

THE HILL WEST HERALD


HILL WEST
Primary
FOUR OAKS



AUTUMN TERM 2 2022

ISSUE 43

theherald@hillwest.bham.sch.uk



ACE; Ambitious, Curious, and Ever-respectful

Message from the Head Teacher

By Dr Beth Clarke



As we move into the New Year we reflect on the successes of the past and consider what it is we hope to achieve in the future. Of course much of what we wish for remains the same. We want to find fulfilment in our personal and professional lives and we want our friendships and relationships to grow in strength and intensity with the passing of time. We want to uphold the moral values we hold dear and be the very best version of ourselves. We want this for our children too. We want our children to be happy, healthy and successful in all that they do. We want to protect them from adversity and shoulder their hardship. We want to help them grow in independence and develop the resilience to bounce back following a difficulty. With increasing levels of resilience, our children will be able to adapt to the world around them with confidence. At school and at home we will be encouraging our children to:

Invest in their self-esteem; having a strong sense of self can help them build resilience. We can encourage them to get to know who they are, to consider what values that govern their actions and encourage them to take the time to think about the attributes that are important to them, e.g. kindness.

Believe in themselves and their abilities; helping them put themselves first when they need to especially if they are in a stressful situation. Helping them to list all the things they are good at including being kind, helpful and loving and showing them why these attributes are so essential in life. Thinking about their achievements no matter how big or small is great for their confidence.

Develop a strong offline social network; helping them build a support network of friends and family who love them for who they are. Giving them space to spend quality time with their network and do the things they love to do. This will promote their happiness and help them learn to be independent in their actions and thoughts.

Learn to problem solve; helping them to understand that no matter what the situation or issue, there is always a resolve, even if it means walking away from something that no longer serves them.

See the bigger picture; sharing our experiences with them so they can see we understand what they are going through. Letting them know that everything has a process and sometimes we have to go through these things to come out the other end stronger.

Mind, body and soul; helping them look after themselves is crucial. Not only is it important for them to eat healthy and enjoy treats in moderation, but being active is important too for both mind and body. Getting enough sleep and learning positive mindfulness is an important barrier and defence structure for stress, trauma and adversity.

Value who they are; children will only learn to value themselves if those around them first value them. Together we can give our children lots of positive encouragement and praise. This will give them the necessary springboard to take on challenges and boost their self-worth.

Emotional flooding; when a child is upset they can't think straight or begin to sort out what they want to do – they are overwhelmed or 'emotionally flooded'. If we think of emotions as water, when we are upset the thinking part of the mind becomes flooded. Listening gives our children a chance to express the feelings and gradually come back into a balanced state where they can start to think through the problem or let go of the feelings and move on. When we name their feelings and what they need, we are helping them understand their own feelings and needs rather than being led by them. Children who learn to handle their emotions tend to have better physical and emotional health, do better at school and get on better with friends. Let them know it is ok for them to seek help and support too if they need this.

By working together we can ensure our children develop the resilience they need to adapt to life's challenges. May you all find peace, love, success, optimism and resilience in 2023. Sending my heartiest New Year wishes to you all!

Arthur Terry Learning Partnership News

By Dr Beth Clarke

Children's University launched across all ATLP schools



Students from the Coleshill School graduate at a ceremony at Birmingham University

Thousands of youngsters across all of our schools are being offered a chance to 'graduate' in Birmingham University's Great Hall – thanks to a scheme that promotes learning outside the classroom. All of our young people are being encouraged to take part in the Children's University, a national scheme which for more than 25 years has offered 7-14 year olds (and 5-6 year olds with their families) learning activities and experiences outside school hours.

The Coleshill School have trailblazed the scheme since 2016, when just four students received their gold graduation award. This year more than 100 Coleshill youngsters made the grade and took part in the ceremony in Birmingham, with many more gaining bronze and silver certificates along the way.

Now the Children's University has been launched across all of ATLP's sites, including secondary schools in Birmingham, Lichfield, Coventry and Coleshill as well as 13 primary schools, reaching more than 10,000 students. Natasha Blunt, who is Head of Sixth Form at The Coleshill School and the driving force behind Children's University at ATLP, said the scheme was all about encouraging children to learn outside the classroom. She said:

"Children's University is a fantastic, voluntary scheme that offers children aged from 7-14 innovative and exciting learning experiences outside of school hours. Even younger children aged from 5-6 can get involved with their parents too. Children only spend 9% of their time in the classroom, so Children's University aims to make the most of the other 91% – by providing both ideas and access to a huge range of opportunities and activities for children to gain extra-curricular experience".

We are proud to be part of the Children's University Scheme which aims to raise aspirations, celebrate and boost achievement and foster a love of learning, so that children can make the most of their abilities and interests. Through participation in fun, high quality learning experiences, we aim to grow inquisitive, confident, independent children and learners.

Our First Christmas in Reception 2021

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

Christmas is such a magical time of the year and a child's first year at school is so special. The children have experienced many firsts, during the run up to Christmas at Hill West. They reflected on what Christmas meant to them.

'Santa gives out presents' – Winter

As part of the Early Years Curriculum, the children have been taught about The Christmas Story. Children are now able to talk about Mary, Joseph, Jesus, the Angels, animals, Shepherds, the Kings - and the parts they played within the events of that time. So Reception were delighted when they were invited to watch the nursery nativity - and what wonderful job the actors all did! It really consolidated the Christmas Story our children, after they had learned so much about it.

'Baby Jesus was born and they put him in a stable because they couldn't find a hotel' - Ivy

We had lots of fun learning about the meaning of each element of the Christingle. Children all made their own Christingles and learnt the songs - all set for our trip to All Saints Church.

'The orange represents the World' - Samuel

'The four sticks on the Christingle are the seasons, like Summer'- Poppy

We have been busy using newly taught skills to create and decorate our Christmas decorations, calendars and Christmas cards. Our Christmas theme has provided wonderful opportunities in Literacy; writing lists, cards, cvc words and short sentences too. Christmas Movie night was a huge success with *Mickey's Once Upon a Christmas* and *The Snowman* helping the children to get into the Christmas spirit.

'Happy Christmas' - Theo



Christingle

By Mrs Charlotte Massey

Christingle at All Saints Church - 6th and 7th December 2022

It's that wonderful time of year again, when all our pupils troop up Clarence Road to the welcoming lights of the beautiful All Saints Church for our annual Christingle service. Years 1, 2 and 3 enjoyed their service on Tuesday 6th December and Years 4, 5 and 6 on Wednesday 7th December 2022.



The children had been preparing for the event by practising the beloved songs in class and assembly and creating their own Christingle to carry to church. Also rehearsing feverishly were our musicians and readers, who we always look forward to seeing each year.

On each day, lots of Hill West parents and relatives were out in force to celebrate Christingle and support their children. Dr Clarke led the service and we were treated to confident readers coming up to the altar to explain the Christmas story and why the Christingle holds a special message at this time of year.



We all heartily joined in with the songs Love Shone Down, Sing Christingle and The Christingle. Its lovely to witness the beautiful voices and some lovely actions with Love Shone Down.

The musical interludes were magnificent. Our guitarists treated us to a rendition of Jingle Bells, the violinists played 'We wish you a Merry Christmas' and then 'Good King Wenceslas' from the brass players.

Hill West would like to say a massive thank you to all the children involved (especially those who took centre stage) and to Dr Clarke for leading the service. Also we say a huge thank you to all of the staff at All Saints church for accommodating us at this busy time of year, especially Sharon and Sally for their festive address which left us all contemplating the true meaning of Christmas.



Anti-Bullying Week and Kindness Day 2022

By Mr Ryan Horne

Hill West marked Anti-Bullying week across the whole school and events were led by our ACE champions. They began by meeting together to discuss what bullying is. The Champions agreed with the school policy: bullying is the use of force, coercion, hurtful teasing or threat, to abuse, aggressively dominate or intimidate others and that it is **Several Times on Purpose**. This message was communicated to the rest of the school through assemblies and in class discussions.

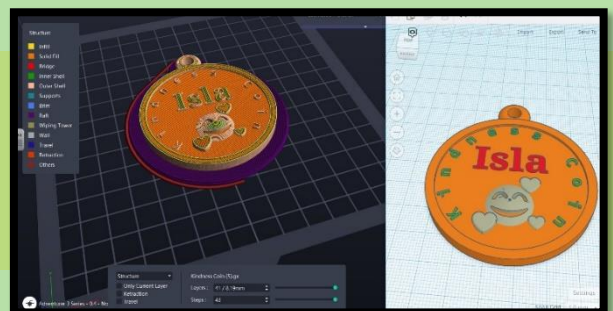
The ACE Champions decided to create a script to support those who may be feeling bullied in an effort to extend help and support to those who need it as it can sometimes be a difficult subject to talk about and deal with.

To extend our anti-bullying message beyond the school gates, Year 6 did a series of online bullying lessons to help them identify intimidating behaviour over social media. They looked at different social media apps and discussed what was fun about them, as well as the downsides of popular apps. Here is a link to the latest #WakeUpWednesday guide for parents, carers and educators from the National Online Safety team in support of Anti-BullyingWeek. It gives top tips to tackle cyber-bullying and can be downloaded from <https://bit.ly/3EiWMSy>

Kindness Day took place on the 13th November 2022. To celebrate and to extend kindness across the whole school, Mr Ellison in Year 6 introduced 'Kindness coins'. Each class nominates a member of their class for the 'Kindness coin' and states why that person has been nominated. Classes were encouraged to think carefully about who demonstrates kindness towards fellow classmates and then to nominate them for a coin. Acts of kindness which the children valued were being good friends, helping each other in moments of need, caring for each other and even making each other laugh.

Reception discussed what makes a good friend; children gave some amazing insights about what a good friend means to them. Year 4 did an activity called 'Reach out our Hands' to help them identify a positive attitude and support to others. In year 5, pupils could choose as many kind people as they wished and everyone was nominated at least once. What a caring year group!

Anti-Bullying and Kindness is in full force at Hill West!



The Hill West Nativity

By Miss Kerry Lynch

Lights, Camera, Action!

This year's show was an adaptation of both Strictly Come Dancing and the traditional Nativity story. Our wonderful hosts kicked off the show with some fantastic dancing, whilst the rest of the cast entered the hall. They were soon joined by the judges (some who were very hard to please!) announced by our Voiceovers. The rest of our cast included Innkeepers; Shepherds and Sheep; Camels and Wise Men; People of Nazareth; a host of angelic Angels; the stars of the show Mary and Joseph; and finally the Star and her Entourage, who guided them all to witness the birth of Christ.

Our performance this year not only demonstrated our talented children's acting skills but also highlighted their talents for singing and dancing. All dances were choreographed by the children and performed with enthusiasm.

Kingfishers were absolutely amazing. The weeks preceding the performance were tough with lots of children feeling poorly and tired. However, they pushed through, learnt their lines, and pulled it out of the bag. They were highly honoured by the presence of Mr Carter, who has over 40 years of teaching experience, giving the children guidance in practising their lines and rehearsing. They were truly amazing!

Owls were all superstars. They demonstrated amazing energy, enthusiasm and confidence. Who knew that they were all secret dancing sensations! All the Year 2 teachers are incredibly proud of the commitment, effort and performance they saw from the children.

A big thank you goes to all the families for their support with costumes, learning lines and those who came to watch.



Class 4 Assembly

By Miss Sarah Mooney

One of our most exciting achievements as a year group was to have the opportunity to perform a Tudor themed assembly retelling the events of the life of Henry Tudor and his wives and to tell people about the different elements of Tudor life. The children worked diligently, learning a range of Tudor style songs, and rehearsing their Tudor dance to perform to their adults. As teachers we were so proud of their dedication to the assembly. The children took an active role in creating the background props; styling their costumes to make their characters accurate; and learning their lines. All this made the assembly feel like a professional performance! This assembly developed the children's confidence and they thoroughly enjoyed the experience. They have been constantly asking us when they are doing their next assembly!

Unsurprisingly given the fabulous play, Year 4 have been focusing on Tudors within their history lessons. We have studied all the Tudor monarchs and key events, beginning with Henry VII and Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth, all the way through to Elizabeth I and the Armada. The children's ambitious nature was also increased by our recent trip to Blakesley Hall where the children were able to experience the period practically using artefact analysis, designing their own Tudor house and in lots of entertaining ways, for example learning a Tudor dance!

Art has been an exciting subject this term, the children have been studying a range of artists to develop their skills and to master their creative styles. They have used their art skills to create our wonderful calendars inspired by the artist Julian Opie, the children have worked hard on making these portraits look identical to themselves.

This autumn term the children have worked extremely hard in all areas of the curriculum, as a year group they have made us all proud and have been Ambitious, Curious and are always Ever-respectful. The children have thrown themselves into all topics covered this term, one of the most favoured being our electricity topic in Science. The children have tested their curious nature to build a range of simple and complex circuits and have been testing different materials to see if they are conductors or insulators.



Road Safety Week

By Miss Sophie Beardmore

National Road Safety Week this year took place from the 14th to the 18th November. The theme of Road Safety Week 2022 was 'SAFE ROADS FOR ALL' and hoped to bring people together to raise awareness that every life on our roads matters and that every death and injury is preventable'. It had the aims of drawing attention to 'the key areas of road safety namely safe roads, safe vehicles and safe speeds. There is a new hierarchy of road users, reflecting inclusivity to keep us all safe on the roads, no matter who we are or how we travel'.

In our Road Safety assembly, we first looked at who uses our roads.

- People who walk – pedestrians
- People who ride – bicycles, motorbikes, horses and scooters
- People who use wheelchairs or mobility scooters
- People who drive for work – buses, trams, ambulances, lorry drivers, van drivers
- People who ride for work such as food delivery services and the police
- Children in pushchairs



We then looked at two different street scenarios, one a quiet street and another a busy street, and how important it is that everyone understands how to use roads safely to keep us all safe. Reflecting on the scenarios, we asked the children to think of some road safety rules that should be used when using the roads near school: **driving slower near our school; only cross the road when the green man shows; looking both left and right before crossing the road; stopping when we see a red traffic light; and not parking outside school.**

Here are some more Road Safety tips:

- Always hold hands with a grown-up when walking near roads.
- Use safe footpaths away from traffic and always cross roads at safe places with a grown up.
- When riding bikes, ride with a grown up on a safe path away from traffic and wear a helmet to protect your head if you fall off.
- Always sit in a special car seat to protect you when travelling by car.
- Don't use your phone when walking near roads or crossing roads
- Only play in safe places away from traffic
- Always wear a seat belt and never use your phone while driving

We all share a responsibility to use roads safely, and this includes people who walk, scoot and ride, as well as people who drive. Everyone's life matters on roads.



PTFA Movie Night

Following on from the success of last year's Christmas Movie Night, this year it was a hotly anticipated event. The school buzzed with excitement as hotdogs were cooked, sweet bags prepared and final soundchecks completed.

Around 5.30pm, the first of the excited children arrived to get the best places and settle in for an evening of fun.

In Reception, they created a super cosy atmosphere with many dressed for comfort in snuggly onesies, so they could really relax and enjoy the film. The children were treated to 'Mickey's Once Upon a Christmas', which they all really loved. They only paused from watching the film to enjoy some more treats in the form of delicious hot dogs. Yummy!



In Year One, the children were having a great time watching Mickey, followed by 'The Snowman', after completing a fun Christmas quiz.

In KS2 the children avidly watched the hilarious 'Home Alone Lost in New York', before taking a break to enjoy some foodie treats. It was wonderful to welcome so many children into school to support our PTFA Movie Night.

Reveling in all its Christmas cheer, all the children were excited to receive a message from Father Christmas himself at the end of the evening. Then too soon, it was time to say goodnight and head home to bed.

Many thanks go to all the amazing PTFA members, who helped make this event happen both beforehand and on the night. Our indefatigable staff team also worked incredibly hard to ensure the night was a success.



Aberdovey November 2022

By Mrs Alison Downes

A crowd of extremely excited (and a little apprehensive) Year 5 and 6 children boarded the waiting coach in front of Hill West Primary School, just after 9a.m. on Monday 28th November. As seatbelts were buckled and checked, the children waved good-bye to their loved ones and set off on their journey to Aberdovey, located on the Welsh west coast, north of Aberystwyth. On board were not only the children from Hares, Badgers and Foxes but 5 adults: Dr Warrack, Mr Holmes, Mr Henrick, Mr Parkin and Mrs Downes. As school became a distant memory, attention turned towards the adventures which might await them...



Would they jump into the sea, go rock-climbing, canoe or walk in the gorges? No-one was sure, but the eager chatter of children filled the coach as they headed onwards to their destination.

Three hours after leaving school, the Welsh mountain scenery gave way to river views. As we turned around a bend, we were able to glimpse the widening mouth of the river as it approached Cardigan Bay and joined the sea, which meant we were nearing our destination. Eventually, the coach turned right off the main road and drove up a steep, curved drive to the Aberdovey Outward Bound Trust Centre. The coach driver showed great skill as he parked the coach in the steep, small car park and we worked together to unload the coach. As the children looked behind them, the view from the dining hall overlooking Aberdovey was simply magnificent. The weather that greeted us was spectacular too – clear blue skies and crisp, dry winter air.

After lunch, the children were introduced to their teams (Caffari, Ramsey, Dufton, Hameister, and Yaseen) before their leaders took them off to show them their common rooms and give them a tour of the centre. They then went to their accommodation blocks and were shown the rooms in which they would sleep for the next four nights. Once there, they were given the chance to choose their own beds, and then shown how to make them—using the sheets and bedding provided – with varying degrees of success! After settling in, the children met up again in their teams. Over the next five days the children would get to know the people in their teams exceptionally well and they were eager to start their big adventure.

Team Hameister used some teamwork and problem-solving skills to get into their cage on the first evening. They then proceeded to have an amazing time gorge walking. Before enjoying the first night hot chocolate before bed. On Tuesday, Hameister went on an amazing adventure to find Dolgoch waterfall, where they saw an old slate mine and then made some dens. Finishing off their first full day was the Jacobs ladder. On Wednesday, they had an awesome time climbing up to Llyn Cau lake, even wandering through the clouds and emerging victorious at the beautiful lake! Thursday saw Hameister spend a glorious day out on the water, where they worked well as a team and had an awesome time building a raft out of canoes. Then they paddled up the Dovey Estuary! On their final morning of activities, they played lava shark, skipped and played gutter ball!





Team Ramsey had a lovely time gorge walking on the first evening. What a fabulously adventurous start to the week! The following day saw them zooming upriver by speedboat and then canoeing back to Aberdovey. In the afternoon, they played on the beach- a game called camouflage - before an afternoon jog and dip. After dinner was orienteering around the Aberdovey centre site. They had a wonderful first day! Wednesday saw Ramsey climbing Jacob's ladder in the morning. They found that working together was the best way to climb higher!!

The afternoon was spent at Dolgoch waterfall. After climbing through the forest, they made shelters and enjoyed hot chocolate and marshmallows. After dinner they packed for a mountain adventure and played team games.



The next day they headed to Barmouth, where the view from the top of Barmouth was breathtaking. They felt like they were on top of the world. Every member the team successfully abseiled down the rock face. They were all amazing! Afterwards it was a much faster scramble back down the mountain to the bus for the drive back to the centre and dinner. The last day saw Ramsery talking about their magic moments before playing a game of hand football.



Team Caffari started their week with a 'nice' dip into the famous icy black waters of the Grot Pot - a chilly, but fun, way to sign off the evening. But all were warmed up with a hearty mug of hot chocolate before bed. This led to further water adventures on Tuesday when Caffari had a wet and wild time gorge walking. They dried off just in time for some evening team building, where they worked together to transport a golf ball into a bucket using drainpipes. Midweek saw Caffari scrambling up cliffs, where they had a lunch with a view! It was into the forest the following day, when Caffari had a great time exploring Dolgoch waterfall, building dens and toasting marshmallows.



Team Dufton had a lovely jog and dip to start off their Aberdovey experience. On Tuesday, they travelled to Barmouth where they went rock climbing and abseiling. What a great first full day adventure! Then Tuesday saw them head off to explore the forest at Tan Y Coed and ended the day off with a dip in the sea. They had a wet and wild time on the gorge walk. A truly epic day.



Their final day involved discussing how they had grown as a team. They reflected on their learning of PIE (praise, inspiration, encouragement) support and practised it one last time during their abseiling session.

Team Yaseen started their adventure at the Grot Pot, where some team members couldn't wait to jump into the murky depths. There were lots of discussions about what could potentially lie beneath the surface!



On their first full day, Yaseen were map reading and hill walking in some stunning scenery with clear, blue skies all around. They headed to the remains of an old fort through a creek requiring some a courageous climbing.

Midweek, Yaseen had a great time exploring everything Dolgoch had to offer with its spectacular waterfalls and scenery. It was truly magical. They enjoyed collecting the twigs to heat water in the kettles for the hot chocolate. Thursday was the 'wet' day and Yaseen got geared up in wet suits and waterproofs to head up to the gorge. They worked well as a team to overcome all of the challenges they faced – helping each other in the trickier parts. On the final morning, they headed to the beach, where they build a fire and relived the experiences of the past five days. They then had a creative sand modelling competition, where they let their imaginations run wild.



The last night was spent together under the stars by a roaring fire. We all shared campfire stories and successes from our week. We discovered we have achieved so much collectively and individually. Memories to take with wherever we go!

Too soon it was time to board the homeward-bound coach and begin the long journey back to school where loved ones were waiting eagerly to congratulate all on an amazing accomplishment.

We are so proud of you all, children and staff, for each and every accomplishment, whether that be staying away from home for the first time or completing an activity you never thought was possible.



National Award for Special Educational Needs Co-ordination (NASENCo)

By Mrs Rebecca George



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Since September 2021 I have been enrolled in the National Award for Special Educational Needs Co-ordination, Masters Level course at The University of Birmingham. This course composes of 10 face to face days that are delivered over the course of this academic year. As with all Masters level study, reading the core materials and wider materials is an essential part of this course. Alongside this reading, three 4000-word assignments need to be written and are expected to take anywhere between eight and thirty hours!

The National Award is a mandatory qualification, 60 Credit Masters level course which all SENCOs who are new in role must undertake. The course meets the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice (2015 Section 6.86). The course is 12 months in duration; however, SENCOs have up to three years from the point at which they are designated as a SENCO in which to complete the award.

The course is designed to support a SENCO's professional development, giving them an opportunity to reflect upon and improve their practice whilst learning more about the coordination of special educational needs, leadership and management, policy and supporting the individual needs of children and young people.

To successfully complete the nationally approved training for special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) participants will be expected to achieve *all* of the learning outcomes.

The learning outcomes are specific to the SENCO role and relevant to SENCOs in all schools but some aspects will need to be interpreted differently according to the phase, size and type of school.

Achieving the learning outcomes will help both new and more experienced SENCOs fulfil the role set out in the current *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice* (DfE/DOH, 2015), of which the key features are:

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy
- co-ordinating provision for children with SEN liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after pupil has SEN
- advising on the graduated approach to providing SEN support
- advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- liaising with parents of pupils with SEN liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies
- being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- working with the Headteacher and School Governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- ensuring that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEN up to date

The Code of Practice (DfE/DOH, 2015) also envisages that the SENCO will provide professional guidance to colleagues with the aim of securing high quality teaching of pupils with SEN. The expected outcome being that they will lead teaching and learning and the coordination of provision for pupils with SEN in their school.

So far, I have attended four days at the university, where I have been introduced to reading and watched presentations around the following themes: key legislation and the role of the SENDCo; optimising provision for those with SEND; partnership and equality; and leadership and management. All of these days have supported me with the writing of the first assignment; a portfolio, which links specific course content with key aspects of the SENCO's role (4000 words plus relevant supplementary evidence). This is due to be submitted by 16th January 2023! It has been a very long time since I wrote an assignment and it has certainly challenged me at times. Although I have very much enjoyed enhancing my knowledge and skills further, which in turn has supported me to critically evaluate our approach, thus ensuring that our children with Special Educational Needs continue to reach their potential with continued excellent targeted support and nurture.

