Headteacher's newsletter Friday 27 November 2020

Dear families

The weeks are flying past and it's hard to believe that we are heading towards Christmas already. I hope you all have your Advent calendars at the ready for Tuesday! There has been much speculation in the press about arrangements around Christmas and into the New Year. Please rest assured that should there be any changes, we will let you know as soon as we are informed. We are continuing to plan as normal for the next few weeks until Wednesday 23 December, including booking in visits from Santa, Christmas Jumper Days and Movie Nights. Further detailed information to follow on each of these events.

It has been our YPI (Youth Philanthropy Initiative) final this week in Secondary. The S3 pupils have been working in teams, researching their chosen local charity and putting a personal and business case together for their final presentations to compete to win £3000, which is part funded by The Wood Foundation and the school. The standard of presentations was exceptional, with every young person taking part. Well done to all eight teams, but there had to be a winner and although it was a difficult decision, the judges unanimously agreed that SAMH (Scottish Association for Mental Health) would be the winning charity as it met all criteria. Congratulations to Rafee and Leeoin and thank you so much to all the staff who made this experience possible and especially to Mrs Strathearn and Mrs Brown.

We are in the throws of Parent Contact in both Primary and Secondary S4. These look very different from normal, being a mixture of phone and video calls, but serve the same purpose in that they share information about your child's progress and next steps in learning in partnership and dialogue with you at home. We know there will be some teething problems, so please bear with us in this and remember just to phone or email the school should have any questions or queries.

As ever, it's been a busy week for learning, and I have incorporated a small selection below to give you a flavour of our week.

Primary 1/2 have been learning all about Nocturnal Animals over the last few weeks, painting their favourite, thinking about special characteristics that help animals at night and even writing their own story books about a mouse that comes into the class room at night. They have also been learning the number bonds to ten and have begun making Christmas Decorations a wee bit early, putting up number bond chains in our classroom window. They certainly make the room look cheery and we hope you agree.

P4 have been learning about the blackout this week and in particular how to keep safe on the streets in the dark. They have been learning to name parts of the body in French and revisited the French 'head, shoulders, knees and toes' song. In Maths, they have been revising how to tell the time from and past the hour and are beginning to look at the 24 hour clock. Following Book Week Scotland, they have made book reviews on a postcard to share with the Primary ones.

Primary 5 have been experimenting with water this week and have been learning about surface tension, buoyancy and the water cycle. In RME they found out about Humanism. They have also had fun working in trios to compose oral stories with the help of some story sticks.

P6 have continued with the theme of Lost, inspired by our visit from the LRC ladies during Bookweek Scotland, and have each written emotive personal accounts of a time they themselves were lost or have a lost thing very dear to them. They have also been learning about how difficult it was for females to study degrees in the past by learning about the French-Polish Physicist, Marie Curie.

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In Home Economics, S3 have made their Christmas cakes and are now looking after them at home making sure they are well fed as per the email sent to parents. Please remind the pupils to bring their cakes back to school on the 18 December to decorate them.

Mr Leck has been co-ordinating and commentating on our Secondary Darts competition. Here is his latest up-date – in the semi-finals, Roman was in command against Jamie in the first semi-final but fell away and Jamie won with the final dart. Dougie beat Robert in another tight match. In the Darts Final, Jamie took on Dougie. Both players showed signs of genius and frailty in a topsy turvy final. Jamie had the mental strength (unlike the team he supports) to come from behind again to secure victory with the final dart. Please see picture below.

In the Staff Darts tournament, there has been a steady stream of matches taking place over the last week with a lot of chat about Miss Dow from the office being the form player. Qualifying for the Quarter finals will take place next week, with some old rivalries from the bowling re-surfacing. Watch this space!

Drew Scott came to school on Tuesday and Wednesday this week to host an Escape Room for the pupils. There were four Teams trying to Escape. Interestingly the mixed group of senior pupils escaped significantly faster than the single sex groups of younger boys and girls. Practice makes perfect. Thanks to Drew for bringing this experience to Pitlochry HS.

As you can see, it's been a varied and interesting week. Remember to follow us on Twitter for instant up-dates during the week.

Many thanks to the local Rotary Club for providing the lovely reflectors for Primary 1. Please see picture below.

Have a good weekend.

Take care
Elaine Liney

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