

# Church knitting group welcome the Primary 1 pupils at Buckstone Primary School with teddies

**This is now the first full week of school for the P1 pupils at Buckstone Primary School.**

Today will be even more exciting for them as they will be welcomed to their classrooms by a very special band of school helpers who have been making their way to the school for the last week.

The Flock – the knitting group at Fairmilehead Parish Church – was set the task by minister, Reverend Cheryl McKellar-Young, of crafting 65 teddy bears for the new school pupils a couple of months ago.

It was her brilliant idea which meant that all the wee Primary 1 pupils at Buckstone Primary School where Mrs McKellar-Young is chaplain, received their own hand-knitted teddy when they arrived at school this morning. The teddies have just spent 72 hours in quarantine, getting ready to be handed over to their new owners.

*Watch here to find out the story of the Fairmilehead Parish Church knitting group and the teddies for Primary 1 pupils at Buckstone Primary School [pic.twitter.com/w2492sZNVJ](https://pic.twitter.com/w2492sZNVJ)*

*– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [August 17, 2020](#)*



Three of the teddies were keen to meet the press at the end of last week. PHOTO ©2020 The Edinburgh Reporter

Cheryl, who became minister at Fairmilehead in 2018, explained to The Edinburgh Reporter: “I had this idea in May when I realised the schools would be going back in August and it would be a very different look to going ‘back to school’ for the children. I wondered how we could make it extra special for the nursery children who won’t have had that period of transition into the big school.

“When I thought about it I realised I had to turn to The Flock, our knitting group, and asked them to knit the teddies in a Buckstone Primary uniform. I spoke to my Deputy Session Clerk, Helen Grant, who coordinates The Flock and she agreed it was a good idea.

“She in turn asked the knitters and that started the ball rolling. By the end of July we had 65 little teddies all knitted up and ready for the Primary 1 pupils when they start school.

“I don’t sew knit or crochet, but I do have the ideas and I pass them on.”















Leader of the Flock, Helen, said: "Cheryl started the knitting group when she first came here. She felt it would be nice to have a group of people – mainly ladies – who would come

together once a month to meet and to knit. From there it grew, and now we have 25 or so members and we do mainly charity projects.

“We called it The Flock for obvious reasons, for the wool comes from the sheep and we are a flock of people in the church.

“My initial reaction was very positive. I thought that this was a great idea. We were all stuck in lockdown, we couldn't do anything. We couldn't go out. So I thought that a lot of our group would be interested in making these teddies and indeed that turned out to be the case. They were very glad to do it.

“We got the pattern from the internet. It seems to work well and we changed the colours to make it the school colours.

“Although everyone followed the same pattern the different knitters' work all turned out individually. Some of the teddies are a bit bigger and some are a bit smaller, some have more stuffing than others. They are individual, just like the children they are going to.”

The logistics were carefully worked out. A lot of the members of the Flock had their own wool and only needed some colours to be able to create the teddies. Some are mothers or grannies who knit school sweaters for pupils anyway, so they all had black wool but some of it Helen had to source off the internet and then organise a 'no touch' delivery to the knitters so that they could get on with the job.

She said: “We decided on the yellow stripe for the scarf because the writing on the school sweatshirt has yellow in it.

“Every so often I would email my colleagues and would be told how many they had completed. It was just wonderful!”

As it turned out it was all ladies who created the teddies – although Helen is quick to say they would be delighted if men would come and join them.

The teddies will now be at school having had a bit of a journey to get from Fairmilehead Parish Church. You can follow the whole journey on the church's Facebook page.