



## Seasons for Growth Newsletter Summer 2018

### The Australians Visit

We were delighted to welcome two Australian visitors to West Dunbartonshire this term, Gerrard Jones, Depute CEO of MacKillop Family Services, accompanied by his wife Annemarie Jones, a development teacher. They were interested to find out about Seasons for Growth in the local area but particularly how Seasons is delivered within secondary schools. MacKillop Family Services is an organisation which supports children and families who have experienced disadvantage, trauma and loss in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia. You may remember from your companion training that Seasons for Growth was inspired by Saint Mary MacKillop's philosophy "*never see a need without trying to do something about it.*" The beliefs of Mary MacKillop continue to motivate the work of the organisation including facilitating Seasons for Growth groups.

Gerrard, Annemarie and Moira Sugden, National Coordinator for Seasons in Scotland, visited Vale of Leven Academy on a warm, spring day in April. Firstly, they met with young people who participated in the Seasons groups. The second year pupils spoke openly about how they felt about taking part in a Seasons group and what had helped them. They shared that the most useful parts of the programme were drawing a story-line of important events in their lives and writing down worries to place in the worry box. After meeting the pupils, Gerrard, Annemarie and Moira spoke with companions Emma McFall and Jean Roy. They offered Seasons to all young people in S2 at the start of the year and the interest was so high that groups have been run every term. Emma and Jean shared how they overcame obstacles such as timetabling to ensure that all young people who opted into Seasons were offered a place. Gerrard and Annemarie were interested to hear that some young people had participated in Seasons in primary school and found it helpful to experience the programme again at secondary. They commented on how dedicated and innovative the companions and school had been in ensuring Seasons for Growth was available to those young people that needed it.

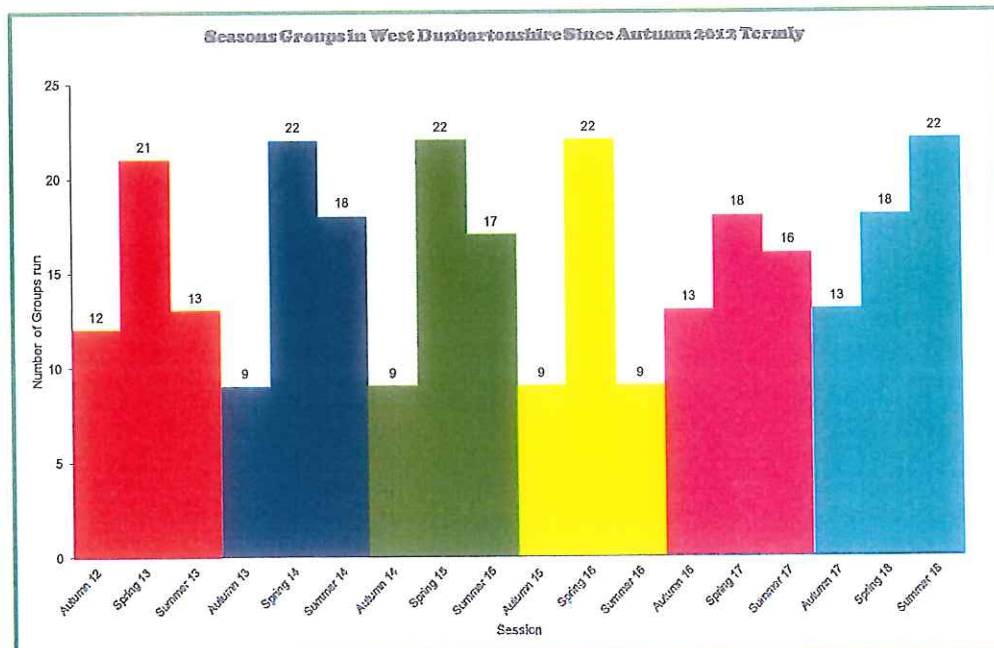


Annemarie, Gerrard, Moira, Emma, Jean and Vale of Leven Academy pupils in the nurture room where Seasons groups were held.

## Groups Run patterns

There has been a change in the pattern of number of groups run in the Autumn, Spring and Summer. This year we had a drop in Spring groups and a huge surge in Summer. Overall this year 53 groups ran, which is approximately 318 participants.

A big **“Well Done”** and **“Thank you”** to all Companions and school leaders who support them.



Pupils at Clydebank High School

The S1 pupils at Clydebank High School received their Seasons for Growth certificates recently from Mrs McNally, Depute Head Teacher, at the group celebration. Parents also joined us for some tea, coffee, pizza and other nibbles.

**Look out for information about next year's Seasons for Growth conference. Dates will be on the website later this year: [www.seasonsforgrowth.org.uk](http://www.seasonsforgrowth.org.uk)**

Celebrating inspirational stories from Companions about the work they are doing and the difference it is making in their communities. Topics include:

- The bicycle metaphor
- Research in Scotland update
- Young refugees and asylum seekers
- Adults in Cornton Vale Prison
- Young people leaving care
- Parent Programme Groups
- 2 area Co-ordinators enabling Local Authority sustainability

Hilton Glasgow Grosvenor £35 - £40

**Dates for the Diary:**

## Reconnectors

We had our biggest ever attendance at a reconstructor on 4<sup>th</sup> May – 30 Companions squeezed into the training room at Psychological Services! We had had to cancel the Reconnector in February due to the snow, which may have pushed the numbers up. We chatted about what times suited Companions best, and people unanimously said they would like another reconstructor during the afternoon of an INSET day. The dates for Reconnectors 2018 – 2019 are:

**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018 3.30 – 4.30 pm**  
**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019 1.30 – 2.30 pm**  
**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2019 1.30 – 2.30 pm**

Thank you to all Companions who attend every year – Reconnectors form a critical part of the ongoing training and support that allow us to deliver such a high quality service to our children and young people.