

# THE HILL WEST HERALD

**HILL WEST**  
*Primary*  
FOUR OAKS



**AUTUMN TERM 1 2022**

**ISSUE 41**

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**ACE; Ambitious, Curious, and Ever-respectful**



## Message from the Head Teacher

By Dr Beth Clarke

The first half of the Autumn term always seems so busy in school and last half term was no exception. We have now reinstated, post Covid-19, a full schedule of school events. Whether it be class assemblies, planning for residential visits, hosting parent workshops or open mornings, attending the Halloween disco or visiting Blakesley Hall, The Malvern Hills or Hatton Country Farm, the children remain at the 'heart of everything we do'.

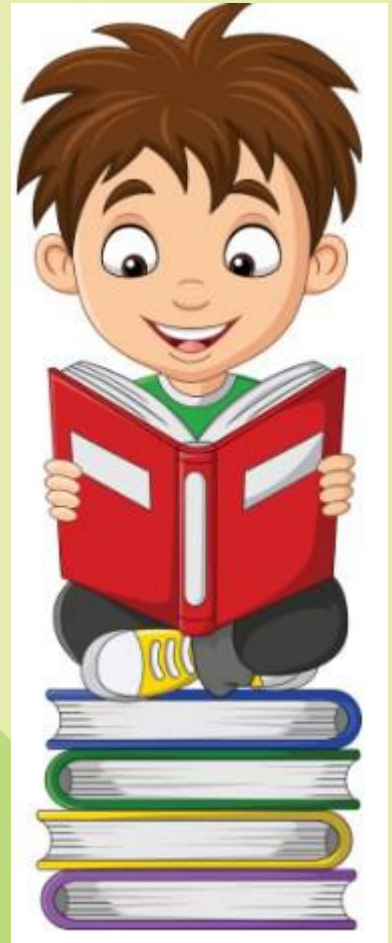
The Autumn term is also the time when we re-affirm our priorities for the year ahead and plan our staff training to support our ambitions. At Hill West we are committed to ensuring that every pupil will learn to read regardless of their background, needs or abilities. We want children to develop a genuine love of books and thirst for literature. We want them to read books written by a wide range of authors and we want all of our children, before they leave us, to read many of the classics. We understand that when children make good progress in Reading they also find success in other individual subject disciplines; fluent readers learn more because they can read and gain knowledge for themselves. The ability to read fluently, comprehend and interpret is a prerequisite to success in later life.

Teachers are often aware that children who enjoy reading, and who read frequently, do better in school. In recent decades, this anecdotal evidence has been substantiated by research from large national and international studies. For example, in England, analysis of the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) found that 10-year-olds who reported the most enjoyment from reading scored, on average, 45 points more on a reading assessment than those who reported not liking reading (McGrane et al., 2017). The will influences the skill (and vice versa).

The benefits of engagement with books begins in the early years; a study found that children who are read to regularly at age four to five achieve higher levels of attainment in reading, maths and cognitive skills at age eight to nine (Kalb and van Ours, 2013). These are the children who are supported in developing the vital habit of reading. We know that children who read only one book a day hear about 290,000 more words by age 5 than those who don't regularly read books with a parent or care giver (Logan, 2019).

Being a keen habitual reader nurtures children's social and emotional development, introduces them to rich vocabulary, enhances their capacity to express themselves, and develops their knowledge and understanding of the world. Through reading widely and by choice, children gain a broader range of perspectives than those they may encounter in their everyday lives. When you read to your child you are making a positive impact on your child's reading ability and their love of reading.

When reading to your child at home, let your child be the boss of the books they choose. Enjoyment really matters. Comics, information books, magazines, story books, picture books, poems and leaflets are all great for sharing. Catalogues are fun to share and talk about too. Repeated reading of books is really beneficial for children also. It helps them memorise parts of stories, words and phrases. Knowing a book or poem by heart is fun and powerful for children, they can 'read' the story with you, or join in with words of phrases. If you really want to mix it up offer another book alongside the much loved favorite!



**REMEMBER; a love of reading is the biggest indicator of future academic success!**

## Arthur Terry Learning Partnership News

By Dr Beth Clarke

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### Anna Seward Primary School; Lichfield



The ATLP has been appointed by the Department for Education as the sponsor for the new school, which is being built by Staffordshire County Council as part of the Deanslade Park development on a former farm site in the city of Lichfield.

Diggers are now on the site of the school, which will be the ATLP multi-academy trust's 20th. Nine of those are in Staffordshire, including six in Lichfield. The free school is planned to open in September 2023 and is being constructed in response to the growing need for school places in and around Lichfield brought about by new housing developments in the south of the city.

ATLP CEO Richard Gill CBE said: "There has been a clear need for increased education facilities in Lichfield and it's an honour for ATLP to have been chosen as the sponsor for such an important school.

"The ATLP family will reach a significant milestone when Anna Seward Primary opens its doors as our number of schools will then stand at 20. As our multi-academy trust continues to grow, so does our reputation for delivering excellence in education."

ATLP executive headteacher and strategic lead Helen Hastilow said: "A romantic poet and early environmentalist, Anna Seward was known as the 'Swan of Lichfield'. "She was an important local figure who has been remembered through history for her commitment to reading, writing and equality. Buried at Lichfield Cathedral, she is synonymous with the city and surrounding area."

Staffordshire County Council Cabinet Member for Education, Jonathan Price, said: "This latest school is being built to accommodate increased demand for school places in the Lichfield area and forms part of countywide plans to build more schools in response to local housing developments. "Getting the opportunity to attend a brand-new school is an exciting prospect and I am sure many parents will want to take a look at plans for the school to see what it can offer their child."

Nursery and reception places will be offered in the school's first year of opening. After this, the school roll will grow annually until a maximum of 210 full-time pupils are accommodated by 2029.

Applications for pupil places at Anna Seward open on Tuesday, November 1st.

Visit <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Admissions-primary/Apply/Overview.aspx> for details on how to apply.

Visit <https://annaseward.atlp.org.uk> to stay up to date with the latest developments including progress with building work.

## Our First Half Term in Reception (Autumn 2021)

By Miss Sophie Roberts, Mrs Lisa Pardoe and Miss Sophie Beardmore



Just like that the reception children have completed their first half term and have begun their journeys into education. We can't believe how quickly the time has passed and how well settled the children are in their school careers.

In Reception, we place a strong emphasis on nurture, learning through play and exploration, where the well-being of our children is at the heart of everything that we do - enabling our children to gain a deep level of mastery of their learning and development goals. The Foundation Stage Curriculum is made up of seven areas of learning and development. These are divided into three prime areas; **Communication and Language**, **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**, and **Physical Development**, and four specific areas; **Literacy**, **Mathematics**, **Understanding the World** and **Expressive Arts and Design**.

To encourage a love of learning, new information is taught through our weekly key questions; here are just a few.... **'Who am I?'** **'How are YOU feeling?'** **'What is falling down?'**

This year we are participating in the **'Mastering Number'** program in conjunction with the NCETM (National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics). Over the autumn term, children will be 'building on previous experiences of number from their home and nursery environments, and will further develop their subitising and counting skills. They will explore the composition of numbers within 5. They will begin to compare sets of objects and use the language of comparison.' We have already commenced the program at the start of this half term and children have been looking at:



- Subitising using different arrangements, both unstructured and structured, including using the Hungarian number frame (dice)
- Developing counting skills and knowledge, including: that the last number in the count tells us 'how many' (cardinality); to be accurate in counting, each thing must be counted once and once only and in any order; the need for 1:1 correspondence; understanding that anything can be counted, including actions and sounds.



## Our First Half Term in Year 1 (Autumn 2022)

By Mrs Linsie Burton, Ms Devon Ward and Miss Emily Arkininstall

Year 1 had an amazing visit to Hatton Country Farm this half term. The children thoroughly enjoyed the coach trip and had wonderful animal encounters. Our trip to the farm linked with our science subject of animals and seasonal changes. In school, the children have been learning to identify, name, describe and group some common animals. Therefore our trip was a very practical way for the children to see some animals up close and discuss what they have learnt. The children were able to hold guinea pigs, feed goats and sheep, stroke snakes and lizards and even look closely at pigs, piglets and chickens.

The children had in depth discussions about how animals adapt to their surroundings and learnt about the functions of the different parts of their bodies, and how these are used to help them to survive. During our tractor ride, our farm leader was able to tell the children many different facts about the animals around – a particular favourite was the ‘mountain of poo’ we discovered half way round!



Overall it was a very stimulating day with lots learnt and the children were a credit to the school – well done everyone!

We have also enrolled this year in the NCETM Mastering Number program in maths.



In the classroom, the program is currently focussing on whole-class interactive teaching, enabling all

children to master the concepts necessary for the next part of the curriculum sequence. Use of precise mathematical language enables all pupils to communicate their reasoning and thinking effectively. In addition, significant time is spent developing children's deep understanding of the key ideas that are necessary to underpin future learning.



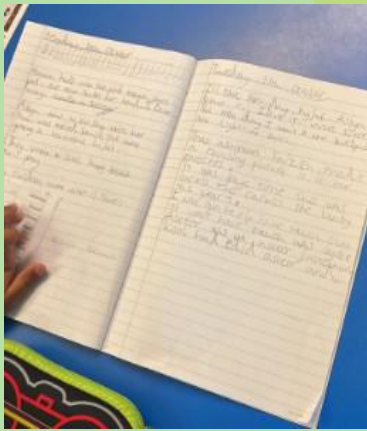
In Mastering Number, key number facts are learnt to automaticity, and other key

mathematical facts are learned deeply and practised regularly, to avoid cognitive overload in working memory and enable pupils to focus on new learning.



## Our First Half Term in Year 2 (Autumn 2022)

By Mrs Charlotte Massey, Mrs Kaur and Mrs Lynch



Our first half term in Year 2 has gone by so quickly! We have well and truly hit the ground running and we are so proud of all the children for how well they have settled into their new classrooms and new routines!

We started off by diving into the wonderful world of *The Storm Whale*, exploring inference, making predictions and describing characters. The children took part in fun drama activities, roll on the wall and explored the purpose of the text. Our classrooms are proudly decorated with the children's published writing, retelling the story including adjectives and time conjunctions. Our second text was *'The Proudest Blue'*; the children

loved the vibrant pictures and tracked the emotions of the characters throughout the story. They took part in role play drama as well as exploring how emotions can change and how they are shown. We are finishing the term with performance poetry.



During Art this half term, the children have been investigating and researching about a sculptor called Andy Goldsworthy. They have practiced their sketching skills and have explored natural objects which they have used to create their own sculptures.

Science has seen children explore habitats and micro-habitats. They have learnt the importance of finding habitats that can provide them with what they need to survive including shelter, warmth, food and protection. The children then created their own habitats, which have been displayed in the classroom.



### Mastering Number

This year the children have been fortunate enough to take part in Mastering Number. The project aims to secure firm foundations in the development of good number sense. The aim is that they will have fluency in calculation, and develop confidence and flexibility with numbers. During the year they will develop the following skills: being able to communicate mathematical ideas clearly; understand number bonds, place value and fluency with numbers. This term the

Number Jacks have introduced the new learning, helping the children to gain a clear understanding of what needs to be added to five to make a number between 5 and 10. We have purchased Rekenreks to support the children's learning throughout the program. The children are so excited to use the new equipment.



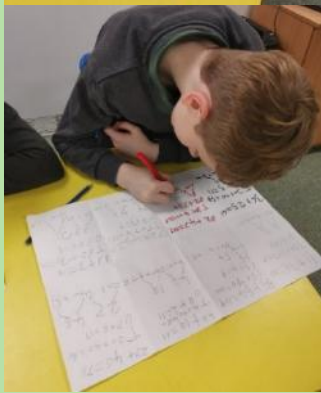
## Our First Half Term in Year 3 (Autumn 2022)

By Ms Kelly Bailey and Mrs Farzana Walele



It is very hard to believe how grown up our Year 3 pupils are. It seems only a short while ago that they were in Reception. However, they have all transitioned into KS2 with ease, and who even remembers school before having personal lockers now?

We have had the pleasure of reading some very interesting books during our English lessons so far. From magical places to bathtubs and forests, we love reading in class.

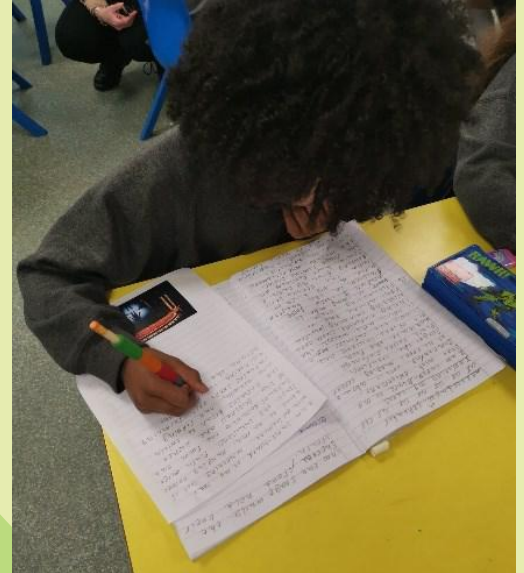


This is what some of our pupils thought about the books:

Amelia: "His wish came true and I am glad that it did" (The Tin Forest).

Manveen: "Leon and the Place Between is magical!"

Zach: "Humphrey is funny and I liked reading about a different school."



This year, we have begun our studies in History by learning about the Stone Age. If you ever have a spare few hours, feel free to ask Ms Bailey about the different eras of the Stone Age and she will be able to chew your ear off... She is the HillWest History Curriculum

Through their studies, the children have delved deeply into life in prehistoric Britain. In geography, we have learnt all about how the continents on Earth formed, what mountains are and how climate change forced early humans to migrate around the world, following animals as they migrated as well as foraging for food. The children have learnt that some humans became trapped in Britain when water from the melting ice caps covered Doggerland, the land that linked Europe and Britain together during the Stone Age, in water, and the land bridge between the south coast of Britain (near Dover) and Calais was washed away by a calving glacier.



We started to look at what life was like for our ancient ancestors and have learnt about how they survived during the Palaeolithic Era, before moving on to look at the Mesolithic Era.



Everyone in Year 3 has agreed that that living in a nice settlement next to a peaceful lake where food can be found in plenty (via fishing) doesn't actually seem like a bad life. Indeed, the children also think that the lack of homework

in a Neolithic child's life was a great thing – but perhaps they are forgetting about the sabre tooth tigers? We are really looking forwards to continuing our historical journey through the deep past of our planet, as next half term we will be exploring the Neolithic era to learn about how early humans continued to evolve through study of artefacts that still exist from that time to try and find out what they did, how they did things and what life was like.

We would also like to thank the families who joined us to watch our class assemblies based on the lovely book 'How to Wash a Woolly Mammoth'. We spent a lot of time practising our lines but the hardest job was training our diva of a mammoth to climb a tree, if you ever need any advice (if you are ever in a similar situation) please do ask Mrs Walele as she managed to get the mammoth to climb on demand eventually! We are all so proud of how our children pulled it all together to entertain us, as you all will know how nerve wracking being on stage can be, especially so soon into the school year.



We didn't get much of a break after our assemblies though before we were adventuring to the top of the world! Well, it felt like it when we were hiking to the top of the Herefordshire Beacon. The excitement and sheer awe on so many of the children's faces made it all worth it. The views really were spectacular.



We hiked for nearly 3 miles, which doesn't seem far however were literally going up hill for most of it. 3 hours later and we were all back on the coach excited to return so as we could all get ready for the halloween disco. What a busy week that was.



In Science we have been learning about rocks! Ok, I know that doesn't sound very exciting but in reality it is! Did you know that fossils are usually only found in sedimentary rock? We have looked closely at a range of rocks, classified them, made careful observations, investigated their strength and porosity and we can talk about how different types of rock are formed... Please ask your Year 3 child what they know about sedimentary, metamorphic and igneous rocks – they will be able to tell you all about them!



And finally, "What did the boy volcano say to the girl volcano? I lava you!"



## Our First Half Term in Year 4 (Autumn 2022)

By Mrs Grant, Miss Mooney and Ms Whelan

Our first half term in Year 4 has been phenomenal. Both Moles and Squirrels have been working incredibly hard within all areas of the curriculum.

In English we have covered the books *Fox* by Margaret Wild and *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare. The children have created a visual picture with pictures and text that infer meaning. They have also written a narrative retell of the story *Macbeth*. In Maths we have focused on place value and addition and subtracting finishing the half term looking at Time. We have enjoyed conducting an experiment in Science where we placed a wet tea towel in the sun, in the shade, in the fridge and in the classroom, we weighed them hourly to measure how much liquid had evaporated in each tea towel, this has complimented our Geography topic on Rivers and the water cycle. In Art we have researched Manga artists and created our own Manga comic strips. The children have very much appreciated their music lessons where Moles are playing the Clarinet and Squirrels are learning to play the Tenor horn.



Within History this half term the children have thoroughly enjoyed working on their foundation skills such as learning about chronology, learning to read and describe royal family trees and creating a historically accurate timeline of British History. The children have made fantastic progress in their focused topic on The Tudors, so far, we have established how the Tudor dynasty began and described the key events within the Battle of Bosworth, focusing on the types of battle strategy used and the politics behind the battle itself. The children have shown great enthusiasm for learning about Tudor life and King Henry VIII. They have used their enquiry skills to research how Tudor life was conducted and the expectations of life

from both the rich and the poor, the importance of the reformation and the impact had on the people, and the fate of Henry VIII first two wives, thinking about the range of potential reasons behind the marriages and how Tudor life was full of drama and political rivalry. We have been incredibly lucky this half term to organize a phase school trip to the fantastic Blakesley Hall, a



Tudor Museum with an original Tudor themed orchard and garden. The children were able to partake in artefact analysis using their research skills to decipher what each artefact was, what it could have been used for and what it was made from. The tour of the Hall enabled the children to take part in Tudor life, there was a taught ballroom dance session, a dress up activity

to

portray the differences between a noble's life and a servant's life, and to witness Tudor architecture and understand the meanings behind certain decisions to the structure and design of the house.



Birmingham Museums Learning @bmtlearning · Oct 13  
Thank you for sharing your fantastic photos @hillwestprimary. We are so glad you enjoyed your 'Rich and Poor Tudors' day @Blakesley\_Hall. Your children were a credit to the school 🌟

Hillwest @hillwestprimary · Oct 13  
Moles are busy in the Tudor barn, Squirrels are going on a tour of a Tudor house... very exciting @Blakesley\_Hall



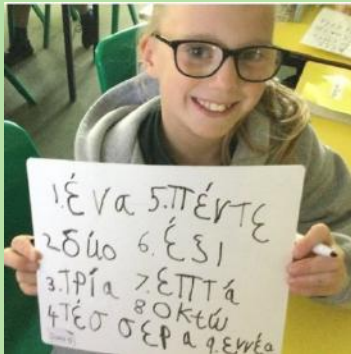
## Our First Half Term in Year 5 (Autumn 2022)

By Mr Adam Henrick and Mrs Alison Downes

Badgers and Hares have both made an excellent start to Year 5 and have risen well to all the challenges and expectations of Upper Key Stage 2. Our topic this term is Ancient Greece and we have thoroughly enjoyed delving into all aspects of it. In DT, we heeded the Health and Safety rules we had learned and carefully followed instructions to produce traditional Greek tzatziki – which some people couldn't get enough of!



In English lessons, we have read two of the Ancient Greek myths: 'The Twelve Labours of Heracles' and 'Theseus and the Minotaur'. The children used mythical conventions to create a 13<sup>th</sup> Labour for poor Heracles. They let their imaginations run wild and Heracles faced lots of dangerous mythical beasts with a variety of gods to call on for help. Lively and in-depth discussions took place when the children were faced with the dilemma of whether Theseus would have been kinder to leave Princess Ariadne in Crete and return to Athens alone. We were impressed with the range of consequences that the children explored whilst debating the question. Lots of options were considered and the children were then able to construct a balanced argument presenting the points they felt were most pertinent – though the general consensus was that Theseus should have put duty above love and left Ariadne in Crete.



We were able to extend our experience of Greece into learning the language on the European Day of Languages. We learned how to count to 10 and had a go at writing the words for the numbers using the Greek alphabet. It was interesting to make links with our French learning and the months of the year.

In History, we have learned about Ancient Greece and how the landscape of the country shaped its past. We are beginning to appreciate the lasting effects of the Greek Empire and how it still influences our world today. Geography lessons have been testing our thinking skills as we learn to understand and work out time zones. We have been calculating the best times to telephone people in other countries so we do not call at unsocial hours – great preparation for being global citizens. We have honed our navigational skills by using the latitude and longitude to position ourselves around the world. Science has had us zooming into space and discovering the size of the universe. We have marvelled at how tiny we are in relation to our sun, other planets and our relatively local stars of Betelgeuse and Antares. We had a lot of educational fun on the school field where, with the outdoor classroom as our sun, we mapped out the relative distance of the planets in our solar system from each other. We observed how Mercury, Venus, Mars and Earth are close neighbours, whilst Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune stretched way out across the school field.



Music has taken us rocking and rolling through the decades since its conception. We have enjoyed listening to artist like Chuck Berry, The Beatles and Bon Jovi. We have been fascinated to see how different rock stars were in the Fifties compared with now, both in style and performance. At time of writing, we are preparing in earnest for our own performance of the Diwali Story of Rama and Sita. We can't wait for our parents to see our production, which just like Diwali, is full of music, dance and lots of light. We have been learning lines, making Diya lamps and collecting props to ensure the message of Diwali is clearly conveyed.

## Our First Half Term in Year 6 (Autumn 2021)

By Mr Chris Ellison, Mr Ryan Horne and Mrs Kerry-Lynn Lampitt

What a term!

Foxes and Otters had a very good start to Year 6. The timetable has been filled with lots of amazing learning, events and lessons. We started the year by participating in the whole school reading event – looking at the Tin Forest by Helen Ward, a beautiful story about a lonely man living amongst fields of rubbish. We explored the figurative ideas presented in the book, and had a lot of fun discovering how the man turned fields off rubbish into a forest made of tin. Foxes and Otters then were given the opportunity to re-write their own version of the Tin Forest; using a range of devices and vocabulary to give their work breadth and meaning.

Later in September, the children were thrilled to be given the opportunity to perform a play to celebrate the harvest. Harvest Hope was a show packed with comedy, music and featured some amazing solo performances from several of the Year 6 pupils. In just a week and a half, the children rehearsed lines, choreographed dance routines and memorised several songs to perform in front of the school and parents. Mr Ellison, Mrs Lampitt, Ms Kaur and Mr Horne were very proud of all the children for working so hard to prepare these performances; and especially proud of those children who volunteered for solo performances for many of the musical numbers.



testing their riding skills before accompanying the instructors in a guided ride along Clarence Road. They learned turn signals, how to put on key pieces of riding equipment and how to ride sensibly. And they looked great in their high-vis jackets!

To finish the year, Foxes and Otters had an open morning-an opportunity to share their learning experience with their parents and loved ones. Lead by Mr Ellison and Mr Horne, the children learned about lighthouses and their importance for ships at

sea. They learned how the light in a lighthouse projects as far as it does using their knowledge of reflection and discussed how various lighthouses have a different pattern of light depending where along the shoreline it is. We then used our coding experience to program our crumbles to flash in a certain pattern; similar to a lighthouse.

Once the lights were successfully coded, the children (aided only slightly by their parents) began to construct a lighthouse model to house their lights. The results were illuminating!



This term also saw the Year 6's participate in the Bikeability course – designed to train our young bicycle riders in safety when riding. They began by

## Sporting news

By Mr Joel Holmes

### Panathlon Bowling – Year 5 and 6

On Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October a team of Year 5 and 6 children attended the annual Panathlon bowling competition at Acocks Green Bowling alley. The children were all in good spirits and enjoyed the opportunity to compete alongside their friends. We witnessed dramatic highs, with many a strike and spare being struck, and equal lows of a 9-pin round, but all in all we had a fantastic time. With two teams competing on behalf of the school, and a high score of 109 being bowled no one of our lanes, we were confident of a good finish against the other schools in attendance. The awards ceremony at the end was tense for all involved, one of the Hill West teams finished just outside the top 3, leaving our highest scoring team in with a possibility of medals. 3rd place prizes came and went, we were in the top two schools at the event. Finally, the announcement was made that Hill West had come within touching distance of the first place side, but we were delighted to be bringing back the spoils of 2nd place. It was an event played in good spirit and the teamwork on display was superb, we look forward to going back to compete in the full Panathlon challenge later this year.



### Dodgeball – Year 3 and 4

Our first second event of the year was another huge success. Mr Holmes and a group of children from Year 4 came along to play dodgeball at Bishop Vesey's on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October. We also had a couple of secret weapons from Year 2 who rotated on to give our Year 4's a breather. The children competed in great spirits, with honesty and integrity and this was recognised by the event organiser and the other schools in attendance. As such, we were voted as the fair-play team of the tournament amongst the 12 schools at the event.

### Football – Year 6

Our first fixture of the football season kicked off for our Year 6 children against Maney Hill. The game got off to a flier, with 2 quick goals from Hill West to make it 2-0. A comeback from Maney Hill after waves of pressure saw it 2-2 at half-time. Maney Hill completed a dramatic turnaround to make it 3-2 with a long-ranged effort. Hill West responded with a long-range effort of our own to make it 3-3. In the closing stages of the game a Maney Hill player found space on the left-hand side and dug out a cross which reached the awaiting boot of the Maney Hill striker who pushed the ball past the keeper to make it 4-3. The final whistle blew and it was defeat for the Year 6's. A hard-fought game against a good opponent, bring on the rest of the season!



## PTFA news

By Dr Rhian Warrack

Hill West PTFA is a group of people who work together to raise funds for the children at Hill West Primary School.



The Hill West PTFA held its Annual General Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022 and received the Chairs report, the Treasurers report, agreed to have the PTFA accounts reviewed by nominating an auditor, before dissolving the committee and electing officers for the academic year 2022 – 2023.

Highlights included:

- thanking members for attending the meeting and supporting the PTFA
- thanking key members of the PTFA committee who have worked so hard to keep the PTFA running and help events to take place, including Mrs Dawn Adamthwaite, former Chairperson; Mr Rob Cook, Treasurer; Mrs Louise Smith, Secretary; Mr Ian Binns, Vice Chairperson; Mrs Clare Whelan, teacher representative; and parents who have attended committee meetings to support the work of the PTFA, including Mr Russell Dale and Mrs Alison Yau
- Thanks were also given to parent volunteers who have helped prepare for, or deliver PTFA events, which we have managed to continue with, despite the uncertainties of the last year following the COVID-19 global pandemic
- Some key moments from the last year included the 2021 Hallowe'en Disco, a virtual balloon race, the Christmas Movie Night, the PTFA annual quiz night, the Summer Ball, on-line Hill West Bake-Offs, the Hill West Fun Run at Sutton Park, and the Hill West Summer Fayre were all run, despite some challenging circumstances
- We have used the funds raised over the last academic year to support a variety of projects including donating money each year at Christmas, supporting Year 6 children as their time at school comes to an end and helping school to provide excellent provision for all children across school (e.g. providing new reading resources across school)
- Our current fundraising goals are to purchase sound systems for performances and events, including speakers, microphones and microphone stands, so that every child's voice can be heard during their performances.
- Over the last academic year, the PTFA has raised I am delighted to announce that over the last year the PTFA raised a total of £9315, of which £5,230 has been donated to school

A new committee was elected by the members present and this consists of:

Chairperson - Dr Rhian Warrack

Treasurer - Mr Rob Cook

Secretary - Mrs Sherrie Fiddy

Vice Chairperson - Mrs Joanne Porter



The committee have already begun work, supported by members old and new, on the forthcoming year's events, including the PTFA Halloween Disco, the PTFA Christmas Movie Night and the Hill West PTFA Annual Fun Run.



**Hill West PTFA  
Halloween  
Disco**

The PTFA Halloween Disco took place on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October, and was an amazing success. I would like to publically thank everyone (both children, parents, committee members and staff), sincerely for all their efforts and hard work, in whatever form that was, over the last weeks, to help the PTFA to prepare and deliver this fabulous evening for the children. **I am delighted to let you know that the event made a profit of approximately £1500.** The previous highest profit was £1200 in 2016, so the PTFA has done an incredible job with this first event of the academic year.

Children were able to pre-purchase a drink/popcorn/hot-dog pack before the event. It really helps the PTFA when parents use this option, as it gives us some idea of how much food and drink we need to have for the event, as well as how many people might attend. We know that we were not able to specify a vegetarian option this time, but we are working with the My Child at School system to try and add this sort of option in for the future. Please be assured that we will always have a variety of food options available, as we are aware that there are many children across school who have different dietary requirements. If you are unsure, please don't hesitate to contact one of the PTFA committee members for further information.



However, hotdogs (vegetarian and non-vegetarian), popcorn, candy floss, soft drinks, sweets, glow-sticks were all available to purchase on the night. Children could also have their face painted, purchase glitter tattoos or have their photograph taken on the green screen, which parents were able to view via the Hill West Primary Twitter feed.



The children all spoke very positively about the evening and there were some fabulous costumes on display at the event. Thank you again for coming a long and making the event such a success.

The next PTFA committee meeting is at **7pm on Monday 7th November** in the KS1 building and anyone is welcome to come along.

To support the PTFA without having to do anything extra, you could sign up to Amazon Smile.



Any time that someone who has signed up makes a purchase through [smile.amazon.co.uk](https://smile.amazon.co.uk), this generates a donation for school under the Amazon Smile program.

In 2021, this generated £96 for school and in 2022, it generated £178.



At the meeting, we will review any outstanding actions, discuss what went well at the Disco and what we can do better next time, before looking forwards to our next event, the Christmas Movie Night, which will be held on Friday December 9th.

# English teaching at Hill West

By Mrs Jaimey Thomas

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## ***Reading into Writing***

All pupils in KS1 and KS2 are taught English in line with the requirements of the English National Curriculum. At Hill West, our daily English lessons are taught through a high-quality key-text and are based upon a 'Reading into Writing' approach, whereby the key-text is explored through reading and writing. We strongly believe that reading is the focal point of good writing – it encourages curious writers who use a range of ambitious vocabulary and written techniques to create purposeful outcomes.

## ***Key-Texts***

Our key-text units of work are carefully mapped out to show progression across school with each unit centering on an engaging, vocabulary-rich text which often link to our wider-curriculum. This allows the children to have a purpose for their writing and develops not only their written skills but strengthens their knowledge and understanding of key learning concepts in other subjects.

We have developed our own evidence informed literature spine, with a balance between fiction texts, poetry and non-fiction texts. The texts have been carefully chosen for their richness in vocabulary, cultural capital and concepts. The texts were selected to enhance our knowledge-based curriculum, whilst also helping us to drive the global elements of our curriculum such as personal development and wellbeing, diversity, equality and inclusion. They also represent our commitment to the UNCRC as a rights embedded school. In addition, many of our key texts and class novels fit within the five plagues of reading (as recommended by Doug Lemov in his book 'Reading Reconsidered') with texts ranging between the categories of archaic, non-linear time sequences, narratively complex, figurative/symbolic and resistant. These texts are complex beyond a lexical level and demand more from the reader than other types of books, ensuring that our children are confident, well-rounded readers by the time they finish Year 6.

## ***Purpose***

At Hill West we have a 'purpose for writing' approach. We know that it is important that pupils are given a reason to write – and someone to write for (EEF, 2021). When planning a unit of work for a specific text, we are very clear on the RAFT of the writing (Reason, Audience, Features, Tone) as we know that children will be more successful if they understand the purpose of the writing. This helps us to ensure that, by the end of Year 6, children will not only leave our school being able to write for a variety of purposes, but able to write in a real life situation, essential for the next step in their education. Children will also cover a variety of poetry forms, building up a repertoire.

## ***Sequence of 'Reading into Writing' planning***

Our key-text units follow a common sequence: Immerse, Analyse, Plan and Write, which encourages the strong interrelationship between speaking and listening, reading and writing. Throughout the sequence of learning, the children look at the grammar, punctuation and spelling that is linked to the writing and learn to plan, draft, edit and publish their work. We have created our own bespoke English Scheme of Work, ensuring that all English skills taught across school are progressive and purposeful.

Please visit our Year Group curriculum pages on the Hill West Website for further information in relation to the texts that we teach within each year group.