Alexei and Mum stayed at Oatridge to finish off some painting. A great day finished off at the park and dance practice at Oatridge.



Day 16 Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Tuesday was another fantastic day for the kids. After a visit from former host parent Martin Smith, who entertained the children with some bagpipe tunes and a hilarious turn each on the bagpipes, we went swimming. Broxburn Swimming Pool has always been a great supporter of the charity and we were again given free admission. The children enjoyed splashing around for an hour, with some of the younger children getting swimming lessons. Our next stop was JHM Dance studio for lunch and some dance lessons, which is another long term supporter of FOCC. The children love being in host parent Jo Todd's dance studio and being put through some fun routines by Jo.

On the way back to Oatridge, we took advantage of the sunny weather and stopped for an hour at the play park beside Kirkhill Primary, where the kids had tremendous fun playing on the slides, swings and climbing frames. A great day was had by all.



Day 17 Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2018

The day started with an English lesson from Chris. The focus was on animals, which turned out to be a theme for the day, and monsters, though the monitors looked funny rather than frightening! The children also had to draw the animals and monsters using pictures from Chris. There are a few budding artists in the group, especially Sasha Gebbie & Sveta Shiel!

English was followed by various craft activities with Gigha and face painting with Sam. The children made shields, using their own uniquely designed tartan, a dream catcher, individually decorated to their own taste, and their own choice of shape in hamma beads. The animal theme was popular with the hamma beads, where the big kids had to help! Animals were also a hit with the face painting, especially tigers and butterflies! A busy and creative morning! After lunch it was time for a final run through of the party sketch for Friday, and then finishing off the day with some games.





Day 18 Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Today started with English class with Chris. The older kids we're learning about the time, while the younger kids were learning how to order food they were picking the prices for the food. I would not want to eat at their restaurant as it was £20 for pizza, £10 for cola and £200 for a burger. After snack we headed to Connifox but it was very windy so we only lasted till lunchtime. We had lunch at there, they very kindly let us eat our sandwiches in their cafe. We then called "Potter Around" to see if they could accommodate 20 kids at short notice and they could, so we descended on them for the afternoon. Everyone was delighted that they were in the heat & the kids had a fantastic time. Great painters all of them! Then it was back to hall to unwind.



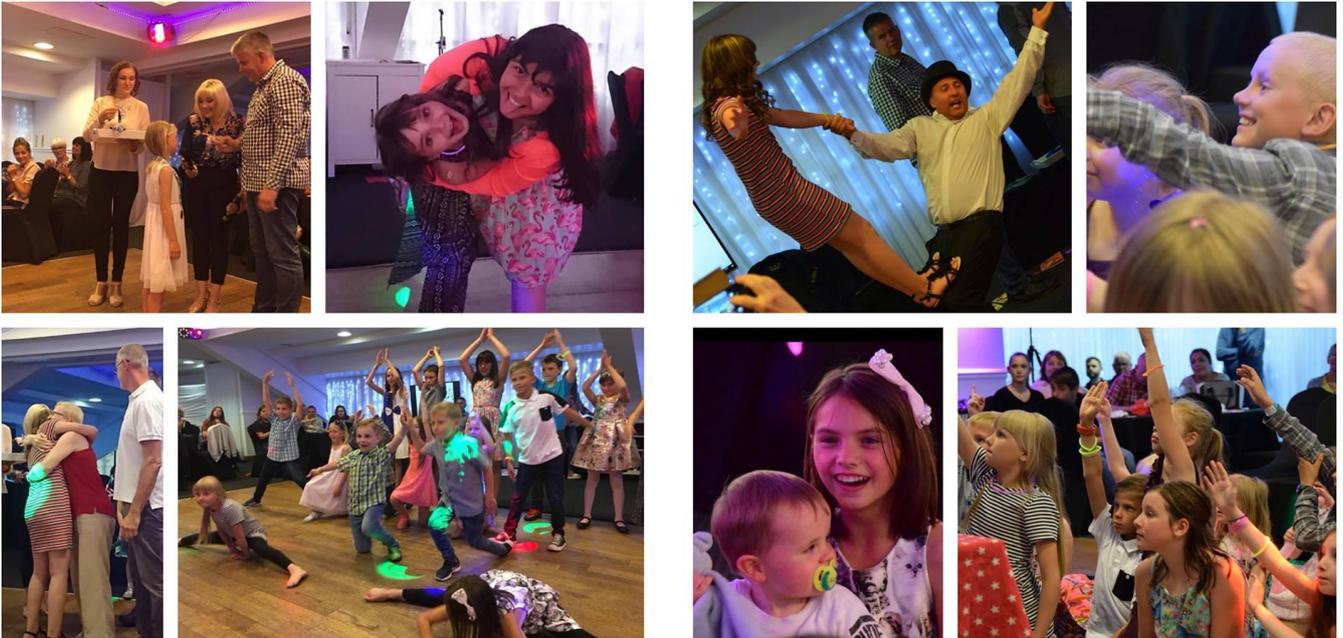


Day 19 Friday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Today began with an English lesson from Chris which included games of guess who. We then went on to do cake decorating with Shirley teaching the kids the art of how to make minion cakes. There was also art and crafts at the other table but as the contents are top secret, photos will be posted at the weekend. In the afternoon, we headed to the EICA to clip and climb. The kids (& Luda) had great fun! There were lots of brave kids who had fun climbing the walls and being pulled up the slide. In the evening we all enjoyed a fantastic party with the children & their host families & friends.



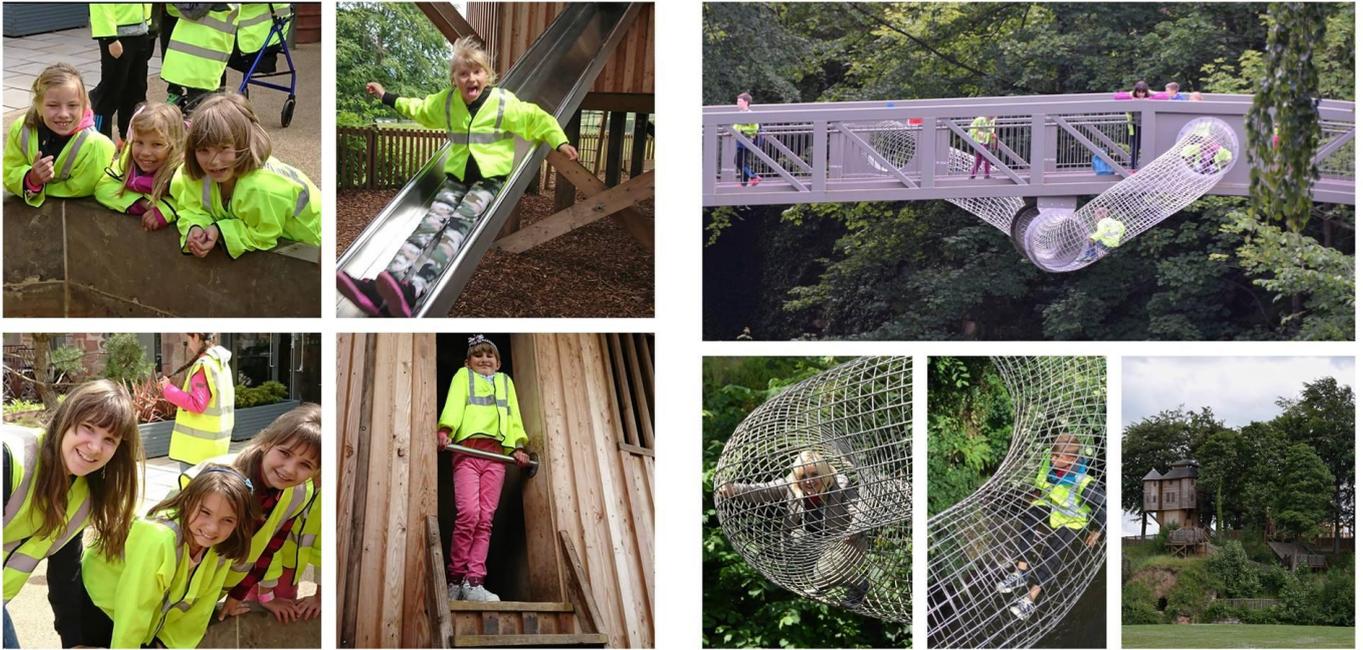




Day 22 Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2018

After English lessons from Chris the team headed down to Dalkeith Country Park where the next 4 hours were spent running, climbing, sliding, hiding, screaming with a brief break for lunch. But enough about Ross, Luda and Tania, the children had a great time and there should be a few early nights tonight. Some great memories from this trip like the way Lera Craske has blossomed and our new pocket rocket Nastya Todd. Only a few days to go but they'll be filled with laughter and smiles.





Day 23 Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Day 22 started with some Luda time where the children performed their fantastic dance routine to enable us to record it. After a brief snack we left for Broxburn Swimming Pool which as ever is a big favourite with the children. Following this we headed on the short journey to Albyn Park where we enjoyed lunch. After lunch we were kept very busy where the children all had a chance to take part in various sports including, football, rugby, basketball, hula hooping, tennis, French boules and croquet. After trying out all these activities Leigh from Albyn Park organised lots of team relay races including running, basketball and obstacles, this brought out the competitive nature in them all. Back to Oatridge for some games and quiet time. Another great day had by all.





Day 24 Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Today's fun began with English lessons with Chris. The children were learning months of the year and also how to barter for clothes, highest bidder won! We'd hoped to get outside in the afternoon for some games but the the skies were grey & the grass was wet so we instead headed for Yo-yo's soft play in Bathgate. The children had a fabulous time, sliding, playing in the ball pit, crawling around the obstacles & playing a little football. Another great day with our kids!!



