

THE HILL WEST HERALD



HILL WEST
Primary

FOUR OAKS

SPRING TERM 1 2023
ISSUE 43

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Message from the Head Teacher

By Dr Beth Clarke

I think all those in outward facing, servant leadership roles have a duty to keep learning, to keep reading and keep reflecting on their practice and the practices of their teams.

I have recently been reading a book called 'Imperfect Leadership in Action' written by Steve Munby and Marie-Claire Bretherton (2023). In this book Munby and Bretherton argue that those with an imperfect leadership mind-set know that they don't know it all, which is why they need a good team around them and why they value the expertise that others bring. It is also why they see it as a wise and positive thing to ask for help. Their self-awareness helps them to manage their ego – not too low and not too high – because they know their strengths and their weaknesses.

They go on to explain that these leaders understand that they will never be a perfect leader. Instead, they try to be a better version of themselves tomorrow than they were today. And if they have days when that doesn't happen (and there are likely to be many of them), they try to be kind to themselves, because they know that perfection is not attainable and if they tried to achieve it, they may damage their health and their sense of self-worth. They don't expect their colleagues who are aspirant leaders to be perfect either. Rather than putting barriers in the way, leaders with an imperfect leadership mind-set encourage others to step up into leadership position and help to build their confidence. Imperfect leaders, they suggest, are authentic. They know themselves and they see it as important to be honest about who they are. Of course, I strive, in my day-to-day role to enact all of this, and try to remember that perfection is never possible, especially when working in schools where the context and parameters are constantly changing.

Munby and Bretherton remind us that imperfect leaders see their role in developing and empowering teams as fundamental to their work, and not as an optional extra. These leaders know that if their school is to have sustainable success, then a team that works effectively together and maximises the expertise of each person is essential. They reject the 'hero leader' model. They understand deeply that what counts is not who has the best idea at the beginning of the process but whether the right decisions are made and whether good outcomes are achieved. The book acknowledges too that leading a team is one of the most challenging parts of the role of a school leader and of course it is a never ending task. When we invest time and energy in developing and supporting our colleagues they inevitably grow in expertise and confidence and often seek opportunities for promotion; they want to lead their own schools; they want to make a difference to children, families and staff teams in their own schools. They know that being a head teacher and serving a community is a privilege and they are committed to the principles of servant leadership. This means that aspirant leaders grasp the opportunities afforded to them and the work of the imperfect leader continues, as is the case at Hill West with the departure of Mrs Leeson, Mrs Cook, Mr Day, Mrs Johnston and finally Dr Warrack all to lead or deputise in their own schools. This is something I am incredibly proud of and without sounding a little conceited, I like to think that I have played a very small part in impacting positively on the education of children within and beyond Hill West.

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**Leadership should be focused on
extending the ladder of
opportunity for everyone.**
— Justin Trudeau

Arthur Terry Learning Partnership News; A little insight into our Chief Executive Officer

By Dr Beth Clarke

It is hard to believe but at the end of this term we will be celebrating our 10 year anniversary as an ATLP School. Since those early days and conversations with Sir Christopher Stone, our learning family has grown considerably. The ATLP today, is a multi-academy trust of 14 primary schools, 6 secondary schools and one Teaching School Hub, serving more than 10,500 students and 1,400 staff and governors. This growth and commitment to public service has happened under the stewardship of Richard Gill.



Most recently Richard has been awarded a Birmingham City University honorary doctorate for his outstanding service and dedication to the sector.

He received his honorary doctorate during a graduation ceremony for education and social work students at Birmingham's Symphony Hall on 5 January 2023 and joined the likes of Miss Sarah Mooney, who was also being awarded and welcomed into the profession on that day.

Richard said: "It is my honour and privilege to work alongside, and to be involved with the training of, so many exceptional young people who are dedicated to helping others. "A fulfilled life always involves putting more back into society than you take out, and I would encourage these graduates to do what they love, and to continue to make a profound difference to the lives of those around them."

Richard began his career as a teacher in Staffordshire and was appointed as head teacher at the Arthur Terry School in 2010, which during his tenure became one of the first 100 teaching schools to provide initial teacher training.

Over the last 30 years, Richard has played an important role in school-to-school support across the West Midlands. Richard is a valued member of several education advisory groups and bodies. In 2014 he was appointed as National Leader of Education by the Secretary of State for Education, where he uses his expertise to engage with Ministers and senior officials to help shape the national education agenda.

Richard said, "I am delighted to have been awarded this honorary degree. It is especially rewarding to be recognised in this region, among the communities ATLP serves."

Richard's career has focused on improving the educational opportunities of children and young people in the Birmingham and Midlands region; a mission that aligns with Birmingham City University's mission to transform the lives of its students and wider society. In his message to education and social work graduates, he said: "I am truly humbled to share the stage with such talented and dedicated professionals, who care intensely about their chosen vocations. I wish them well in their future careers."

In 2020, Richard was awarded a Commander of the British Empire in the Queen's Birthday Honours list for his outstanding services to education.

Congratulations Mr Gill; we are very proud of you.

Year 2 Black Country Museum Visit

By Mrs Charlotte Massey

Year 2 were extremely excited to find out that they were going on an adventure back in time. We jumped on board our coach and set off into the heart of our city, venturing back to the Victorian times to discover the many ways our wonderful city led the development of transport, industry and culture.

Our first stop was on the water! Year 2 lined up with their hard hats on and boarded a canal boat. They were following the same canals our ancestors followed, through the limestone tunnels hidden 200 feet beneath Birmingham city centre, which connected our factories to the rest of the country. These tunnels, built in 1778 still stand strong and show us glimpses back in time to when the dinosaurs roamed around. The tunnels were lined with fantastic fossils!

In the darkness Mrs Thomas and Mrs Massey had to work hard to “leg” the boat back to the dock. It showed us how the workers had to move the canal boats and how difficult it was! We paused in an enormous cavern and were entertained with flashing disco lights and rock music.

Back on dry land, we began our tour of the city, set up just as it would have been with rows of tiny shops, cobbled streets and oil-lit street lights. First we visited Mr Gregor’s grocery store. He told us about the variety of items he sold in his store and how little everything cost. We watched as he demonstrated the bacon slicing machine and told us about the meat and butter being left out on display all day long! As we left the shop, Mr Gregor explained that the gentlemen had to leave the shop first and hold a hand out to assist the ladies down the very steep steps. Of course, our helpful young Hill West gentlemen quickly obliged and assisted the ladies out of the shop. Lovely manners lads!

A little further up the street, we stopped at A Hartill Motorcycles in the hope of buying a new motorbike. They were lined up neatly in the shop windows and the shop keeper explained how the machines were made in factories just down the road. The walls were lined with photos of the bikes winning lots of races and there were even motorbike helmets worn by the racers. Can you believe you could buy a motorbike for just £18?





Then we ventured into the shop next door to buy a very smart suit. The tailor explained that most of the suits were made from wool. They must have been very itchy and quite hot in the summer but they did look extremely smart. It was especially popular for the boys to wear flat caps and waistcoats.



We followed the cobbled street back down towards the water and lined up were beautifully hand-painted canal boats. On board we met a lovely lady who told us all about life living on a canal boat. She let us hop aboard and take a sneaky peak inside. It was very cramped. The beds doubled up as sofas to sit on and the wood burning fire was extremely close. They had to be very careful not to accidentally set fire to their bedding. The fires were used to cook their meals and heat up their water as well as keep them warm. We quickly noticed that there were no bathrooms on the boat. That was when we discovered what the bucket was for...! There was a catchy phrase known as the "bucket and chuck it" which sorted out the issue of no bathrooms! Not very nice if you ask me.



After a quick bite to eat it was off to school, but not the school we know and love. Oh no, this school was very strict! The boys and girls had to sit on opposite sides of the classroom and they had to sit in complete silence at all times. There were no interactive whiteboards, just a small chalk board to look at. The children had to repeat and learn all their lessons off by heart. We found out that school was very expensive and sometimes families had to pick their favourite child to go to school because they couldn't afford to send them all! If you didn't go to school then you had to go to work. I know which one I would prefer to do. We then discovered the most shocking part of all...if you were naughty or broke the rules then you got the CANE! Mrs Thomas and Miss Lynch were found wearing nail varnish and they had to have the cane.

Outside school we met Charlie, a beautiful horse that pulled a cart. This was how many people got around before cars had been invented. Our tour guide explained that as the roads became busier and more families got cars the horses weren't needed and were only ridden for fun. Then a double decker bus pulled up and we climbed on for a ride. This was so much fun and we drove up the street looking at the rows of interesting shops and waved at the people walking along the street below us.

Year 2 had the most exciting day and couldn't wait to share their adventures with their families when we got back to school.



Year 4 Whitemoor Lakes Residential

By Miss Sarah Mooney



This term Year 4 had the fantastic opportunity to head to Whitemoor Lakes Activity Centre in Lichfield. The centre provided a range of physically and mentally challenging activities for the children to participate in, which were not only fun, but pushed us all to learn more about ourselves.

On arrival on Wednesday 1st February, the children were taken straight to their first challenge...seeing if they could successfully put on their bed linen without the adults to help! With beds successfully made, the amazing staff gave the children the best dinner followed by a set of fantastic evening activities, which included extreme team games, where reliance on each other was fundamental to win!



The morning brought a delicious breakfast to set the children up for a day rammed full of activities. Abseiling, fencing, problem solving, archery, raft building and orienteering were among some of the activities they took part in. Each activity took determination, skill, teamwork, and perseverance. The children were all incredibly brave and took on every activity making themselves and all staff incredibly proud!

Thursday evening brought a filling dinner of meatballs and pasta followed by the best tasting ice cream for dessert! After some free time for the children to explore their dorms, it was time for the group camp fire. Everyone was led out into the dark field, where they sat around a roaring fire to sing songs and play games. The children even had a competition against the other schools for who could be the loudest when singing, which, of course, Hill West won!



The final day was still to come with a morning packed full of activities. After breakfast, the children were whisked off to take part in a range of team games including: a battle between dwarves, giants and wizards; a race with sharks, fish and jellyfish; and ended with the staff giving the children their awards for their fantastic achievements over the course of the three days. Certificates were given for determination, independence, bravery, and perseverance through the most difficult activities.



After having a fantastic fish and chip lunch, we all waved goodbye to the staff team and headed back home! We are all so proud of the children for their resilience and bravery throughout the trip. They behaved fantastically and were all superstar A.C.E. children! Well done Year 4, it won't be long until next year's Aberdovey trip!

Year 6 Trip to France

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



Forty-five Year 6 pupils and five members of staff were lucky enough to spend a long weekend in the small town of Rue in Northern France. We left school bright and early at 4.00am on Friday morning, full of excitement and anticipation. We travelled in style on our luxury coach down to the Port of Dover to board the ferry. Whilst on board, some made a beeline for the arcade, some preferred to shop for presents for friends and family, and some even enjoyed an ice-coffee together in Starbucks! Once we arrived in Calais we made for Rue, arriving at our home for the weekend, Le Château du Broutel, at around 4.00pm.

We spent Friday evening settling into our rooms with our friends. We enjoyed a delicious dinner followed by fun-filled activities of volley ball and capture the flag. It was a great end to the first evening before turning in for the night, in readiness for the adventures that lay ahead of us.

Saturday morning started like each morning at the Château with delicious croissants and pain-au-chocolats. Delicious! We then headed off on a tour of the Château grounds, finding out about the rich and varied history of the building. We learned that it was taken over by the Nazis during WWII and we were even able to find evidence of them being there. We heard about the fortunes and misfortunes of the family who owned the Château after the War.



Then, it was on to Rue town and a visit to the Saturday market, to buy gifts. We had the opportunity to order food in the pâtisserie in French and then some time to browse the market, where many children were interested in the French sweet stall - buying hot chilli sweets seemed to be a favourite! The children enjoyed



browsing the market wares and surrounding shops. The baguette shop being the most popular venue! After a pizza lunch back at the Château, we headed off to the chocolate factory for the afternoon. Children were able to watch the process of how the chocolate was made - along with sampling some creamy delights. Being able to try before you buy was a great idea!



Sunday morning, with the winter sun smiling upon us, we were up bright and early for an interesting, historical day. First we headed to the Somme Museum in Albert, where we got the opportunity to see real relics and recreated scenes from WWI. There was a trench that we could walk through complete with sound effects. This really resonated with the children from their learning back at school. Many felt sombre about the experience and thankful that we have so much to be grateful for.

We then spent a cold and foggy afternoon visiting some of the many monuments and memorials to fallen soldiers from WWI. It was a privilege to see, first-hand, the sacrifices made by so many men over one-hundred years ago. Paying our respects to Canadian, French and British soldiers, who so desperately fought for our rights, was an honour. After a humbling adventure, we headed back to the Château for our final evening of activities, which included a camp fire where the children had time to reflect upon their adventures together and sing camp fire songs in French.

Monday morning announced itself with a cool, hazy frost as we headed off to breakfast and then loaded our coach in readiness for the journey home to friends and family. On the return journey, there was lots of lively talking about all that we had been able to cram into such a short time; it was a fantastic experience for us all, giving us a real-life context in which to use our French skills.



Young Voices Experience

By Mr Ryan Horne

Hill West Choir has, once again, had the amazing opportunity to perform in the Young Voices 2023 choir concert at Resorts World Arena in Birmingham. The night was electric with choirs from dozens of schools from all over the area coming together to perform in a gigantic performance choir made up of almost 7000 children. The choir rehearsed weekly for approximately 6 weeks. Rehearsals were spent learning how to warm up their voices as well as their facial muscles in preparation for singing. We have even been practising singing in groups and allocating each other different parts to sing; learning how to sing as part of an ensemble. This hard work really paid off on the day.

The choir arrived at 1:30 in the afternoon and proceeded to spend the next 4 hours rehearsing every song in the show. This was the longest part of the day as it requires all children to focus and repeat several lines again and again until it is right. The concert was led by Conductor David Lawrence. The children sang their way through: a Disney medley comprised of songs from 'Pocahontas' and 'Brave'; a disco medley featuring songs by Nile Rodgers; and an amazing performance of 'Proud' that featured none other than Heather Small. A medley based on the film 'Trolls' was certainly a highlight for many of the children; specifically a lovely rendition of 'Can't Stop the Feeling'.

The evening was sprinkled with amazing beatbox performances as well as a street dance spectacle by Urban Strides, led by the incredibly talented Andy Instone. The children were mesmerised by all of the amazing talent that was on display that night. The choir was clad in Young Voice T-shirts that helped them to feel part of the concert experience. They were armed with torches, smiles and enthusiasm. Although it was a long day, the Hill West choir conducted themselves with patience and enthusiasm during the long afternoons. The coach trip home was just as energetic; as stories and anecdotes were shared between all of the children, we laughed our way back to the school. Not even the late night could dampen their spirits as they returned to school around 10pm that night. They were enthusiastic, energetic and very proud to be there! All in all, the only thing the choir would like to ask is:



'What have you done today to make you feel proud?'



Our New Book Club

By Mrs Alison Downes and Mr Gary Phelps

Last term, Rayyah Deyn-Kaan of Badgers wrote to Dr. Clarke suggesting that in a school with such eager readers, we needed a book club. She was keen to start one and so without further ado set about organising it. After deciding a time and day, she created advertising posters to be put in each classroom of years 4 to 6. The club started the very next week and was immediately popular. We have now been meeting regularly since then. It is a lovely opportunity to discuss books, recommend titles and explore the library. News of the new club reached the ATLP and they sent their own reporter Mr Gary Phelps to Hill West to find out all about it. Here is the resulting article:

The library at a Sutton Coldfield Primary School has never been busier after a book-loving student started a reading club for her classmates.

Ten-year-old Rayyah Deyn-Kaan loves reading so much that she started the Book Club at Hill West Primary School, which is part of the respected Arthur Terry Learning Partnership.

Now dozens of Rayyah's fellow pupils are taking a leaf out of her book, and joining in the weekly club.

Rayyah said: "I was in Boldmere with my family last year, and when we were walking around, I saw a poster for a book club - and I thought 'that would be a good idea at my school.'"

Rayyah then emailed Hill West head teacher Dr Beth Clarke, explaining all the reasons why a Book Club would be beneficial to the school.

The Year Five student said: "I want more young people to start reading, I love reading at school. I just liked the idea of a whole club that was just about reading."

Now, each Friday, youngsters at the Sutton Coldfield school gather in the library to talk about books, authors and enjoy book-related activities.

Rayyah, who enjoys adventure books such as The Famous Five, said: "The club had a really good response. It started in November and has just grown and grown.

"We had to split the Year Four, Five and Six students into two groups because we had such a great response!

"It would be good if other schools copied us and launched Book Clubs. Some people in the other class here have started their own Book Club too, for the Year Three children.

Rayyah added: "There's nothing else like reading. It's like having a movie in your head, and you can make up how the characters look.

"It's also very important to learn how to read, otherwise you wouldn't be able to write."

Teacher Alison Downes said: "We are so impressed with how determined Rayyah has been to make the Book Club a success.

"She really cares about books, and her enthusiasm is rubbing off on the other children.

"Each week the club lets the children share ideas, talk about their favourite books and read to each other.

They learn about an Author of the Week too, with Rayyah reading an extract from one of their books too."



The Children's University

By Mr Joel Holmes

The children at Hill West have embraced the opportunity to broaden their horizons and challenge themselves through Children's University. Since its launch in September 2022, the children at Hill West have amassed 4000+ hours of learning outside of school. Children's University has offered the children in our school community the opportunity to be celebrated for their incredible dedication to sport, music, community action and the arts. It has been fantastic to see the excitement on display from all those who have engaged closely with Children's University.

There are plenty of opportunities through a range of after school clubs to earn hours towards Bronze, Silver or Gold awards, including: tennis, dodgeball, gymnastics and many more. Please contact the school office if you have any queries.

We have so far given out awards to 17 children who have achieved their Bronze award in assembly. Two of those children have amassed enough hours to earn their Silver award which will be presented to them at a ceremony at Arthur Terry School later in the academic year.

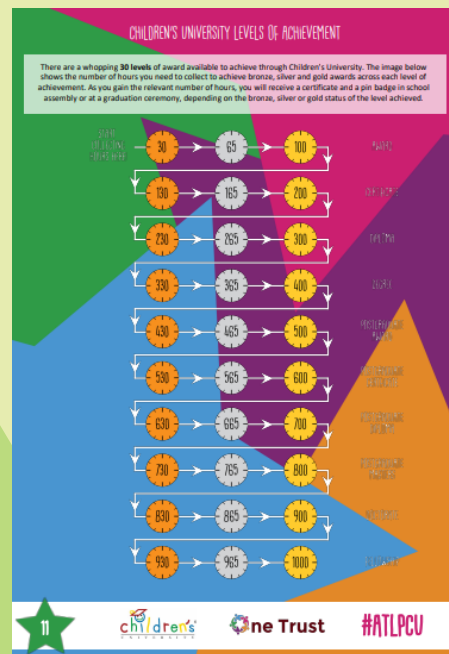
Don't forget to spread the word about Children's University in our local community, by issuing postcards to any clubs or activity hubs which your child attends. These various clubs can sign up as a learning destination via the QR code and can start to distribute hours via the stamp codes they are provided with.

Want to earn some hours? Why not complete one of the ATLP challenges on the most recent newsletter.

OWL-BERT WELCOMES YOU TO THE FEBRUARY 2023 EDITION OF THE ATLP C.U. NEWSLETTER! With National Careers Week coming up, this edition of the newsletter involves a variety of tasks relating to different academic subjects and skills! Complete the range of activities over this half-term, to gain up to 8 extra Children's University hours! The activities can be completed in any order but at least one of them may require adult supervision. Record evidence of your learning with each task - this could be a photo or reflection report on the activity/activities you completed, and don't forget to log your hours on your 'Passport to Learning'!

Activities include: Making a historical fact file, participating in an "I-Spy" walk, performing a Science experiment, making a model, being kind and researching a future career.

Well done to the children of Hill West for engaging so positively with Children's University. Hopefully there will be some children who have reached 100 hours and will be able to join the other Arthur Terry Schools in a graduation ceremony at Birmingham University.



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TO REGISTER...



...scan the QR code or go to:
[www.childrensuniversity.co.uk/
get-involved/learning-providers](http://www.childrensuniversity.co.uk/get-involved/learning-providers).

When prompted, select 'children in your local area' and search for 'ATLP MAT' in the 'named' box. Selecting this enables us to verify the registration.

