

THE HILL WEST HERALD


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Message from the Head Teacher; Curriculum Planning

By Dr Beth Clarke

Since our return to school after the Christmas break, I have been working hard, alongside other senior leaders, to improve and refine our individual subject specific learning journeys or schemes of work. This work has taken into consideration the statutory guidance from the DFE on Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education, parts of which will become statutory in September 2020 and Teaching Online Safety in School (Guidance support schools to teach their pupils how to stay safe online).

The National curriculum has obviously provided the overarching outline of what we should teach in each subject but our progressive learning journeys break down the learning into smaller chunks, articulating key themes and concepts that should be taught in depth. In History, for example we have decided to teach about The Stone Age;

	Knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past	Historical Interpretation
Year 4	I can place a number of events, objects, themes and people I have studied on a timeline.	I can research a person using a secondary source.
	I can research and explain significant events from before living memory.	I can explain the difference between primary and secondary sources.
	I can select and combine information from a range of sources about historical times and events, namely <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Roman Empire (Julius Caesar's attempted invasion; The Roman Army; Claudius' invasion and conquest; British resistance – Boudica; Romanisation of Britain) The Tudor Period (Henry VIII and his wives; life in Tudor England; The dissolution of the monasteries; rich and poor; succession to the throne – Elizabeth I; The Spanish Armada) World War Two (the outbreak; life during the war; the impact on Coventry and Coventry's significance; evacuation) 	I can suggest some reasons why there are different accounts and interpretations of the past.
	I can explain why the past can be represented and interpreted in different ways.	I can select and organise information to structure their work.
	I can understand that there can be several reasons for a specific event.	I can understand the Romanisation of Britain, through a visit to Stone.
		I can understand what life was like during the Tudor Period, through a visit to Blakesley Hall .

	Knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past	Historical Interpretation
Year 6	I can devise historically valid questions about similarities, differences and their significance, through studying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Victorians (Victoria and Albert; The Great Exhibition; Industrialisation; Crime and Punishment, law and democracy) World War One (causes; western front – Somme battlefields, home front; end of the war; remembrance) World War Two (outbreak; Battle of Britain; Winston Churchill; Dunkirk; Ann Frank and the Holocaust; VE Day) 	I can talk about the significance of canals and railways in Birmingham and explain how they have helped shape our city.
	I can organise, select and use relevant information to produce well-structured narratives and explanations.	I can research Queen Victoria and Winston Churchill using secondary sources and draw on primary sources to strengthen my understanding.
	I can make links between their factual knowledge and understanding of the history of Britain and the wider world.	I can show independence in lines of enquiry using their knowledge and understanding to identify, evaluate and use sources of information critically.
	I can use these links to analyse relationships between features a particular period or society and discuss reasons for events and changes.	Through a visit to the Imperial War Museum in London, I can reflect on achievements and follies of mankind and how this has impacted our world today.
I can analyse and explain reasons for and results of historical events, situations and changes.	I can take into account a range of information when evaluating the accuracy and usefulness of sources.	
I can make balanced judgements on their understanding of the historical context about the value of different interpretations of historical events and developments.	I can address and devise historically valid questions on a visit to The Somme to enhance my understanding of World War One.	

The Iron Age and Ancient Egypt in Year 3. The Romans; the Tudors and World War 2 in Year 4. Ancient Greece; Anglo Saxons and Vikings in Year 5. The Victorians; World War One; World War 2 and the influence of canals and railways on life in Birmingham since the industrialisation in Year 6. We have mapped out each subject in the same way leading to a whole school long-term overview, which shows what will be taught and when it will be taught. As well as using these learning journeys to plan teaching sequences, teachers also use them to assess learning and progress. Our progressive learning journeys for each subject chart the children's learning and allow teachers to assess progress over time. Annual data captures for the non-core subjects give us a robust understanding of those children who have met year

group expectations and understand curriculum content and those who are exceeding your group expectations in individual subject disciplines.

Our curriculum design is underpinned by some specific aims. We want to promote high standards in all individual subject disciplines; we want to enable children to acquire knowledge and key skills across the curriculum. We want to promote spiritual development, physical development and mental well-being. We want to enable our children to be aware of the importance of and participate in the arts and related cultural themes. We want to enable pupils to develop moral sensibility through carefully taught values and we want to develop the personal and social skills of each child, preparing them well for transition and the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Science	Plants, animals, everyday changes, seasonal changes. Hotton Country Farm Park .	Plants, living things and their habitats, animals (including humans), everyday materials	Plants, animals (including humans), rocks, light, forces and magnets	Living things and their habitats, animals (including humans), states of matter, sound, electricity.	Living things and their habitats, animals (including humans), earth and space and forces, properties and changes of materials. Big Bang Science Fair .	Living things and their habitats, animals (including humans), evolution and inheritance, light and electricity.
History	My childhood, a time before I was born, toys, The Wright Brothers, William Hillary.	Time lines, century, decade, and gunpowder plot, Great Fire of London, Florence Nightingale and Mary Sawyer , Neil Armstrong. Black Country Museum .	Chronology, Stone Age, Iron Age (late Neolithic hunter-gatherers / early farmers; hill forts, tribal kingdoms, farming, art and culture), Ancient Egypt, BC and AD, Stonehenge	Chronology, research Roman Empire, Tudor Period, World War Two (outbreak, life during Coventry), representation, reasons for events, understand difference between primary and secondary sources. Stone and Blakesley Hall .	Chronology, Ancient Greek Civilisation (art, architecture and literature's influence on the western world); Anglo-Saxons, Vikings, compare societies and time periods, The Staffordshire Hoard, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery	Chronology, The Victorians, World War One, World War Two, balanced judgements, historical bias, Queen Victoria, Winston Churchill, canals and railways. The Imperial War Museum, The Somme (France) .
Geography	Directional language, the local area, our school, continents, oceans, the UK, and weather	Continents and oceans, Tanzania, capital cities of the UK, significant landmarks, climates and links to physical features.	Seas of UK, Locate world countries (North and South America and Russia), Paris, extreme weather, local environmental issues, mountains and volcanoes. Herefordshire Beacon .	Counties of the UK. Topography, rivers, Indian village, tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, earthquakes, four figure grid references, trade links.	Counties and cities in the UK, six figure grid references, European cities, time zones, rainforests, Amazonian tribe, coastal landscapes, WASSC , cycle. Aberdovey Residential .	Six figure grid references, Australasia, Amazon, biomes, climate change, climate zones, and capital cities of the world, latitude and longitude.
Art	Naive Art - Henri Rousseau, Pop Art - Andy Warhol, Constructivism - De Stijl . Sketching, primary and secondary colours, collage.	Abstract expressionism - Jackson Pollock, Fauvism - Henri Matisse, Art in nature - Andy Goldsworthy. Sculpture, hues of secondary colour, intaglio printing.	Cubism - Picasso, Post impressionism - Van Gogh, Pop Art - Andy Warhol. Yayoi Kusama, Sketch book, charcoal, chalk, photography, book illustrations, scale.	Impressionism - Monet, Baroque - Rembrandt, Pop Art - David Hockney and Pauline Boty . Total value of water colours, proportion, paper mache , collage, sustain painting.	Pointillism - George Seurat V post Impressionism - Paul Cezanne and Pierre-Auguste Renoir - Greek architect - Phidias. Still life, pointillism, oil pastels, planographic printing, sculpture.	Surrealism - Rene Magritte and Salvador Dali, Pre Raphaelite Brotherhood - William Morris, Expressionism - Wassily Kandinsky and Helen Frankenthaler. Half drop patterns, screen printing, colour mixing, memorabilia.
DT	Design and build a boat, make a puppet, make a gingerbread person, running stitch, stiffer, stronger, more stable structures.	Textile pattern, printing block, design and build a moving vehicle; levers, sliders, wheels and axles (stiffer, stronger, more stable structures), making bread, healthy eating.	Pulley or lever system, measure mark out cut and shape material. Short, long and cross stitch. Understand food is grown and reared. Make healthy pasta dish.	Measure mark out cut and shape components, electrical circuits to make a light up village. Herringbone, cross and blanket stitch, butt, mitre and dovetail joint to make a Tudor house. Make Indian dishes.	Cross sectional drawings. Design and make a rain gauge, create a moving theatre set piece, reinforce and strengthen a 3D framework. Make tzatziki, create a balanced nutritional breakfast cereal. Prepare and cook a healthy meal.	Surveys, interviews, questionnaires, computer aided design, create a biome, stitch matters and embroidery, work with moving components - pulleys, belts and motors (moving car). Programme a computer to control a spider . Make shortcrust pastry (for a pie/tart).

Arthur Terry Learning Partnership News

By Dr Beth Clarke and Anna Newson

More than 1,000 staff and volunteers from across 14 of our schools joined three distinguished speakers and an international recording artist at our ATLP bi-annual staff and governor conference on 6th January 2020.

Rosie O'Sullivan, Richard McCann, Musharaf Asghar and Jaz Ampaw-Farr addressed us all at the Solihull National Conference Centre, providing us with the opportunity to come together to celebrate the difference we make in our respective communities.



ATLP CEO Richard Gill, introduced the high profile guests. The conference started with the acclaimed singer-songwriter and Britain's Got Talent star, Rosie O'Sullivan, a former student and current staff member at the Arthur Terry School. Rosie said, "It was an honour and privilege to sing for the ATLP staff conference. It was such an inspirational and incredible start to 2020. It has been a pleasure to not only be taught by, but also work alongside, such a wonderful group of staff that not only believe in you, but also your aspirations".

Internationally renowned speaker and bestselling author, Richard McCann, spoke about overcoming adversity and embracing a positive mindset. Like his fellow speakers, a dedicated teacher – Mr Hill – whose legacy continues to have a profound impact on others had shaped Richards's life. Richard said, "It's about having a 'I can' attitude and finding the positive in everything you do, developing a mindset to achieve more. Being optimistic and positive is vital when going through challenges and remembering it could always be worse".

Musharaf Asghar shot to fame when viewer of TV's Educating Yorkshire witnessed a schoolchild overcoming his stammer and gain confidence – thanks to the dedication of English teacher Mr Burton. Since he appeared on the show, Mushy has carved out a career as a motivational speaker and author and is even the inspiration for a smash hit musical. He said "With the right mindset you can achieve whatever you want. There were times when I thought that giving up was the only option I had, but I was so fortunate to have Mr Burton in my life. The teacher and student relationship is so important – you have such an impact on the young people around you and can help them to achieve whatever they want. I thank you for all that you do".

Former teacher and star of TV's The Apprentice, Jaz Ampaw-Farr, reflected on how unique and significant the passion and commitment was at the conference. She talked about 'everyday heroes' and the huge difference schools can make to children's lives. Jaz shared with us how she too had overcome hardship in her life and credited her achievements and outlook to her primary school teacher, Mrs Cook. Addressing the audience, Jaz said, "Mrs Cook made you feel like you could do the impossible – she changed everything. All that I have is because of people like you and I am extremely grateful for everything. School taught me about family, belonging and the power of relationships. Teaching starts with 'R' – relationships".

ATLP CEO Richard Gill thanked staff from across all of our schools for the brilliant work they do each day to support children and young people. The conference was definitely a motivational and inspirational start to 2020!

THRIVE

By Mrs Hannah Cook



Last week, Dr Clarke and I completed our Thrive training, and we are now fully licensed 'Thrive' practitioners. The course itself has consisted of six face-to-face days alongside reading and assignments each week in between the sessions, and two e-mentoring sessions. A large part of the training has involved self-reflection; something it is often difficult to make time for considering the ever-increasing pace and pressure that comes with working in a school. The articles I have written so far have focused on the earliest developmental strands (Being, Doing and Thinking), and the neuroscience underpinning the Thrive Approach. In this article, I thought it might be useful to share some practical mindfulness techniques which you may wish to try with your child – children who attend our Relax Kids sessions are likely to be familiar with some of these already.

So what is mindfulness? Professor Mark Williams, former director of the Oxford Mindfulness Centre, has described mindfulness as knowing directly what is happening inside and outside of ourselves. It is noticing what is going on from moment to moment.

"It's easy to stop noticing the world around us. It's also easy to lose touch with the way our bodies are feeling and to end up living 'in our heads' – caught up in our thoughts without stopping to notice how those thoughts are driving our emotions and behaviour.

An important part of mindfulness is reconnecting with our bodies and the sensations they experience. This means waking up to the sights, sounds, smells and tastes of the present moment. That might be something as simple as the feel of a banister as we walk upstairs.

Another important part of mindfulness is an awareness of our thoughts and feelings as they happen moment to moment. It's about allowing ourselves to see the present moment clearly. When we do that, it can positively change the way we see ourselves and our lives."

Practising some of the following mindfulness techniques may help your child to become more aware of what is happening inside of them, meaning that they can then regulate their internal states.

Sensing in: Personal Weather Report

We can think of the sensations and emotions arising in our bodies as being like weather systems moving across a landscape. Thinking about our feelings in this way helps us to observe our current state without overly identifying with our emotions: just as we can't change the weather, we can't change how we're feeling, but we can change how we relate to our feelings.



Make sure you're sitting comfortably with your feet on the ground and your back upright.

Close your eyes if you feel safe to do so and notice what is going on inside. Spend a minute or so just observing what is happening inside you.



Now see if you can summon the weather report that best describes what you notice inside, for example, it might feel sunny, rainy, stormy, still, windy and so on.

Open your eyes and share your weather report with someone else if you feel happy to do so.

Breathing: Five Finger Starfish Meditation

In this exercise, children are encouraged to link their breathing to the shape of their hand. The combination of focusing on the hand and the breath, coupled with soothing touch usually has a calming effect.

Make a starfish with one hand, spreading your fingers out wide.

Using the forefinger of the other hand, you are going to gently trace the outline of the starfish hand in sync with your breathing. To do this, use your forefinger to trace from the base of the thumb up to the top of the thumb as you breathe in. Then, as you breathe out, trace down the other side of your thumb.

Continue to trace around the outside of the remaining fingers, breathing in as you trace up a finger and out as you trace down a finger.

Continue this process for up to five minutes.



Breathing: Breathing with a buddy

The following exercise is particularly good for younger children who can sometimes find the instruction to "pay attention to the breath" difficult to follow.



Choose a soft toy that you like. This will be your 'breathing buddy'.

Lie down on the floor on your back in a comfortable position with your breathing buddy. Place your breathing buddy on your tummy.

Focus your attention on the rise and fall of your breathing buddy as you breathe in and out.

Continue this for up to five minutes.

Orienting: Noticing inside and out

The ability to stay present to what is happening inside us and around us is a key skill that enables us to be aware of how we are impacted by what is happening around us and to take appropriate action that keeps ourselves safe and regulated. The following exercise will support children to start to develop this skill of staying present. It is likely to be more suitable for older children.

Sit comfortably in a chair with your feet on the floor, your back straight and your hands in your lap. Close or lower your eyes if you feel comfortable to do so.

Turn your attention inside and scan through your body. What sensations do you notice – perhaps warmth or cold, tightness, heaviness, lightness, fuzziness, dullness and so on.

Now focus on each of your senses in turn. How does your skin feel as it makes contact with your clothes, the chair, the air around you? What can you taste? What can you smell? What sounds can you hear all around you?

Now open your eyes and look all around you. What can you see in the room? Pay particular attention to the colours, shapes and textures of the objects in the room.

Close your eyes and return your attention to your senses: What sounds can you hear? What can you smell? What can you taste? What can you feel on your skin?

Finally, draw your attention further inwards back to the inside of your body. Notice the sensations in your body. Is there any change from before?

There are many mindfulness resources online too – try visiting <https://www.gonoodle.com/>. This website has a plethora of videos to encourage calm, movement and mindfulness.

Handwriting and Spelling

By Mrs Jaimey Thomas

Following a review of various research there have been exciting changes to spellings and handwriting at Hill West this year.

Handwriting at Hill West



Regular writing by hand in the early years supports the development of reading skills.

(Dinehart, 2015; James and Engelhardt, 2012)

Handwriting plays a crucial role in writing and developing related writing abilities like spelling and sentence construction.

(Datchuk 2015)

Handwriting at Hill West occurs in all classes during the morning lessons. All teachers model the new skill that is being taught to the

children and they are given at least 5 minutes to practise their new skill. Years 2-6 practise their handwriting in their English learning journals above their English work for the day. Recently we have abolished the awarding of pen licences and now all children from Year 4 - Year 6 are able to use a black handwriting pen at their own discretion. Please note that we do not allow children to write in biro pens.

Spellings at Hill West

By setting weekly spelling tests, many children fail to retain or apply this knowledge to their writing.

(Abbott 2001; Beckham-Hungler & Williams 2003)

Learning to spell is a complex, intricate, cognitive and linguistic process rather than one of repetition. *(Reed 2012; Schlager 2007)*

The National Curriculum spellings lists for each year group (Years 1-6) are split into six sets and sent home as homework at the start of each half term. It is the expectation that all children practise their half termly spellings at least weekly as part of their homework. These words are frequently modelled to the children by the class teachers and they are all on display within each classroom. Children should be able to spell all of their spellings by the end of the summer term where the class teacher will assess them.

Exciting news!

At the end of the Spring Term we will be holding a sponsored spelling event. All children in Years 1-6 will be quizzed on their first four sets of spellings and will be given the opportunity to raise sponsorship money for words spelt correctly! More information will follow at the start of the next half term.

"Rather than relegate spelling to a back burner, spelling can and should be an integral part of language instruction for every student. It is mortar that helps students master the basics of language, especially students who may struggle with reading. Rather than dismiss it as a frill to "focus harder" on reading, teaching spelling and handwriting enables a struggling student to use different senses and strengths to learn and master the relationship between the sounds and symbols of our language, which is the backbone of reading. Other students will be able to more deeply understand the patterns of our complex language and become master communicators."

<https://www.spellingcity.com/importance-of-spelling.html>

Whole School Pantomime Visit

By Mrs Emily Johnston



Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs at Birmingham Hippodrome

Mirror, Mirror on the wall, who is the fairest of them all! The pantomime this year was Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs and once again had a star filled cast. With *Birds of a Feather's* Lesley Joseph as The Wicked Queen, Hippodrome panto favourite as Muddles, *The X Factor* winner Joe McElderry as The Spirit of The Mirror, *Coronation Street's* Faye Brookes as Snow White, joined by *Britain's Got Talent* finalists Flawless, Midlands YouTube phenomenon Doreen Tipton, the return of the panto dame Andrew Ryan and Jac Yarrow as The Prince, there was really no end to the talent in this year's panto spectacular.



The theatre exploded into roars of cheers and applause as master comedian Matt Slack made his entrance onto the stage, stealing the show for the seventh year in a row with his own brand of silly, outstanding physical comedy and hilarious interaction with the audience from start to finish.

The costumes sparkled, the set was sumptuous and a visual delight, and there were some truly magical moments of stage craft. No pantomime would be complete without some amazing special effects-

with a gigantic dragon and two reindeer pulling a sleigh over the heads of the audience were a sight to be seen. Magical too were the inclusion of the Flawless, who brought fantastic moves to the Hippodrome stage.

Our annual trip to the pantomime has become somewhat of a tradition at Hill West. So...why do we do it? The answer is simple - we do it for our children. It is an absolute privilege to take our children to the theatre; to see their excitement as we get on the coaches and travel under the Birmingham tunnels; to witness their awe as they step into the theatre, maybe for the first time, and see the stage in amazing, glittery colours and to experience their wonder as the curtains lift and the pantomime begins.



At Hill West our aim is to develop children who are confident, articulate and well-rounded citizens. Throughout both of our visits to the theatre, this was highly evident; children's impeccable manners, outstanding behaviour and articulacy were clearly apparent. An absolute credit to our school and their parents!

Bikeability

By Mrs Sarah Terry



One of the exciting extra-curricular opportunities offered at Hill West is the Bikeability Level Two course, which develops children's confidence when riding and teaches them how to ride a bicycle safely on the road. In January, thirty-six Year 6 pupils took up this opportunity and spent a day (over two sessions) developing their skills, despite the few initial nerves that were felt.

First stop: the playground. Equipped with high-visibility clothing and helmets, the children gathered on the Key Stage Two playground with the two instructors to complete their safety check. The children learnt that this check, the 'M' check, must be completed before every journey, to minimise the risks of any possible accidents. It consists of examining: the back wheel; the gears; the height and stability of the saddle; the pedals; the tightness of the handlebars and finally the front wheel. Following their checks, the group were ready to ride!



Travelling around the playground, our cyclists were taught some essential skills - indicating was the first. The rules are simple: outstretch the left arm to signal an upcoming left turn and outstretch the right arm to signal an upcoming right turn. Luckily, the team were pros at this and, after riding around the perimeter of the playground just a few times, demonstrated that they were able to handle something even more challenging – controlling the bicycle around obstacles.

To put their newly-acquired skills into practice, the group travelled to Chelsea Drive, due to its flat surface (riding safely on hills requires even more experience) and lack of traffic. It was there that the children learnt how to stop and start their journey safely, pointing the bike in the correct position and checking over their right shoulder to check for any vehicles before going. Not only this, but the children learnt about primary and secondary positions when riding on the road. The primary position, which is closer to the middle of the road, should be used when overtaking parked cars and the secondary position – nearer to the pavement than the centre of the road – should be used at all other times. The rest of the session was spent exploring the roads surrounding Hill West in a new way – as cyclists.

At the end of their two sessions, all children passed their Bikeability Level Two, which is brilliant! The course was successful and enjoyed by all. What is fantastic to see, though, is more children riding their bikes to school and utilising their new-found skills. Here are just a few opinions about the course:

"It taught us how to stay safe and ride properly." Lola, Otters.

"It taught us to ride on the road and gave me the confidence to ride independently." Edison, Foxes.

"The course taught us about road safety and I'm going to start riding on the road more" Daniel, Foxes.



Leverage Leadership

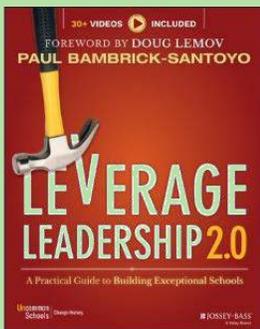
By Mrs Rebecca George

Dr Warrack and I have recently participated in a full programme of Leverage Leadership training over three days, led by Mark Gregory, regional director for Ark Schools and recent graduate of the Leverage Leadership institute.

The premise of Leverage Leadership is that in the most successful schools, leaders spend the vast majority of their time trying to improve teaching rather than on administrative or other tasks. This approach answers the basic question: what do great school leaders do that separates them from the rest? Rooted in the observation and training of over 20,000 school leaders worldwide, Leverage Leadership is a proven framework to streamline implementation and help good leaders become great. It attests that effective leadership is about how a leader uses their time. The approach is captured in a number of books by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo and Doug Lemov, including Leverage Leadership 2.0.



Paul Bambrick-Santoyo bases the Leverage Leadership approach on the idea that there are seven “levers” that can be used for school improvement.



These principles, or 'levers' allow for consistent, transformational, and replicable growth. Fundamentally, each of the seven levers answers the core questions of planned school leadership.

"What" should an effective leader do, and "how" and "when" should they do it?

The model puts school leaders in control of school improvement and necessitates a planned, systems led approach to doing the things that really matter:

Instructional levers:

1. Data-driven instruction - define the roadmap for rigour and adapt teaching to meet students' needs
2. Observation and feedback - give all teachers professional 1:1 coaching that increases their effectiveness
3. Instructional planning - guarantee every student well-structured lessons that teach the right content
4. Professional development - strengthen both culture and instruction with hands-on training that sticks

Cultural levers:

1. Student culture - create a strong culture where learning thrives
2. Staff culture - build and support the right team for your school
3. Managing school leadership teams - train instructional leaders to expand your impact across the school

Three in particular stand out and were looked at in depth over the course of the three days.

First, data-driven instruction is key: teachers need to take the time to use summative assessments to discover what needs to be revisited. Planning should be adjusted accordingly.

Second, observation and feedback in most schools is based on a few formal observations each year, used solely for evaluation. Leverage Leaders timetable weekly 15-minute observations, along with associated feedback, making it clear that the purpose is coaching and improvement, not evaluation.

Finally, Bambrick-Santoyo says that “in schools with strong cultures, students receive a continual message that nothing is as important – or engaging – as learning”.

The Leverage Leadership approach brings a clarity and focus to school improvement but also, necessitates an active, action-led approach. Bambrick-Santoyo argues that creating a culture where learning matters most is

Core Ideas

‘You never get a second chance to make a first impression - The first five minutes make or break your relationship for the future’.

‘See It, Name It, Do It. Repeat until you’ve mastered it’

‘School culture is not only about what you can see; it is about making all the children feel seen’

not accidental. It has to be programmed and systematised. For example, how do we, as leader coaches, plan for providing high quality teacher feedback? The most important conversations we have with our most influential change agents, often at a time when they are at their most vulnerable? Such conversations are so critical to a school’s improvement, they have to be rehearsed. Effective coaching feedback, Bambrick-Santoyo argues, must be direct, face to face and provide specific action steps.

The point is, great leadership is about what you do. What Bambrick-Santoyo describes this as “minute by minute leadership”. Exceptional leaders, he argues, **"succeed because of how they use their time: what they do, and how and when they do it."**

If we are to truly recognise and value the importance of a structured approach to school improvement, enhancing professional capital along the way, being able to answer the following questions would not be a bad place to start:

1. What have we done today to make a difference for improving teaching?
2. What actions have we taken that lead to outstanding results?
3. Which actions are missing that we need to do more of and when will we do this?

**"LEADERSHIP
AND LEARNING
ARE INDISPENSABLE
TO EACH OTHER."
-JOHN F. KENNEDY**

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CREATE
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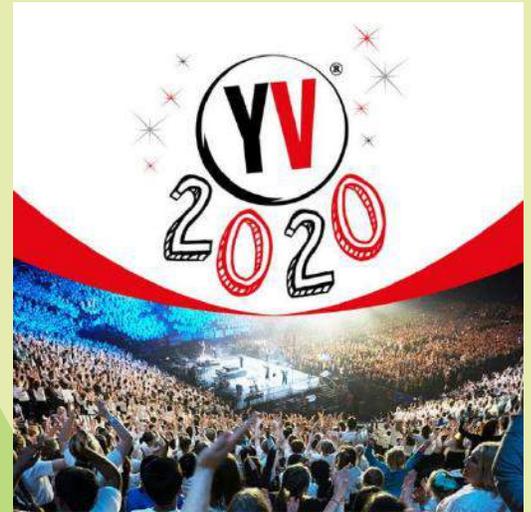
By Miss Chloe Davies

After weeks of rehearsals, banner making, outfit organising and dancing practice, the day had finally arrived! Thirty excited children woke with butterflies in their tummies. Today was the big day, the day they had been waiting for...YOUNG VOICES 2020!

On the day of the show, we excitedly climbed onto the coach and got ready for the journey and day ahead! Rehearsals started at 2:15 with the introduction of David Lawrence, the principle conductor. He walked us through each of the songs and his vision for the performance. We rehearsed each song along with the accompanying dance moves and we were told which parts of songs to sing when they were split.

After a long, exciting rehearsal, we broke for dinner. The children enjoyed a chance to catch up with their friends and talk about the amazing evening that lay ahead! We had just enough time to get changed and collect our torches for the show before heading back up to our seats.

As we entered the arena (now lit up with different coloured lights and beginning to fill with parents), jaws dropped. We realized just how big this arena was, filled with 6041 children and teachers waiting to sing their hearts out for their proud parents and family members. The evening started with a 'whip cracking' Best of the West Medley, with songs from Oklahoma and Calamity Jane to fuel us with energy and excitement for the rest of the show. Favorites of the evening included a Medley of current popular songs, Frightfest (including Ghostbusters) and Shiny Happy People.



The spectacular evening came to its grand finale with an outstanding Queen Medley accompanied by Spandau Ballet's very own Tony Hadley! The atmosphere and joy that engulfed the room was truly wonderful and will surely be a lasting memory for all involved.

Enhancing our French Provision

By Mrs Alison Downes

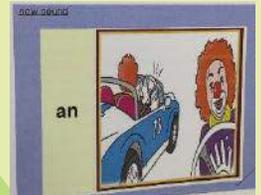


Bonjour! Quelle surprise! Walking past a French lesson at Hill West you'd be forgiven for wondering why you can hear the class honking like geese, tooting imaginary horns or beating their chests like gorillas. These and many more such actions are all part of our new initiative. Since September, it has been a very exciting time for French at Hill West.

French teaching at Hill West has always aimed to foster a curiosity in language learning by introducing our pupils to another language in a fun and accessible way. Recently with the support of the wonderful ATLP MFL Lead Tracy Williams, we have enhanced our provision to help children to develop their French skills in greater depth and thus improve their progress and enjoyment in this subject.

An MFL Pedagogy Review published in 2016 by the Teaching Schools Council reported that children need a more secure grounding in the basics of a language in order to feel secure in their learning and ultimately in their future use of the language in real situations.

Pupils need to gain early knowledge of the sound and spelling systems (phonics) of a new language. Therefore, in order to improve the pronunciation of French, the ATLP have responded to the MFL Pedagogy Review by introducing the brilliant physical French phonics system as developed by Sue Cave. In her scheme, 23 French phonemes are introduced, each with a related amusing picture and action – hence the honking geese



and tooting horns! Gradually pupils are taught the phonemes and the corresponding graphemes through games and activities until they feel confident identifying the graphemes in French words, leading them to confidently pronounce a new word in French. A recent learning walk through the French lessons of year 3 to 6 witnessed pupils confidently linking phonemes and graphemes and applying them in their learning. Plenty of opportunity to practise and consolidate



this knowledge is embedded in every lesson.

Building on the excellent structure from previous years, vocabulary provision will now complement more closely the topic learning in each year group and events happening in France, England or the wider world. To pique pupils' curiosity about countries outside the UK, they are given a greater opportunity to explore life in France and observe how it compares and contrasts with their own lives. We are also including more stories and songs in lessons so learning is more than just vocabulary. In all classes colourful knowledge organisers are used to help pupils recall previous learning easily and enable them to use it in new situations.

The ATLP primaries are presently collaborating on a scheme of learning for years 3 to 6. Our Hedgehogs and Rabbits are already enjoying the access to their fabulous resources. Hill West are excited to be joining the planning group soon to start work on the year 4 scheme of learning. It is an ambitious and exciting project.



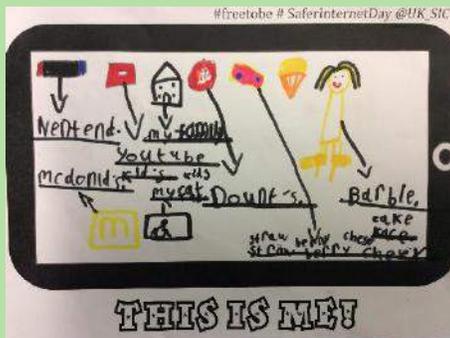
So if you're curious about why 'eau' leaves pupils looking shocked and 'oi' has them crying like a baby, your Hill West French learner should – or very soon will – be able to explain!



Safer Internet Day

By Ms Kelly Bailey

On Tuesday 11th February we celebrated the annual event of safer internet day. It is celebrated globally during the month of February. This year the theme was about working together for a better internet with the hashtag #freetobeme. Every class across school shared discussions and took part in activities encouraging them to think deeply about our school's core values. We believe that every pupil at Hill West is special and unique and that they have the right to express themselves freely and to be treated kindly.



Many classes talked about their own identity and what makes them unique and how important it is to have an online identity and presence that encourages kindness. We linked these ideas very closely to our SMART rules.

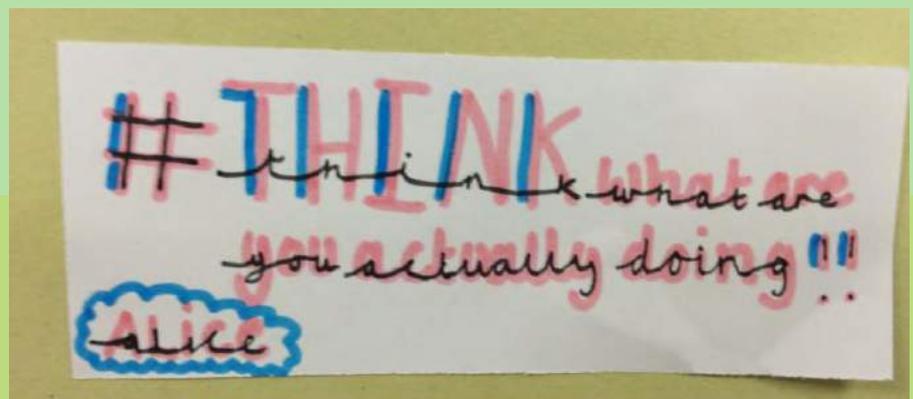
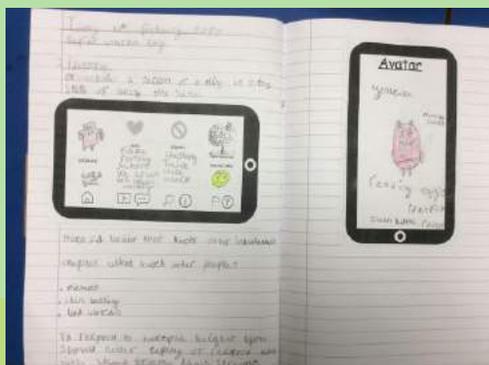


All of our children know that they should protect their private information and today we encouraged our pupils to think more carefully and to ensure their online identity excludes any of that information. Even in our Reception classes we started to deliver and embed these important messages. During safer internet day Robins and Wrens spent a lot of time practising an amazing song to remind us to keep our private information safe; hopefully you saw it on our twitter feed!

We encourage you as parents to regularly have similar discussions with your children at home. Over the coming weeks you will receive lots of fact sheets and advice regarding many of the popular apps and games. Sometimes keeping up with technology



can be a challenge so these 5 minute reads could help you navigate the evolving online world in which our children are growing up.



Year 6 Trip to France

By Dr Rhian Warrack

As the coach pulled up outside Hill West at 5:30am on Friday 7th February, an excited group of parents and children were gathered, waiting to board. The coach pulled away just after



6am, and we began our drive towards Dover. As we drove towards the ferry terminal, we could see the white cliffs of Dover looming above us. The children remembered how they were formed thousands of years ago, when the land-bridge made of chalk between Dover and Calais was destroyed by an iceberg, making Britain an island. After a short wait at portside, we drove into the ferry and were soon walking up



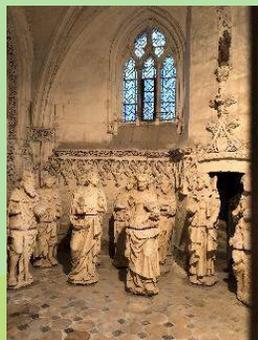
several flights of stairs to each the main decks. We headed straight for the rear of the ship to get a great view of the cliffs, and a whole group photo, before finding a central location to base ourselves at the front of the ship. The children then enjoyed visiting the shops, restaurants and arcades on board the ferry. Approximately two hours later, we were driving on French soil, heading to the town of Rue, and Chateau du Broutel (which was to be our home for the next few days).



On arrival, the children were taken by the instructors to find their rooms and they quickly settled in. After unpacking and making their beds, the children met up in the dining hall for dinner, with a choice of sausages or beef (which was delicious). Everyone had plenty to eat, and thoroughly enjoyed the medieval surroundings they were dining in! The children then headed off for some free time, before gathering for the Chateau Scavenger hunt. They could be heard from all corners of the grounds, laughing, as they enjoyed exploring their new surroundings.



The following morning, after a breakfast of croissant, cereal or fruit, Year 6 headed into the town of Rue, to visit the local market and have the opportunity to buy a drink in the café. On the way, the instructors regaled them with stories about local history, before giving them a chance to walk through the market and speak to the stall-holders, with some people trying to use their French to ask for the items they wished to purchase. Afterwards, we were given a tour of some of the buildings in Rue, which have played a role in a range of historical events, including a church that was transformed into a hospital during WW1, and an ornately decorated, limestone built church, that contains a holy cross and the relics of a saint.



On return to the chateau, we enjoyed a hot meal, before heading off to visit the village of Buessent, and their chocolate factory. We met Simon, who guided us through the process of making chocolate, from the growth, harvest and drying of the cocoa beans in Ecuador, before the beans are shipped to the factory (Chocolat Buessent Lachelle) in France, where they are processed to make chocolate.



the cocoa beans make and were given the opportunity to taste the crushed roasted cocoa bean, the cocoa liquor produced in the workshop grinding machine and then to try the chocolate that is produced in the factory from the liquor. We watched Simon make hazelnut chocolates, before he demonstrated how large pieces (like a rabbit) are made, using a mold.



After dinner on Saturday, the children took part (in 3 teams) in a variety of events as part of the Chateau Olympics, which they thoroughly enjoyed. Everyone played their part within their team, and they all had a wonderful time. They went to bed tired and happy, dreaming of their forthcoming visit to the Somme battlefields the next day.



As Sunday dawned, we had an early start and left the Chateau at 9am to head towards the town of Albert, and La Musée Somme. Inside, in an underground tunnel used by the townsfolk to move safely between buildings during WW2, were display cases holding a huge array of artefacts excavated from the battlefields, including clothing, personal belongings and weapons. The children walked past the cases and wondered what it must have been like for new soldiers in the trenches, when they had arrived from Britain. As they moved through the museum, the children gained a much deeper understanding of what life must have been like in the trenches.



The next stop on our tour was Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial Park, which stands on land gifted to the Canadian Government in memory of the Newfoundland soldiers who died on 1st July 2016 (approximately 85% of the Allied soldiers present that day (660 men) were killed within 20 minutes of 'going over the top'. It also remembers other allied soldiers who fought to hold this section of the front during WW1. Here the children had the opportunity to walk in some of the original trenches and saw first-hand how close the German and British front lines were and how the landscape is still scarred by the events of the war. Some children chose to sign the Visitors Book of Remembrance at the on-site graveyard, to show their respect for the people who gave their lives for us. We then moved on to the Lognagar crater, which is 70 feet deep and 200 feet wide, and which threw debris up to 4000 feet in the air. It was dug 50 feet below the German trenches by British miners, who then packed it with 24 tonnes off explosive explosives, and at 07:28 on 1st July 2016 (the first, and bloodiest, day of the Somme battle), it was detonated, sending debris 4000 feet in the high. The explosion was heard in Britain. The resulting crater is now a memorial to the lives lost and the children took a moment to contemplate how massive the explosion must have been to create such a massive scar on the landscape.



Our final visit was to the memorial at Thiepval, where the names of 72 000 soldiers, whose bodies were never found, are recorded and their memories honoured. We returned to the Chateau with thoughts of Frogs legs and snails for tea and a Camp Fire for the evening.

The next morning was our last day at the Chateau, and as we packed the coach, we thought of all we had learnt. The crossing was rough, but we endured. Just like our forebears, who fought and died for us, in France.