

THE HILL WEST HERALD



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ACE; Ambitious, Curious, and Ever-respectful



Message from the Head Teacher

By Dr Beth Clarke

One of the most wonderful things to happen this term has been the reintroduction of our school assemblies. The benefits of coming together collectively cannot be underestimated and these opportunities were sorely missed during the restrictions that came as a result of the pandemic. We have come to realise that our school assemblies are one of the most important aspects of our school's curriculum. Its potential to nurture a positive school ethos that stresses care for self, others and the pursuit of ambitious, curious and every-respectful behaviours is immeasurable. It powerfully nurtures the development of intrapersonal intelligence.

Our assemblies take place every day in school and they are a time when the school community, or a part of it, meets together to share aspects of life that are of worth and communicate matters of significance. In England, an act of collective worship is usually held as part of an assembly too as it has been a legal requirement since the 1944 Education Act. Our assemblies, are an important feature of our school's life. They act as one of the main ways by which we create our positive reflective ethos and promote our values-based education. Assemblies usually involve a presentation or a story (usually with a moral theme) and time of quiet reflection that enables our pupils to develop the deepest values and aspirations of the human spirit. I thought it may be useful if I shared one of the stories I have read to the children this term, which I selected out of 'The Book of Hopes by Katherine Rundell'. It is called **Bag for Life** and was written **by Joseph Elliot**.

"What's in the bag?" I ask for the umpteenth time.

Umpteenth... Such a weir word. Ump-teenth, ump-teenth. The image of what an ump monster might look like appears in my head, complete with row upon row of garish teeth. It's funny how your mind occupies itself when you've got nothing to do but walk. I push aside a low-hanging branch so it doesn't thwack me in the face.

"You'll find out soon, Amila," says Dad. His answers are always vague when I ask about the bag. "I'm saving it for when we really need it". He's told me that before.

Dad's been clutching the bag ever since we entered the forest. I'm not sure where or when he picked it up. It's the only thing either of us are holding; we left too quickly to take anything else. The bag is from a supermarket – it's one of those 'bag for life' ones. It's orange and the writing on it is cracked and faded. The plastic's too thick to see through. Trust me, I've tried.

There's food inside, I know that much. It has to be food. Dad says we have to save it for when we're desperate, but I don't know how much more desperate we need to be. We've been walking for two days already and all I've eaten is a handful of blackberries and some wild mushrooms, which made my stomach cramp.

From the look of its weight and the way the bag swings, I think its tins. Maybe tuna or baked beans or spaghetti hoops. Spaghetti hoops are my favourite. On toast, with loads of butter. My mouth starts salivating at the thought of it. Or perhaps it's dog food. Right now, I'm so hungry I'd even eat that. I'd probably enjoy it too.



“Can we eat the food yet?”

“No.”

“What about now?”

“No.”

What about now?”

“No.”

That’s about the extent of our conversation in the days that follow. My feet are sore, my back aches, and my whole body feels like it’s falling apart. We’re never getting out of here. I keep my eyes on the bag for life as it sways back and forth, back and forth. Maybe it’s not tins. Maybe it’s chocolate or biscuits or –

“Look!” says Dad. “Over there.” There’s a massive grin on his face. I was so lost in my thoughts, I hadn’t even noticed we’d left the forest. I follow Dad’s finger and see the buildings. There’s smoke coming out of the chimneys.

“People!” I say.

“We’re going to all right,” says Dad.

“But what about the food?...” I point at the bag. “We never ate it.”

“No,” says Dad. “We didn’t”.

Then he does what I’ve been wanting him to do ever since we entered the forest; he opens the bag.

I hold my breath and peer inside.

“Oh,” I say, and then I understand.

At the bottom of the bag, smooth and grey and speckled with dirt, are three large stones.



Arthur Terry Learning Partnership News

By Dr Beth Clarke

In case you missed it! We have been selected for the second round of the Prime Minister's transformative school rebuilding programme!

We are so excited to soon be benefitting from new, modern, energy efficient school buildings as a further 50 schools are confirmed for the Prime Minister's ten-year rebuilding programme, to level up opportunities for all. Transforming education for thousands of pupils, the 50 projects announced in July 2021 build on the existing programme bringing the total number of schools being upgraded to 100. The School Rebuilding Programme is due to deliver 500 rebuilding projects over the next decade, which will benefit tens of thousands of pupils over their lifetime.



The schools included in the latest round include primary, secondary and special and alternative provision schools, with more than 60 per cent of the schools being located in the North and the Midlands. The rebuilds and refurbishments will create modern education environments, providing new facilities from classrooms and science labs, to sports halls and dining rooms. The new school buildings will also be net-zero carbon in operation, helping meet the Government's net zero target.

The then Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson said: "The environment children are taught in makes such an enormous difference to their education. This programme will give thousands more young people the chance to learn in world class school facilities, levelling up opportunity and making sure every young person has the chance to succeed, progress and fulfil their potential. As we build back better after the pandemic, with buildings that are net-zero in operation, this major ten-year rebuilding programme will help to shape the education of not only children now, but for years to come."

We are of course thrilled to have been chosen for this ambitious project, which will include state-of-the-art facilities and modernisation to future proof Hill West and Improve the learning environment for all our pupils. This rebuild will transform our school – not only bringing with it amazing opportunities for our pupils now, but also for all the pupils who are to pass through Hill West in the future. We are extremely proud of the Hill West community and all that we have achieved together. This programme will enable us to build on our successes to date and to share those benefits with our children and families, both at our school and across the wider Arthur Terry Learning Partnership.

Andrew Mitchell, MP for Sutton Coldfield, said: "I am delighted for Hill West Primary School, the ATLP and our community by this announcement. This significant investment will bring a welcome boost to our schools, resulting in lasting improvements and opportunities for all. As an avid supporter of schools in my constituency of the royal town of Sutton Coldfield... I am pleased to be part of this exciting development."

Funding for individual projects in the School Rebuilding programme will be determined when the scope and delivery plans at each school are developed. Projects will range from replacing or refurbishing individual buildings through to whole school rebuilds. The most advanced projects from the first round of the programme will begin construction in autumn 2021. The programme will help to create jobs, apprenticeships and training opportunities across England, with suppliers offering training and apprenticeships as part of their work on the projects. The majority of the confirmed projects are expected to complete within three to five years. We are awaiting confirmation from the DfE of their ambitious plans for Hill West and of course will share the details with you when we are in receipt of them.

Our First Half Term in Reception (Autumn 2021)

By Miss Sophie Roberts



What an exciting time we have had already! Children have begun their journeys into education and have had a happy start to their school careers. In Reception, we place emphasis on nurture, learning through play and exploration, where the well-being of our children is at the heart of everything we do, enabling our children to gain a deep level of mastery in their learning and development.

The Foundation Stage Curriculum is made up of seven areas of learning and development. These are divided into three prime areas and four specific areas. At Hill West, we ensure that the Prime Areas are incorporated into the children's learning throughout the year. The **Prime areas** are important because they lay the foundations for children's success in all other areas of learning and of life. These are:

- ✓ **Communication and Language**
- ✓ **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
- ✓ **Physical Development**



Development in the Prime Areas enables our children to go on and master the skills within the Specific Areas, providing them with the essential skills and knowledge to participate successfully in society. Personal, Social and Emotional Development underpins all we do in Reception at Hill West. We support our children by helping them to interact effectively and develop positive beliefs in themselves and others. Children at Hill West are given many opportunities to speak and listen in a range of situations, and to develop their confidence and skills by expressing themselves. Our wonderful school grounds provide our Reception children with the opportunity to access daily learning in all curriculum areas outdoors, but particularly encourage both gross and fine motor physical development.

These **Prime Areas** are fundamental to a child's development. They are then supported by the **Specific Areas**. The Specific Areas strengthen the Prime Areas and include:

- ✓ **Literacy**
- ✓ **Mathematics**
- ✓ **Understanding the World**
- ✓ **Expressive Arts and Design**

All of our Reception children are already making excellent progress - we are seeing their wonderful characters coming out. They have thoroughly enjoyed exploring their classrooms and outdoor area, demonstrating great social skills and a thirst for learning. We are very proud of them all!



Our First Half Term in Year 1 (Autumn 2021)

By Miss Emily Arkinstall

Year 1 has been bursting with excitement, curiosity and laughter since we returned six weeks ago. Swifts and Swallows have settled beautifully into their new classrooms and new school routine. We have immersed ourselves into our new phonics structure using Little Wandle Letters and Sounds to help us with our early reading.



To start our Year 1 adventure, we read the Oliver Jeffers text, 'What We'll Build'. As part of our whole school reading day, we made predictions, acted out scenes from the story and sequenced the main events. We continued to develop our understanding of the story through concentrating on inferring the characters feelings by closely

examining facial expressions and the text. Inspired by the buildings in the text, we then designed, made and evaluated our own structures using a range of materials to join together.



We then moved on to our next key text, 'Owl Babies' written by Martin Waddell. We loved exploring the story of Sarah, Percy and Bill and loved to join in with the repeated phrase, "I miss my Mummy!" We also read some non-fiction texts about Owls and learnt the difference between fiction and non-fiction. Using all the facts that we had gathered about Owls, we created our own non-fiction text, ensuring that we formed letters correctly on the line. This linked to our learning in Science, understanding that Owls are nocturnal and are birds of prey. In Art, we experimented with different materials to create Owl collages using tissue paper, cotton buds, and feathers. We also discussed the importance of family in the story and linked it to our own homes, considering who is in our own family.



After Owl Babies, we moved on to the text, 'Funny Bones', by Alan and Janet Ahlberg. We learnt the predictable phrases in the story and performed the start of the story in groups. We also wrote sentences for the beginning and middle of the story focusing on using finger spaces and orally composing the sentence before writing it. We even created our own ending to the story and



imagined that the skeletons come to the Hill West Halloween disco! In Science, we labelled our body parts and linked the body parts that we use for our senses. We revisited the NSPCC PANTS rule and discussed the importance of staying safe. In Music, we learnt the skeleton dance and loved copying the movements of the skeleton.



As well as all the learning we have been doing in the classroom, we have also been lucky enough to be participating in weekly Positive P.E sessions. Mrs Curran has been coming in on a Tuesday morning and showing us different ways to move using equipment. We have loved it!



Our First Half Term in Year 2 (Autumn 2021)

By Mrs Kerry Lynch

Wow! What an amazing term this has been! We have thoroughly enjoyed meeting our new Kingfishers and Owls this term. Our first day started with a whole school Reading Day, it was truly amazing. The children were introduced to the text 'What We'll Build' by Oliver Jeffers, they used a range of skills including: prediction and background information to infer what the text could be about. The children took part in a range of fun activities throughout the day linked to the key text. This included: role play, retelling the story, investigating vocabulary and puzzles.



Another memorable day has been the International French day. We had so much fun exploring France and learning how to greet people in French

(Bonjour). Enthusiastically, the children made Eifel Towers from Spaghetti and playdough using their DT skills (thinking about the strongest shape) to make it stable and as tall as they can. After their creative building of the Eifel Tower the children had the chance to do some creative art. They were given the head and hands of the famous Mona Lisa (painted by Leonardo da Vinci in the 16th century) so they could design her hair and clothing. There were some very inventive ideas.



Year Two had a wonderful Morning during the Reading Breakfast, they relaxed with their favourite books and a tasty oat bar made by our wonderful kitchen staff. Sharing their favourite book with a friend gave them a fantastic opportunity to discuss their favourite author's with their classmates and teachers.

As part of our Geography lesson the children had chance to enjoy the last bit of sunshine whilst they created their own compass using chalk. They had to remember where to put North, West, South and East. In addition, the children had to give each other direction instructions using the correct language; they were very good at it.



Finally, we would like to say what a busy and amazing first half term it has been, we cannot wait to see what next half term has in store for us.

Our First Half Term in Year 3 (Autumn 2021)

By Ms Kelly Bailey

We have been thrilled to have Mrs Marshall join us in Year 3 this year, as well as a few new faces in class too. Everyone settled in beautifully making us all proud, as the transition from KS1 to KS2 is a big one!

During the first few weeks of term we got our heads straight into our books, doing our best to get our handwriting neat and our presentation tidy. We dived straight into ancient history learning all



about the Stone Age. We found out what life was like for people all those years ago, we couldn't believe they lived so long without fire or effective communication. We spent some time understanding what aspects of their life would have been like, we foraged and crafted our own tools, painted some cave style art and built model neolithic round houses too! Safe to say we are quite the experts now. Our knowledge of rocks from our Science lessons was very helpful as this

ensured that we selected the correct type of rock needed to make our Stone Age tools, based on their properties.

A highlight for many so far this half term has been getting to play the recorder. Holding it correctly is harder than it looks, but the children are already beginning to master this skill. The children have now learnt the notes b, a and g. They know how to follow a musical score, and understand the duration of notes such as crotchets and quavers, allowing them to play together in unison.



The children explored the story "Beegu" and have developed their understanding of empathy. They opened up their hearts to imagine how Beegu felt when she was lost. The children are now determined to make sure no one feels that way in our school; being kind and ever-respectful are values that the children in Hedgehogs and Rabbits promise to uphold.

The children have thoroughly enjoyed maths this term, and are able to calculate mentally using numbers with up to 4 digits. Of course, times tables practice is absolutely vital, as they need to have learnt all of the times tables to 12 x 12 by Year 4.



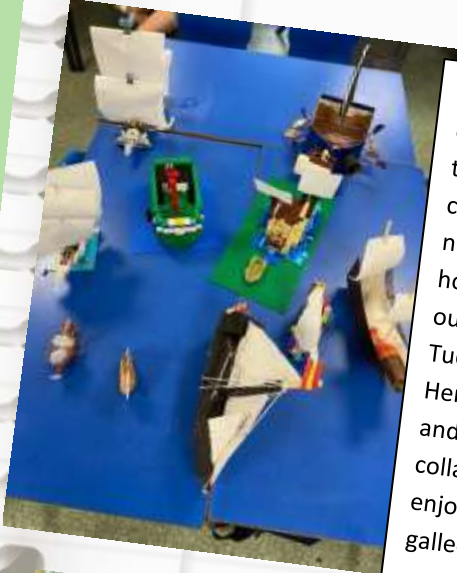
We have studied 4 different types of mountains and used maps to help us understand the physical features of each

continent around the world. In Netball, we have learnt about each position that players can play within the game, and understand where they are allowed to move and what each player's role is within a netball game. We have revised our rights and know how to keep ourselves informed. We have mastered logging in and navigating our school computer network too. Of course there is too much learning to mention here, so please keep asking us about our school day when we get home.



Our First Half Term in Year 4 (Autumn 2021)

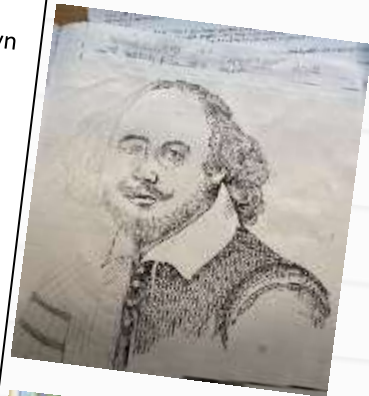
By Mr Steve George



Life in Year 4 since our return has certainly been busy – we've been trying to fit in all 13 subject areas of the curriculum every week and there's been no time to take a breath! We have, however, been able to shoehorn in lots of our overarching topic, which has been the Tudor period in History; we've studied Henry VIII and his wives, the Reformation and the Dissolution of the monasteries, collaged Tudor costume and really enjoyed making model Spanish Armada galleons.



In Art, we've tried to emulate the linear, black and white artwork of the Tudor artist John Taylor and we've made, drawn and tested electrical circuits in Science – including making a buzzer game.



In English, we've written the death scene from Macbeth, diarised the Armada and orally reviewed our favourite books; in Geography we've studied Britain's rivers. In maths, we've studied written methods of addition and subtraction and really tried hard to make it look great!



In PE, we've progressed to competitive basketball and rugby matches (without injury!) and we've stitched coasters in DT.

Some of this can be seen in the photographs that surround this prose – I think you can tell that a good time has been had by all!



Our First Half Term in Year 5 (Autumn 2021)

By Mr Ryan Horne

Year 5 started the Year by examining the ancient Greeks and their influence on the modern world. We examined the different time periods by looking at the design and decoration of different pots and discussed how we could recreate our own Greek pots based on what we examined. We then spent an afternoon learning the pinch technique for pot making before making our very own Greek pots. We then painted our pots in the style of the ancient Greeks and decorated them with a picture of one of the many tasks of Heracles.



In English, we started the year by looking at the Greek myth of Heracles. We have read about the 12 tasks of Heracles; identifying features of a myth and things that each task has in common with the other. Children wrote their own 13th task of Heracles, making sure to include the appropriate vocabulary and features.

In Maths, we have been looking at place value of numbers up to 6-digits as well as decimals. Children compared numbers with 2 decimal places and even began to add amounts of money.

We have spent much of this half term talking about the Hindu festival of Diwali. We read through the story and began to write part of the story as a play script. For the Diwali festival, we are preparing a performance of the story of Rama and Sita for parents during the first week back in school. We have been having lots of fun learning our lines, making props and even learning some amazing dances.

In PE, we have looked at the game of Dodgeball and the skills needed to play. Children spent sessions working on their throwing skills as well as their dodging skills. They have been setting up their own versions of dodgeball-related games and even participated in their own dodgeball tournaments.



Our topic in science has been Space. We started the topic by asking all of the varied questions that we had about the solar system. We learned the names of the planets as well as their order in the solar system. We made our own model solar system using items found around the school and measured their approximate distance from one another.

In addition, we have looked at the Earth's orbit around the sun, which takes 365.25 days. Every fourth year, the $\frac{1}{4}$ s add up to make a leap year! We also investigated how the Earth's spin on its axis as it orbits the sun, and due to the angle at which the axis is tilted being 23^o5 minutes North, how this affects the length of day and night and seasons within the year. We also learnt about the time zones around our planet. We finished the topic by looking at the different phases of the moon and identifying each one.



Our First Half Term in Year 6 (Autumn 2021)

By Mr Chris Ellison

Year 6 have had a fantastic start to the year. They have loved getting stuck into some challenging work and having had some normality restored to their school day. Back to busy playgrounds and assemblies in the hall. They have also loved getting stuck into their first class assembly in two years – the Harvest Hope Festival – which coincided with the ACE Champions driving the donations from across the school for the Hope Food appeal. And, it's not just the Ace Champions



that have been busy; the Rights Respecting Steering Group have been hard at work and were delighted when the school was given the Rights Respecting School Gold Award. That's not all as House Captains have been collecting house points weekly and the Senior Students have also been incredibly busy keeping breaks, lunches and assemblies running smoothly. Some fantastic exemplary behaviour all around.



In their day-to-day lesson, Year 6 have been thoroughly enjoying the great texts we've been delving into. From our class novel, *Pig Heart Boy* by Malorie Blackman, to extracts from classic texts by Mark Twain, H.G.Wells and Charles Dickens. We are currently exploring the excellent work of Neil Gaiman, whose unique and descriptive style has exposed them to a beautifully crafted narrative that uses a wide breadth of vocabulary and contextual knowledge that adds depth to his writing. The children have had to use everything they have learnt so far to make inferences about what they have read – Neil Gaiman's use of allusion has really made Year 6 think about each character and the plot carefully. They have been busy using what they have learnt to craft characters and settings for their gothic horror novellas.

In Science, Year 6 have been enjoying their physics unit on light. They have delved into complex concepts and used scientific language to describe what they understand. Children have learnt about light sources and how darkness is merely the absence of light. Following on from this they have learnt about reflection and absorption, and how different surfaces change how light is reflected, whether through diffuse or specular



reflection. Once they had learnt about these, they explored angles of incidence, reflection and how we can use these when looking at how refraction takes place when light

changes direction when it moves through a transparent material, such as glass or raindrops, to another. They explored how refraction gives us rainbows; how it makes an object 'sparkle'; how Isaac Newton discovered how we can get different colours of light from white light; and how, for more practical purposes, it is used in lenses in glasses, binoculars, and telescopes. Their learning about refraction led Year 6 to learn about the



human eye, and how quite similarly, it uses a range of components that cause the same processes to occur on a biological level.

In History, Year 6 have been learning about the Industrial Revolution and the Victorian era and how during this time, many changes took place in the living and working conditions of people in the U.K. The children started by exploring the reach of The British Empire from the 1400s to the 1900s, which eventually expanded into Asia, with Victoria being crowned the Empress of India in 1876. Children have learnt about the social class systems and how the Industrial Revolution provided opportunities for the working and middle classes, and the subsequent population boom.

Although positive for the British economy, the children learnt how this led to poor sanitation and a rise in crime in the cities. This led them to explore crime and punishment during the Victorian era and, linking to our English work, the case of John Walker.

The children examined copies of the original documents from 1874; they pulled out key archaic language that they'd never seen before and learnt their meanings. After looking at the idioms and colloquialisms of the time, the children created their newspaper reports using their arsenal of new vocabulary to ensure their writing was appropriate for the period. They included the use of formal and informal registers in speech to show the distinctions between the prosecutor and the prosecuted. To write in a clear and coherent formal tone, Year 6 used agentless passive for their headlines and practised using passive voice in their writing.



Year 6 have hit the ground running so far, and with their continued determination and optimism we're sure this is only the start of the many amazing things they will go on to achieve this year.



PE and Sporting News

By Mr Joel Holmes

It's been a rip-roaring start to the year in terms of PE and Sporting News, with the return of sporting events across our local area we have been able to celebrate the amazing sporting talent which we have across school. In my second year in the role of Physical Education lead in school, it feels like I've finally been able to take full advantage of this role and experience all of the incredible benefits of delivering high-quality PE in school.

During September I was able to get out and see what excellent teaching and learning is going on around school and gave me an opportunity to see what incredible talent is on show across Hill West. It also highlighted the need for our children to be active more than ever, with only 53.4% of children in the UK being physically active for 60 minutes or more each day in 2019 this has decreased to 51.1% in 2020 based on research conducted by Sport England. We are committed in school to offer our children at least 30 minutes of heart-raising activity through the 'Daily Mile' initiative, our PE sessions and our provisions at Break and Lunchtime. We know the positive impact this has on the physical and mental health of our young people, increasing mood and reducing feelings such as loneliness. This does, of course, leave 30 active minutes each day which need to be achieved outside of school. Whether through walking, cycling, dance, swimming or competitive sports this is vital to the development of the children at Hill West.

We have also been pleased to invite back several members of our school community from local sporting clubs to delivery high-quality coaching sessions in Rugby, Tennis and Cricket. This year has also seen us make links with an organization called 'Positive PE' which supports movement and activity for children in KS1 which promotes a love of being active as well as supporting mental health and development needs. It is an incredibly exciting time for PE in school at Hill West.

KS2 Cross Country – 21st October 2021

Our first race of the year was a tricky one for our Year 6's who attended, a huge run around the expansive fields of Bishop Walsh Catholic School was a real test of body and mind. We had some excellent individual finishers in the event with Isabel coming 10th overall in the girls race and Louie coming 26th in a hard-fought boys race.

Year 3 and 4 6-a-side Football – 22nd October 2021

An opportunity for some of our children to show off their football skills in a tournament down at Bishop Vesey's. The group stages proved difficult for our team of Year 4's who came 3rd in their group with a win and a draw in the match. The standout performer was Regan who slotted away 4 goals.

KS2 Cross Country Race – 29th October 2021

The second foray in long-distance running for our Year 5 and 6's who were tested by a lengthy run around the grounds of Bishop Vesey's Grammar School, the overall team performance was fantastic.



Year 6 Tag Rugby – 6th October 2021

In our latest event, we emerged victorious over all other schools. Having played 5 games, we managed to win 4 and draw 1 in an excellent team performance, all 12 players on our mixed team got stuck in and fought hard for each victory. The referees identified Jacob as the standout individual in the team.

Looking forwards: Year 4 Dodgeball (19th October 2021), Year 5 and 6 Commonwealth Games Festival (21st October), SEN Primary Pentathlon (Date TBC early November).

European Day of Languages

By Mrs Alison Downes

The annual European Day of Languages is celebrated on the 26th of September across Europe each year and celebrates the diversity and wealth of languages in Europe. This year at Hill West we certainly felt that celebratory atmosphere as we took the day to delve further into our chosen foreign language of French and discover more about France.

In our assemblies, both KS1 and KS2 revealed their impressive knowledge about the countries and flags of Europe. They were able to name an remarkable number of the 44 countries in Europe and could recognise several different flags. After learning that approximately 300 languages are spoken in our very own capital city of London, we celebrated the wealth of languages spoken by the children at Hill West. Brave volunteers came to the front to teach the school 'hello' in a variety of languages including Russian, Punjabi, Urdu, Italian, Lithuanian, Chinese and Welsh.



Throughout the day the focus returned to France. KS2 used their amazing French phonics knowledge from their French lessons to decode the wonderful poem 'Janvier' by Franco-Russian poet Alain Bosquet. Otters produced a short video showcasing their achievements by reciting the poem accurately; some pupils had even managed to memorise their lines for the performance (view with QR code). Great work, Otters! After studying the poem, pupils were inspired to compose their own month-based poems in English with some even opting to write in French. Wonderful efforts KS2!



Mrs Lampitt ingeniously tailored her lesson on newspaper features by using a French newspaper as the source. Again, pupils decoded the unfamiliar words using their phonics and could pronounce them accurately.

KS1 learned basic greetings and how to give their names confidently in French. It was lovely to witness their learning on Twitter in the videos they had made.



Geography gave pupils the opportunity to study a map of France and work out where key towns and cities were. They then used that knowledge to plot the route of the 2021 Tour de France, after learning a little more about the renowned race and the significance of the famous 'yellow shirt'.



In Music, the children discovered why a bridge in Avignon, though only spanning half of the river Rhone, is such a famed part of French tradition. They enjoyed singing and dancing along to the French melody.

The afternoon gave way to a more creative slant, where after learning about the huge Louvre Museum in Paris, pupils across the whole school were able to give its most famous resident, the Mona Lisa



Lisa, a modern overhaul with some truly inventive and outrageous creations. She was transformed into various guises from



cartoons, books and myths. One incarnation saw her reimagined successfully as a monkey!



Across the school everyone let their inner engineer loose to construct a mini-Eiffel Tower from plasticene and spaghetti, which turned out to be a

pesky building material, snapping easily under pressure! The task, though frustrating at times, definitely showcased the persevering nature of Hill West pupils. We can't wait to celebrate the European Day of Languages next year!



PTFA news

By Ms Clare Whelan



The pandemic certainly didn't hold back our amazing PTFA! Fund raising has continued throughout this tumultuous time, but all members have continued to join in with scheduled meetings and planning events. The dedicated Team have continued to support school in every way possible, The Hill West staff Team, as always, are extremely grateful for everything they do. Whether its support large builds such as the playground equipment in Key stage 1 or Easter eggs, School is a brighter place because of them.

All children thoroughly enjoyed the Indian dance workshop in the summer term, the images on Twitter were truly amazing. The smiles on the children faces were a joy to behold. I think staff members also joined it with the fabulous routines. This was of course arranged by the PTFA member and really went down a storm.



Our school has featured in the papers many times of the last few months and the PTFA's efforts to boost school funds and community morale did not go unnoticed by the Sutton Chronicle and a variety of other local newspapers. Many of our families took part in the 'Summer Bake off Challenge' All of the bakes were truly deserving of a Paul Hollywood Hand shake. It was such a wonderful surprise to see both articles celebrating our children and their creations this year, this event raised £450.



Our Families have also been signing up to amazon smile, so that anytime they make a purchase through smile.amazon.co.uk they generate a donation for school under the Amazon Smile programme; which in 6 months has raised £96.



How can we not mentioned the fantasy football that was active over the summer? I know many people, including staff members, signed up to create their own fantasy football team.



On Friday 15th October we had our first whole school event since lockdown and class bubbles. How amazing it was to welcome families back in to school and see the children looking brilliantly frightening. Your costumes were truly delightful and all the money raised will go towards new activities and resources to support school.

The PTFA can't do all of this wonderful work without the support of our wonderful families who have just been astonishing with their generosity. Their participation and willingness to overcome the many hurdles we have had to navigate over the past eighteen months has been a true inspiration.

Rights Respecting School Award: GOLD Award

By Dr Rhian Warrack

As many of you will be aware, since 2018 Hill West Primary School has been on a journey to embed the rights of children (as stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child or UNCRC) into the very fabric of Hill West, so that children's rights are respected and upheld by every member of our school community.

Hill West Primary School have been working with UNICEF UK to ensure that our school is a safe and inspiring place to learn, where children are respected, their talents are nurtured and they are able to thrive. Our Rights Respecting Schools approach embeds these values in daily school life and gives children the best chance to lead happy, healthy lives and to be responsible, active citizens.

Rights Respecting Schools take a Child Rights based approach towards all that they do. At Hill West, the whole school community is taught, and learns, **about** rights through training, the school curriculum, assemblies, class charters and displays around school, and through focus on different rights from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, across the school year. By modelling rights-respecting language and attitudes, and by making strategic decisions that involve students, we teach and learn **through** rights. By being ambassadors **for** the rights of others, all members of the school community develop as rights respecting citizens. Over the past four years, we have focused on these areas:

Strand A: Teaching and learning **ABOUT** rights

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is made known to children, young people and adults who use this shared understanding to work for improved child well-being, school improvement, global justice and sustainable living.

Strand B: Teaching and learning **THROUGH** rights – ethos and relationships

Actions and decisions affecting children are rooted, reviewed and resolved through rights. Children, young people and adults collaborate to develop and maintain a school community based on equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation; this includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners and promotes well-being.

Strand C: Teaching and learning **FOR** rights – participation, empowerment and action

Children are empowered to enjoy and exercise their rights and to promote the rights of others locally and globally. Duty bearers are accountable for ensuring that children experience their rights.

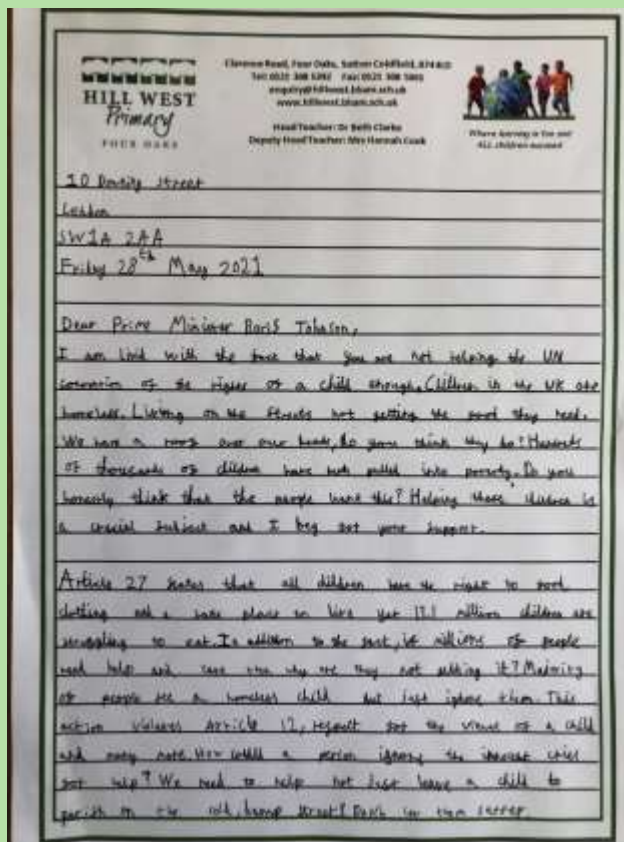
Children's Rights are enshrined in international law – the UNCRC is not a charter that countries, governments or their representatives can ignore – it is part of negotiating what will work well for children in every country across the world. The charter identifies children as 'Rights holders' and governments (and their employees) as 'duty bearers' upon whom the duty to uphold the rights of children is incumbent. The nature of children's rights are:

- inherent
- inalienable
- indivisible
- universal
- unconditional



The convention has four general principles (Articles 2, 3, 6 and 12), underneath or within which all other articles sit. Our children understand that their rights do not end when they reach adulthood, but that their rights are enshrined within the four **Geneva Conventions** of 1949, which form the basis of international humanitarian law. These laws protect persons who are not, or who are no longer, involved in hostilities.

Since receiving our Silver Award in June 2019, we have continued to embed the rights of the child in all that we do at Hill West, so that school policies and procedures embody the rights of the child, and these underpin all decisions made within our school. Through the Rights Respecting School (RRS) Steering Group, weekly 'Tea with Me' meetings and ACE Champion meetings, pupil voice is heard and taken into account as we continue to develop as a school. Despite two national school closures (due to the global COVID-19 pandemic), we have continued to work hard to ensure that the children at Hill West are aware of **their** rights, along with developing the children's awareness of wider issues including the **rights of children on a global basis**, a greater **understanding of the social and emotional** aspects of learning and the **importance of community cohesion and sustainable development**.

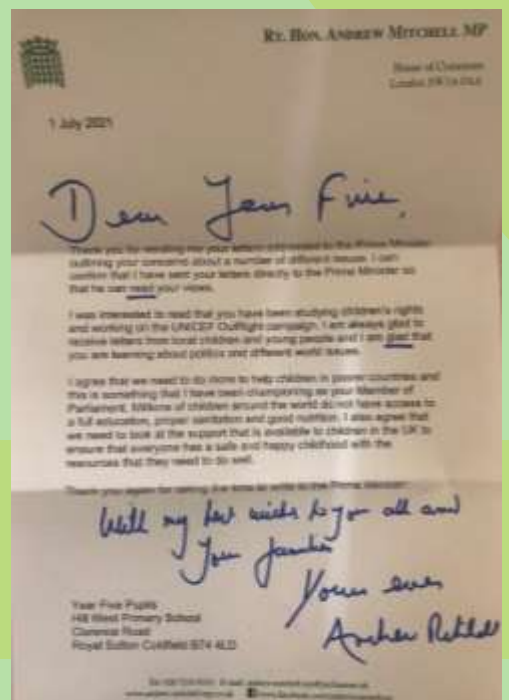


There were many examples of how our children uphold the Rights of children presented to the UNICEF Gold Award committee. As part of our development of a wider awareness of how the rights of children are upheld, or not, globally, we enrolled in Unicef's 2019 - 2020 and 2020 - 2021 'Outright' campaign, which focused on how climate change has a detrimental impact on children around the world receiving their rights. As part of this work, children in Year 5 wrote to the Prime Minister, the Right Honorable Boris Johnson, MP, to let him know what their views were and demand that he take action to reduce climate change and the impact it has on the lives of children globally.

In their letters, the children described which rights children may not be able to access as a result of climate change, including if children are living in a country where there is drought, this will cause a lack of access to water (Article 24) and a subsequent impact on children's health so that they may not be able to go to school, impacting

on their Right to an Education (Article 28), but also applies to children who are impacted by flooding and have to leave their homes (Article 27) – they were shocked to think that this can happen to children in our own country, as well as to children living overseas.

The children also asked Boris Johnson, as the representative of our government, to uphold it's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. They asked him to take positive action to support childrens rights, both here in the United Kingdom, and around the world. They felt strongly that these are, "Our Rights, Our Responsibility" and wanted to make their voices heard! The members of the Steering Group were thrilled to receive a letter from our member of Parliament (Andrew Mitchell MP, to say that he had



forwarded their letters to Boris Johnson, for his attention. When we received a letter from Boris Johnson to say that he had received and read their letters asking him to uphold his duty as a duty bearer and take action against climate change, thereby upholding the rights of children, they were absolutely delighted to realise that their voices had been heard and taken seriously.

The children in Badgers class (Year 5) were also able to speak to our MP, Andrew Mitchell, and ask him questions about his views on climate change, when he visited school in July 2021 to talk to them about the letters they had sent to him, and his work on climate change and the rights of children around the world.



The Steering Group considered how we as a school community could reduce both our personal and our school's carbon footprint. They have advocated turning off lights, interactive whiteboards and classroom lights; reducing the tap flow when running

water; collecting rubbish and walking to school, as they understand that if every one of us takes some action, the small acts will add up.



We could also tell the UNICEF committee about children who wrote a cookery book during

lockdown for children, to raise £450 to support children in hospital with their 'Cooking to make you smile in lockdown' cookbook, as well as explain how the RRS Steering Group planned and delivered assemblies to inform the school community about their work and the OutRight Climate Change campaign, both in person (in non-COVID restriction times) and virtually (during times of restriction).

We were absolutely delighted that in July 2021, Hill West Primary School was awarded the prestigious UNICEF UK Gold Award, from UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting School programme. UNICEF is the world's leading organisation working for children and their rights. The Rights Respecting Schools Award is granted to schools that show commitment to promoting and realising children's rights and encouraging adults, children and young people to respect the rights of others in school, the community and across the world. **Gold is the highest accolade** given by UNICEF UK and shows a deep and thorough commitment to children's rights at all



levels of school life. **There are only just over 500 schools across England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales** who currently hold the Gold award, and it is a truly fantastic achievement for the children, staff and community at Hill West to receive the award, especially given the challenges that COVID has presented over the past two years.



On the 7th October, we shared the news of our fantastic achievement with our school community and gave every pupil in school a balloon, which they brought home with them at the end of school. During school assembly, the children talked about the rights of children that were of most importance to them, clearly articulating why, and then recorded the UNCRC Right that was of greatest importance to them on their balloon, to mark the achievement and their contribution to the RRS Gold Award journey!



At Hill West, we are incredibly proud that our school has been awarded the Gold Award by UNICEF UK. For our school community it is a public acknowledgement of how seriously the rights of children are taken by everyone who works and learns within our school, including both children, parents and teachers. Participation in the Rights Respecting Schools Award over the last three years has had an incredibly positive impact on pupils and the school as a whole. By putting children's rights at the heart of our school, we have embedded their rights within everything that we do and **we would like to thank all of our fantastic pupils** as they embody the values of the UNCRC and uphold the rights of all in everything that they do every day. **We would also like to thank the Hill West staff** for their dedication and hard work in ensuring that teaching about Rights, for Rights and through Rights has been effectively embedded across the school curriculum. In addition, **thanks must also go to our community, including Governors and School Leaders**, who have ensured that the Rights of children (as embodied by the UNCRC) underpins the policies and practices that take place at Hill West every single day!"



UNICEF say that the RRS Gold Award recognises a school's achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of a school's planning, policies and practice. **A Rights Respecting School is a community where children's rights are learned, taught, practised, respected, protected and promoted.**

For further details about UNICEF UK and RRSA, contact: Samantha Bradey, UNICEF UK Communications and Resources Manager
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As a Rights Respecting School, our journey continues and we have enrolled in UNICEF's 2021-2022 OutRight Campaign. This annual youth advocacy campaign, run by UNICEF UK, is for children and young people in the UK to realise their own rights, and to speak out in support of the rights of all children. This year the campaign is all about mental health and children's rights. OutRight aims to help students to understand what mental health is and how it links to their rights, find out how they can take care of their mental health, and discuss how the culture around speaking out about mental health is changing.