Headteacher's newsletter Friday 11 December 2020

Dear Families

As usual, the week has flown by and I can't quite believe that we're heading into the last full week of term. There is no let-up in the wide range of learning, from Nursery making natural Christmas wreaths to S4 studying for their prelims. More information on our school week to follow below.

In staffing news, we have welcomed Mrs Helen Sanderson and Mrs Deirdre Powrie as Pupil Support Assistants in Primary and Mrs Jackie MacDonald starts with us as our Computing teacher on Monday 14 December. We are delighted to have them as part of our team.

Can I take this opportunity to remind everyone not to park at the back of the school, unless you are a Blue Badge holder. We have noticed an increasing number of cars driving round the back to collect their children at 3.30pm. At the end of the school day the children are excited, chatting with their friends and often tired and, given the dark evenings, we are concerned that there could be an accident. Please always put the safety of the children first and resist the temptation to park round the back of the school.

We know how challenging using online platforms can be, so please have a look at the school website as we have attached a series of Parental Guides for Seesaw, Teams, Google Classroom and GLOW. I am sure you will find these useful, but please contact the school if you have any further questions or queries about our online learning platforms. The pupils are taught how to use these platforms in school and homework for classes in both Primary and Secondary is posted on these forums, so please login to Seesaw or ask your child to login to Teams / Google Classrooms and have a look at the work they are doing. These online forums allow you to be involved in your child's learning, see feedback from teachers and help plan their schedule for the week.

Primary 1/2 have been learning all about Mythical Animals in the last few weeks. All the children enjoyed learning about the mythical Phoenix, particularly as it is the symbol of our school. The class created a fantastic collaborative display which is brightening up the classroom and the pictures will be in the end of term Sway bulletin. The class have also been listening to stories of other mythical animals, particularly ones that are made up of two animals joined together. They all already knew of the Unicorn, but the "cockatrice" was a new one to them – half cockerel and half snake, and very dangerous. The children enjoyed painting their own mythical animals with some very peculiar combinations. What great creativity they have.

P5 have been working on internet safety this week. The class has discussed their own experiences and some children have shared how they have dealt with difficult situations when they were online. They made up a list of ways to stay safe online which included always telling an adult if something worries or upsets you, not giving out any personal information, not going on sites or games which have an age restriction and never agreeing to meet someone you have met online. Well done P5.

In P6 Alisha and Isabella volunteered to teach the class how to read Roman Numerals, as questions were cropping up on Sumdog (online maths site) and some children weren't sure how to answer them. Both girls showed excellent leadership skills and P6, as usual, listened intently. Everyone enjoyed the quiz at the end of the lesson and agreed that they are feeling much more confident with their new-found knowledge. The children are also getting an opportunity to develop their presenting skills by performing poetry to the class in their reading groups.

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Thanks to Mrs Powrie for her input during our literacy lessons to make our presentations more dramatic! In PE, Mrs Leck is teaching P6 how to play volleyball. The photos below show the children improving their 'dig' and 'volley' skills during the lesson.

In Secondary we have been specifically focused on Five Ways to Wellbeing this week, using a variety of tasks in Tutor Time to think about and discuss wellbeing. We also ran healthy breakfasts for individual year groups in the Library each morning. Health and Wellbeing has been a focus throughout the school since our return in August and will remain so. I have attached a helpful guide for parents from PKC on supporting our young people.

Good luck to S4 who start their prelims next week and remember there is study time and breakfast from 8.30am each morning in the Library. There is up-dated information from pupils and parents about how National 5 qualifications will be assessed and the associated timeline now available on the SQA website. Please follow the links for learners and for parents and carers

Here are some dates for your diary over the coming weeks –

- Parent Council meeting on Tuesday 15 December at 6.30pm on Teams, so please contact the Parent Council on Facebook or phone the school for further details.
- Wear a Christmas Jumper Day from Friday 18 to Wednesday 23 December. *Please do not buy a new jumper for this, as many staff and children decorate and customise a jumper that they already have. It's much more creative and eco friendly!
- Nursery and Primary Christmas parties on Friday 18 December with a special visitor expected.
- Movie Night on Monday 21 December from 3.30-6pm.

Have a lovely weekend.

Take care

Elaine Liney