



HILL WEST
Primary

FOUR OAKS

THE HILL WEST HERALD

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ISSUE 6



Christmas Time Nativity Story

AUTUMN TERM 2014

Message from the Head Teacher

It is an enormous privilege to be the Head Teacher at Hill West Primary School as I have the opportunity to work alongside great colleagues and the most delightfully engaging children. My return this week has allowed me to marvel in the commitment and dedication of our staff and their unfaltering devotion to the children in our care. I spent my first day back in school analysing pupil progress data and evaluating this against our new primary curriculum. Our children have made great gains again this term and this is not only evident in their books and the data on progress but is also reiterated by parents. I was speaking to a Dad on the playground just this morning who was commenting on how much his young son had progressed in his first four months in school. These conversations are enriching and humbling. On my second day back I was able to enjoy Christmas lunch with children and parents and also catch up with staff about their exploits this term; including Tanzania and Aberdovey. On Wednesday I met with Sir Chris and Mrs Leeson to talk about our respective leadership roles and the importance of excellent communication and on-going leadership coaching and mentoring for leaders across school. I know you will agree that Mrs Leeson has done a fantastic job in my absence and I am indebted to her. On Thursday I was lucky enough to lead both assemblies; this is where I really got into my stride. Being with the children is the best part of my job and the excitement of Christmas was palpable. Today of course, I am writing to you and then enjoying Christmas parties with the children and Christmas lunch with the staff. I am certain that I have the best job in the world! I am so pleased to be back in the bosom of Hill West and I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous new year.





Learning Partnership News

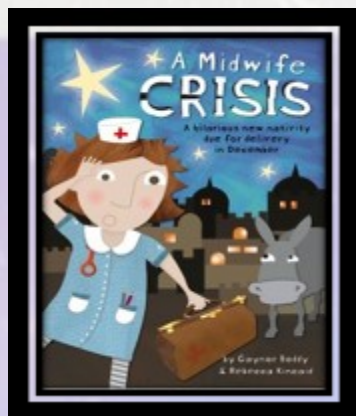
Message from Sir Chris Stone

All our schools have leaders who are considered to be inspirational but the schools are also full of creative and dynamic practitioners. Our successful schools, therefore, are not just in the hands of one person but bear the hall-mark of excellence throughout for that same enthusiasm is to be found in the classroom assistants, teachers and support staff. The teachers and school leaders work together to create a curriculum that motivates not only the pupils/students but themselves too, and in all of our seven schools an enthusiastic and committed group of volunteers involving community groups, parents, grandparents and others contributes to it.

If there is one characteristic that could mark out our Learning Partnership schools it is the provision of a personalised and creative curriculum. Each leadership group knows itself and its community, especially the pupils/students, and every day matches the learning, specifically and accurately, to that need. It is the ability to treat every day as something new and every child as an individual that makes our schools shine through in our commitment to rich learning experiences.

Our leaders at all levels want to see exciting and motivational activities available for all our pupils/students. Whether using another's ideas, adapting published suggestions, devising an entirely new timetable or enlisting volunteers, they have contextualised approaches to fit our individual communities' needs in order to impact on learners' future lives. In doing so, our school leaders understand that it is not only curriculum content that matters but approaches, motivation and attitude generated through appropriate pedagogy.

For our school leaders, the statutory framework simply sets an entitlement to basic provision; the real learning is always to be found through layers and layers of professional creativity, to create a curriculum that is totally personalised to the contexts of our individual schools, dynamic not static, and responsive not to politics but to our local communities' needs.



YEAR 2 NATIVITY

The magic of Christmas has come alive this autumn, with Joseph, Mary, Angel Gabriel and a midwife keeping us company for a long time to come.



It's that time of the year again, Christmas tree shopping, present wrapping, chocolate eating and best of all our school's nativity. The year 2 nativity has arrived and is making its presence known across the whole school, with children humming *No Room at the Inn* on their way to the lunch hall and parents belting out *Baa Baa Bethlehem* on their journey home. Never before have we felt such festive cheer. Year 2 has been ignited with passion for this play and we are determined to make this nativity one to be remembered for a long time to come.

Since the nativity first arrived on our door step the year 2 children have been clutching their scripts with excitement and intrigue. Myself and Mrs Burton are greeted each day by a chorus of "are we practising our nativity today?", reflecting the devotion that is given to this special performance. The children of year 2 have been working tirelessly to ensure the nativity goes off with a bang and never fizzles out.



A love of brass

Music has always been a part of my life and when I started to play the horn in the local village brass band at age 10, it accelerated and became a huge part of my life. I worked my way through up the training band and through the local music centres as I progressed in school and was lucky enough to be given the principal horn position of the National Youth Brass Band of Wales when I was 18. Music became such a big part of my life that I decided to go and study it at University! It was here that I joined the Jaguar Land Rover Bank and where my hobbies are today.



The Jaguar Land Rover Band are one of the top brass bands in the Midlands and I'm lucky enough to play for them! Unlike 'Brassed Off!' you

don't have to work down a mine to be part of a brass band .

Brass bands are split into leagues like football, so that they are given the correct difficulty of



piece. The top section is the championship section, where Jaguar Land Rover play, so as you can imagine, they are not easy pieces to play and do require some practice!

On a contest day, every band will turn up for the draw. Nobody ever wants the number one draw, it's very unlucky to play first! Once this happens, the judges, who don't know the order, have to sit behind a makeshift tent with their pen, paper and score to follow the music, so that they cannot be biased towards any band. They listen to every band play and it is their job to place everybody, and if you are lucky enough to be the winner, it is the best feeling in the world.



During my time with Jaguar Land Rover we have been crowned Midland Area champions, Bolsover Entertainment champions and runners up for many other contests. One of my highlights has been competing in the National Final Brass Band Championships of Great Britain held in the Royal Albert Hall, it was truly incredible.

Playing in brass bands has always been an important part to my life and I hope from this you've gained an insight into the brass band

The English Curriculum at Hill West;

It will never be boring!

In September, England's curriculum changed for key stage 1, 2 and 3. In this article I aim to explain how Hill West is approaching English.

At first glance, the new curriculum may seem a little dry and prescriptive, with lists of spellings for children to learn, expectations for the teaching and learning of grammar and little mention of speaking and listening or drama.

All of this has made some schools believe that lessons should be filled with creative-free rote learning.

However this is not the case at Hill West; we are quite the opposite.

We feel that spelling needs to be taught and we are already seeing the impact on writing that this offers.

Our phonics teaching is highly developed and we teach it robustly. However, phonics is not the only tool that we provide for young readers and we work hard to teach other techniques alongside it.

Reading for pleasure is mentioned throughout the new curriculum, which is excellent news for us. Teachers at Hill West immerse their pupils in high-quality texts which link to topics that we choose to personalise learning to individuals and classes. These methods ensure that our children have a life long love of reading.

To all of our teachers, the new curriculum represents an opportunity to deliver the rigid elements in a creative, immersive learning environment and we are loving it!

What Does HWPB Mean?

To stop you guessing all day it means Hill West Pupil Blog. We have a busy team of pupils who have collaborated to design and co run a blog on our school website. They have designed our logo and held regular meetings to discuss posts and ideas... you should head straight over to the children's page on our school website and check it out.

This is the first year it has been running and we have lots of ideas for things to come, we currently have videos , photos , jokes and quizzes.

Don't delay go and visit ! In the future we plan to make it more interactive so as Hill West pupils can comment and reply exclusively so watch this space...



Teacher Interview #1 Mr Minto

© 24th October 2014 News Edit



HILL WEST PTFA

Following our newspaper selling mission at the wonderful summer fayre last year, Hill West won the Birmingham Mail competition and won a staggering £1,000!



In September 2014, the PTFA were approached by Birmingham Mail who informed us of the fantastic news of our victory. They came into school to present the cheque to our very excited children, this photo appeared in the Birmingham Mail!

The wonderful school council of Hill West researched a range of ways to spend our prize money. After much consideration and discussing this with their peers, they decided the money would be best spent on wet play toys and new attendance ted bears. Each year group are delighted with their new toys and are eager for their class to achieve 100% to look after the new attendance teds!



**THANK
YOU**

The PTFA would like to thank you all for your support at all of our events. Without you, none of this would be possible! We look forward to welcoming you at our forthcoming events. These can be viewed on the school's website.

Victorians – Schmictorians that's what I say!

What have they done for us ?

Well – there's electricity, the telephone, recorded music , cameras and radio for a start – where would the kids of today be without them ? Bored – that's where – so there's plenty to thank Victorian inventors for then – eh , parents?



Anyway, Year 6 have just been on a trip to Shugborough Hall to experience life as it was back in the 19th century. First off, they were scullery maids in the kitchen and boy, was the life of a domestic servant tough: Cooking, cleaning, ironing, washing and waiting on people hand and foot – sound familiar ladies?



Then they were off to the schoolroom – the cane , 3Rs , the Lord's Prayer, slates and ink pens for writing , blackboards , back straighteners and finger stocks and the left-handed children as the spawn of the devil – does this sound like Miss Hyde's classroom?

Finally a guide tour of the rest of the Victorian area, including the transport museum, the laundry , servants' dining hall , stables and brewery –



“Dominic, Izzy and Megan’s first term at Wonderful Woodpeckers” by Isabel Curry, Megan Dayus and Dominic Longmore

Hi Everyone! We are going to tell you about some of the things we have been up to at Woodpecker's in our first term.

When we came into Woodpeckers for the very first time we felt a little bit nervous but we felt excited too. It was really warm and sunny when we started School after the Summer Holidays so we did lots of activities outside, we played Football with Mr Minto on the field and got a little bit muddy! We used the trim trail, tyres and outdoor classroom as well. As it got colder we couldn't go on the trim trail or tyres as much as we used to so we started to play games inside. For Halloween we made some creepy, ugly spiders and spooky looking ghosts from material and for Fireworks night we made some chalk pictures and did some chalking on the playground to make our own fireworks.

Now it is nearly Christmas time the weather is freezing and dark and we have been inside more. We have been on the computers in the library to write our own stories and started to make some winter crafts like paper snowflakes, polar bears and lanterns. We are also looking forward to the Woodpeckers Ping Pong tournament!

We have all enjoyed our first term at Woodpeckers and we are also excited for next term!



The First Weeks of School

So the end of the first half-term is fast approaching and it is hard to believe that the Reception children have only been at school for 7 weeks! They have achieved so much already! All of the children have adjusted to the new environment and new routines so well, with our most important aim- for the children to feel comfortable and secure- being achieved.

Each child is viewed as an individual with specific needs being met in appropriate ways, and with individuality being encouraged. We foster independence and each child is encouraged to reach their full potential. Over the past weeks we have got to know their individual personalities, interests and needs. Our curriculum reflects this and balances a range of developmental experiences focusing both on indoor and outdoor activities. The children have really enjoyed using our outdoor classroom so far this term and thoroughly enjoyed putting their wellies on and going for an Autumn Walk through the forest area!



The children are demonstrating their independence more and more each day, whether this is; changing for P.E, unbuttoning their coat or negotiating with a friend. Each of these being a significant achievement towards their learning journey.

The term so far has provided the children with a great start to what is going to be a great year with our Reception children-we just know it!

PLEASE ENSURE
THAT YOUR CHILD
HAS THEIR PE KIT
IN SCHOOL EVERY
DAY, AND THAT
EACH ITEM IS
CLEARLY
LABELLED WITH
THEIR NAME.

Curriculum PE

For the love of sport...

This academic year has seen the introduction of a new National Curriculum for PE, with an increased focus on developing fitness, competition and progression across different areas of sport: Games, Gymnastics, Dance, Outdoor and Adventurous and Athletics.

At Hill West our PE curriculum is designed around these key aims and linked to competitive events taking part around the area. Each half term a year group has two foci. One of these is taught by myself and the other by the class teacher.

In PE lessons we aim to

challenge the children both in terms of their aerobic capacity and ability, in order that they improve with both. We also support the children in developing their teamwork, fair play and tactical skills.

Children are taught basic skills, for example the five gymnastic shapes or types of pass, and work towards applying them, for example in their own sequence or in a game or competitive event.

Children take part in PE lessons with a great deal of enthusiasm as you can see from our Twitter posts and the photographs on this page!

Spring 1 topics:

R - Dance and Footwork (skipping, running and changing direction)

Y1 - Gymnastics and Athletics

Y2 - Gymnastics and Athletics

Y3 - Indoor Athletics and Football

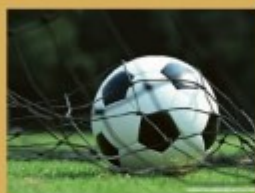
Y4 - Football and Indoor Athletics

Y5 - Dance and Netball

Y6 - Gymnastics and Netball

MISS ROWE
PPA PE TEACHER





Our Football Team

RESULTS SO FAR IN THE LEAGUE:

VS TOWN
JUNIOR 5-4

VS LITTLE
ASTON 7-2

VS HOLLY-
FIELD 13-0

THIS YEAR'S TEAM

Kahrel
Jack
Lois
Sinai
Ryan
Owen
Jamie
Jude
Zak
Omar
Osca

Fantastic start to the season!

This year's football team have had a tremendous start to the season. The close-knit group have worked well as a team and entered each match with a positive and determined attitude.

Last season the school team missed out on winning the league due to their goal difference. As you can see from this year's results, goal difference will not be a problem this season!

The children have begun to nominate their



own "Player of the match," after each game. Winner so far are:

Vs Four Oaks—Kahrel and Jack

Vs Little Aston—Jamie (debut and scored!)

Vs Hollyfield—Kahrel (a whopping 6 goals!)

Many thanks to Miss Hyde for arranging the

matches, to Mr Minto for being our referee and for Mr. Maguire's continued support, management and coaching.

We have now taken a break over the winter and matches will resume in March.

Cup results: We're in the Quarter Finals!



The team have also progressed to the quarter finals of the cup, beating Maney Hill in the first round 10-3 and Four Oaks in the second round, 4-1.

MISS ROWE
PPA PE TEACHER

SPORTING ROUND UP!

All the latest sporting action from Autumn 1

Achievements

- Year 4 mixed football team came **third** in their 7-a-side football tournament.
- Year 3/4 athletics team came **third** in a multi-skills event.
- Year 6 Football Team are through to the **quarter finals** of the cup and are currently **FIRST** in their league.

Other Events

Boys cross country runners are currently 6th in the league.

Girls cross country runners are currently 11th in the league.

Y5/6 Mixed Hockey Team competed against 19 other teams.

Y5/6 Athletics Team came 5th in the large school athletics

Year 3 Mixed Football team competed in the Y3/4 7-a-side football tournament.

This year, along with some of our partner schools, we have rejoined the Wilson Stuart Active Society. This has meant that we are able to offer children Hill West a wider variety of sports in which to compete in as well as increasing the number of schools that the children

compete against.

As well as extra curricular events organized through the Wilson Stuart Active Society, we have had lots of other things going on!

⇒ Funded swimming lessons taking place at Fairfax swimming pool.

⇒ Bikeability Level 1 and 2 course.

⇒ Aston Villa Regional Tournament.

⇒ Aston Villa working with children in school.

⇒ Children using gymnastics facilities at Arthur Terry.

⇒ Participation in a local dance festival, where children were able to



Y5/6 competing in Indoor Athletics

share their dance routine learnt in lessons.

We look forward to more sporting activities next term.



Enjoying Aston Villa Football!

Sports Funding

After the success of the London 2012 Olympics, the government have set out to provide all schools with a sports funding grant. Between 2013 to 2016, over £450 million will be distributed to schools and is 'designed to help primary schools improve the quality

of the PE and sport activities they offer their pupils.'

At Hill West Primary school, we have two main long-term aims:

⇒ To develop teaching and provision in Physical Education so that all children make good or

better progress.

⇒ To implement sustainable initiatives that enable maximum impact on children's health, fitness and lifestyle.

For more information about how our sports funding is being spent, please see our website.

2014-2015

Support Staff Governor
Miss Gurpreet Patter

My first term as a governor has been enjoyable, informative and scary!!!!

Deciding to become a governor at Hill West was something that I decided to do without giving it any thought for it only to be one the most rewarding roles I have undertaken during my 13 years at Hill West. It has given me a new prospective to how things are run and how school is managed. I have a very good working knowledge of the schools daily running but being a governor had made me see the bigger picture.

Since being appointed I have attended many meetings. I'm still finding my feet but the important thing I'm finding is what a vital role the governors play at Hill West to ensure that staff, parents and most importantly the children be given an enjoyable, safe learning journey.



About me

I was born in Newcastle upon Tyne and moved to Sutton Coldfield in 1998. I then attended Sutton College and got my Qualification in Child Care and Education. During this time I was on placement at Langley Special School and was offered a job as a Learning Support assistant for children with English as an additional language, which I thoroughly enjoyed. Following this I was offered a job at Hill West as a one to one for a young boy with a statement. My role at Hill West has changed significantly over the years and I have worked across both key stages as a Teaching Assistant in class and more recently I have become responsible for targeted reading support across Key Stage One.

I have worked at Hill West for over 12 years and during this time I have seen many changes, however one thing remains the same; Hill West has always been a school where children continue to develop not only academically but into well rounded, confident members of society. I feel privileged to work here and am excited to take up my new role as Governor; contributing to a different aspect of school life.



MISS MCNALLY AND MR LACKENBY IN TANZANIA



In April 2014, Miss McNally and I were presented with the opportunity to continue with the Connecting Classrooms Project that Dr. Clarke and Miss Stone had previously been part of, which was funded by the British Council and organised by Childreach.

Day 1: Arrival



We set off very early in the morning at 4am and, after a very long nine hour flight, we arrived in Tanzania to be met by our taxi driver, Honest, and our translator, John. On our journey to the hotel, John was very kindly sharing his knowledge about the region of Kilimanjaro and the people who live there. Almost an hour later, we arrived at the Moshi Keys Hotel and settled into our comfy rooms for the night's sleep but not before spending an hour chasing a gecko gecko out of the room (*Gecko nil*, Mr. L 1).

Day 2: Our First Day at James Ole Millya

The next morning, Honest, our taxi driver for the week, drove us through the centre of Moshi. It was a very humbling experience to see the levels of poverty that some people were living in and this seemed to intensify as we left Moshi town and headed along the rural dust tracks towards the school. People in these areas typically lived in small houses that were constructed of clay bricks, which they made themselves using mud from the surrounding land.

When we stepped out of our taxi we were greeted by a chorus of beautiful singing from the children of James Ole Millya. We were quickly met by Monika, the Headteacher, and introduced to the other staff. Shortly after, the children treated us to a wonderful dance and gymnastic packed performance. The children were often left in their classrooms by themselves and had to study independently. In the staffroom, we were presented with a dish of rice, banana and a fish stew that the cook had kindly prepared for us and this became our staple diet for the rest of the week. During lunch, we presented the staff with the resources we had brought over and it was very touching to see how enthusiastic and happy they were to receive them.



On safari



We awoke early the following day and were picked up by our translator, John. John had kindly arranged for us to have a private safari, which meant we had a full jeep to ourselves. We set off just after 7am for our five-hour journey to the Manyana wildlife reserve. It was incredible to see the landscape and culture as we drove through Arusha and out into the African plains. After a very long journey, we arrived at the park. We were immediately greeted by a group of 30 baboons walking in single file through the forest. We stood in awe at the array of wildlife that walked freely around us: zebras, black faced monkeys, warthogs, giraffes, wildebeest, hippos, gazelles and finally, out of nowhere, a family of elephants less than 1 metre from the jeep.

We ended the day with a drive up to the top of the reserve, watching the sunset across the land. A short while later, we arrived at our campsite, where we discovered we were not camping, but 'Glamping' with beds, hot showers and best of all, a magnificent view of the sunrise over the plains.



On the second day of our safari, we headed to Ngorongora crater. The views from the top were breathtaking - a vast expanse of land surrounded by towering hills that were hidden in rolling clouds. On our drive into the crater, we passed a number of Maasai tribespeople herding their cows towards pastures in the crater. We visited a Maasai village and were taken aback by the difference in our two cultures but the people were very welcoming and let us perform their traditional dances with them. Afterwards, we were invited into a tribesman's home where he explained the traditions of his people. Following an adventurous

day, in which we encountered lions, hippos, hyenas, giraffes and a black rhino, we headed back to our hotel and prepared ourselves for the week of teaching ahead.





Throughout the week, we got to work with a number of classes from Kindergarten to Standard 6, each class with about 50 students. This was difficult at times, particularly when some classes had age ranges that spanned 4 years. However, it was wonderful to see the children engaged with, and enjoying, the new teaching styles that we brought to the school. We taught a variety of different lessons using the resources we had brought with us. The children and teachers loved using the mini-whiteboard we brought with us and the teachers commented how this made assessing the children's work much quicker and easier.

A teacher at the school commented that the education system in Tanzania is based on children learning from government-authored textbooks and that there were no creative approaches used in the classroom in Africa. Therefore we used our final two days of teaching to model a more creative approach. During this lesson, other teachers in the school had gathered at the window of the classroom to observe how much the children were enjoying this new approach to learning. In addition to our teaching, we also wanted to ensure that we provided the school with a stimulating and appealing classroom environment and so we created displays, which were flexible and could be used by the teachers as a resource.

Each night after school, the teacher and the Headteacher, Monika, kindly invited us into their homes. We were very grateful for the hospitality we were shown as the teachers had clearly gone out of their way to prepare delicious meals for us and invite their friends and neighbours around to meet us.

On our final day the school had been cleaned by the children from top to bottom, with flowers for decoration and Monika had invited the Education Minister, all local Headteachers and parents to the event. The Education Minister made a speech, along with the Childreach Ambassador, thanking us for the work we had done in the school. During the Minister's speech, he told us that the teachers would never again teach in the same way and would instead be 'amongst' the children and show them more love.

Reflection: We couldn't stop thinking about how privileged we had been to spend time with such wonderful children, who have so little in terms of material possessions but have so much in terms of human kindness, passion for learning, positive spirit and a general love of life. Our memories of Tanzania will continue to have an enormous impact on our general attitudes to life and we would like to thank everyone involved in this wonderful project, particularly Monika and all of our new friends at James Ole Millya. We look forward to welcoming one of their teachers, Mr. Mroso, to Hill West next year.





Hill West Primary School Library

New School Year New Librarians.

Well a huge welcome back to all the children and what an exciting time it is. At the start of the new academic year, the year six children get the opportunity to apply to be Hill West Primary School Librarians. Year six children were gathered together, they were told all about the role and the duties that were involved.

Reading to younger children within school, taking on the responsibilities of the library ensuring all the books are taken care of, that it is organised into a friendly order for children to access, and to help out with any book fairs or author visits.

The children were given a week to apply, I received over 40 applications!

It was going to be almost impossible to select 5 children to be the new school librarians.....To make it fair all the names of the children were covered up and after reading all the applications in detail and enlisting some valuable help from Mrs Cook. The decision was made.

May I introduce to you the new Year 6 Librarians for this academic year.....



Written By Mrs Kerry-Lynn Lampitt

Hill West Primary School Librarian

Megan Dayus

Alexander Micklasz

Isabelle Fennell

Alex Tuckwell

Peter Thane

Anti



Bullying

WEEK



Well done Hillwest !

17th November was Anti bullying week and every body got involved Pupils from year 6 kick started the week off by delivering a super assembly. The power point was arranged and presented by Omar Ismail and Sinai Ejechi, a dance routine was choreographed and performed by Kahrel Reddin, Joe Geddes and

Owen.Wall.

Well done boys! !

Who did what?

A range of work from super heroes by reception and year 1, to role play, demonstrating feelings, by year 4, characteristics of a good friend by year 2 and 3, cyber bullying by year 5 and text bullying by year 6 have been discussed this week.

Workshops A big thank you goes out to students from Arthur Terry who delivered a work shop to year 5. This included word searches, , a fantastic power point about "cyber bullying" and finally ,to design an anti bullying poster..This was their first presentation that they had put together and presented.They covered all areas of cyber bullying and were very professional and confident in their delivery .

It was a good week that was had by all. Again a huge thank you to everyone for participating and making it an enjoyable week.



Mrs Wendy Pick
Year 1 TA



My first term at Hill West

In the blink of an eye the end of my first term at Hill West has arrived, and what an enjoyable and exciting, yet busy few weeks it has been!

This term has been brilliant so far and has opened my eyes as to how much Hill West has to offer to the extremely lucky students that learn here.

Before embarking upon my journey with Hill West, I attended The University of Birmingham; an institution that I always hope to have connections with.

After achieving a First Class Honours Degree in Bsc Sport, Physical Education and Coaching Science, I went on to study further for my Teaching Training.

As someone that has a range of interests and hobbies, I feel that Hill West, with its Creative Ethos and Curriculum, has allowed me to infuse lots of these passions within my teaching. I have always had a passion for music and musical theatre, so singing with my class and teaching dance within our PE unit has been a great opportunity to pass this on to the children and introduce them to learning through an artistic medium.

A personal highlight this term has been getting stuck into the numeracy curriculum with the students, who have worked hard to absorb and apply lots of new (and sometimes tricky) skills! In addition to this, it has been fantastic to see children using their imaginations when writing stories and also thinking more maturely when learning about renewable energy sources – it is very encouraging to see them so enthused when learning about current economical topics. We produced some brilliant persuasive letters addressed to the Government, encouraging them to think from our perspective. Our Inspire workshop was also a highlight of the term; it was wonderful to work not only with the children, but with parents too!

Next term, I am particularly looking forward to our habitats topic and our class assembly – it will certainly be a busy and fun filled term!

Finally, I must say a large thank you to all of the staff at Hill West for their support and guidance throughout the term – your advice has been invaluable! I am looking forward to another exciting term with Year 4 and the rest of the school!

Have a great Christmas break!

Miss Humphreys



ART across the school

It has been exciting to return to school with a new role. I have really enjoyed getting stuck into the art provision at Hill West.

One of the best things about my new role is having the pleasure of teaching nearly every class in the school! (I'm sure I will get to meet wrens very soon too).



By Mrs Langhorn



Art is an important part of our curriculum. It allows children to get lost in creativity, but can also help to teach them things they never knew about themselves. Children will have the opportunity to learn from across the spectrum of skills including drawing, painting, textiles, collage and sculpture. As well as looking in detail at influential artists from different times and cultures.

Already in our first term children have completed projects in clay, collage, chalk pastel and sewing. We have followed movements in Cubism, Fauvism and Optical art, and looked at the works of Paul Cezanne, Andy Goldsworthy and LS Lowry.



Hello! I am Miss Brown, the new Squirrels teacher. I have loved my first term and Hill West Primary School but what an emotional rollercoaster!

It has been **terrifying**, from the unfailing honesty about how interesting your lessons are, of how you have chosen to dress that day, to doing assemblies in front of other members of staff on quite meaningful topics you have never considered.



Exhausting, it is so different from my PGCE placement school where I did a bit of teaching and a lot of observing. One grammar session a day felt like I had completed a triathlon. Teaching 30 children all day everyday - how to do long division, where India is and what it would be like to live there, the importance of getting 8 hours sleep and many other things. But it's not just your normal lessons that teach you things – there are the questions from children that amaze you – ‘Yeah, but Miss WHY do we do it like that?!’ – ‘Why not just do short division? Then maths would take half the time!’.

Interesting, exploring and surrounding each topic we teach is an incredible way to get your class and yourself completely absorbed in a topic. It consumes everything we teach and leads to new questions that you hadn't thought about before. It forces you to branch out from the usual topics covered in schools and be **creative** in the things we learn. Especially incorporating the outdoors into the classroom!

Fun! I love going home and explaining to family and friends that today we acted out the digestive system, or today we learnt how to dig and plant trees, or used iPads to record poetry recitals that the children wrote themselves, or used chocolate in our science experiment! You never really know what you will be doing, as you never really expect the questions children will ask!



So by the end of the first term I was completely exhausted! Teaching is a rewarding job and it's the moments when a child hands you a poem that he wrote in his lunch time, or someone explains to you why the plural of cactus is cacti-pus! It is a job that makes you question things all the time and I couldn't be happier to be part of the Squirrels team at Hill West.