

Mount Pleasant Primary School Parent Newsletter – Issue 28 October 2020

23rd October 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

We have come to the end of our first half term since school reopened after the national lockdown of 2020. Whilst we have all had to get used to the many changes to the way we live our daily lives which have had to be implemented as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, I am pleased that at least in school we have been able to provide our children with a desperately needed sense of normality, safety and focus in this troubled time. I have written to you over the months to update you on the various safety measures that we have put into place within school, and I am pleased to see that parents have demonstrated their support and trust through the outstanding attendance that we have seen in this first half term. A number of schools across Kirklees had an independent quality assurance check of their Covid-19 procedures, and you will be pleased to know that the inspector who visited our school was very pleased with the effectiveness of all the safety practices and systems that we have put into place. I will continue to update you on everything we are doing, and I thank you also, for your continued cooperation and support.

As Mount Pleasant Primary School is clearly the hub of the local community, my primary aim has been to provide a safe learning environment for our children it has been great having all the children back in school; it was clear that children greatly missed school and that they were thrilled to return and be able to enjoy their normal school routine once again. Mental well-being is so important and returning to school has provided everyone, pupils and staff with many positives.

But it is not just those inside the school that have been a priority for me, I also want to try to ensure that we can maintain the close partnership and contact that we have with our parents and carers. As a way of ensuring this vital relationship isn't lost, I would like to point out some of the new developments that we have worked on during this past half-term as this will indicate to further innovative solutions which are on the pipelines. At the same time, I also will talk about some of the things we are doing to ensure that our children can still be safely connected with the outside world.

Virtual Parents Evening – Following the close-contact restrictions and bubble arrangements that we had to put into place, we saw that parents were missing being able to speak directly with class teachers about children's progress. As a solution, we invested a great deal of time and energy in implementing a virtual parent's evening solution, through Zoom. This involved researching into the correct and most effective communication tool (Zoom), training staff on how to use this tool to create and manage parents evening meetings; communicating with parents on how to use the links provided to access the meetings and following this up with technical support where



required – I was pleased to see that this all came together and worked brilliantly! Through Zoom, parents (together with their children) were able to meet their teachers and have a 2-way face-to-face (virtual) conversation about their child’s progress.

Many local schools used paper reports, but we found that this would have meant that the much needed, 2-way direct communication between parents and teachers would have been missed if we did the same. We are very keen on maintaining our positive parent-school-child relationships and believe this is what makes our school so successful and a favourite of local families. Through this important and valuable partnership, I firmly believe that together we can ensure every child receives the very best education and learning experiences at Mount Pleasant.

Virtual Celebration Assemblies – Whilst our bubble arrangements and safety procedures do not allow the different phases to congregate in the halls for our weekly Celebration Assemblies, I am pleased to say that we have continued with these special events – albeit online, through Zoom. We believe that the need to continue finding ways to celebrate children’s achievements is paramount, so we weren’t going to let a pandemic get in the way! Classes join each other in meeting with their Headteacher via Zoom, and they are able to witness and partake in each other’s achievements. I am able to communicate with all the classes through my computer and the Special Assembly winners came to my office to collect their prizes from the huge table of rewards! I was able to spin my camera around to the other side of the table so that all the children could see the winners and cheer them for their achievements.

Children really enjoy these assemblies and seeing each other on their large smart screens in the safety of their own classrooms. The younger children especially comment that, “Being on TV is so much fun!”



Our TWO Brand New School Minibuses Have Arrived!



As part of our commitment to ensuring that children receive the very best learning experiences, one priority that Governors have been keen that we focus on is ensuring that we can continue to provide children with as many enriched experiences as possible.

The new post Covid-lockdown world has resulted in many issues with transport providers, most of which have resulted in extremely high prices for coach hire etc – which would have meant that prices would be impacted, and affordability could have become an issue for families. As such, we have invested in two minibuses which will enable us to provide our children with even more experiences, whilst keeping costs to parents at an absolute minimum.

On the final day of half term, we had a minibus ceremony in the MUGA in which our longstanding governors, Dr Andy Williams and Cllr Andrew Cooper both drove the new minibuses into school, as they were greeted with cheers by excited children who had been waiting in anticipation. Our Chair of Governors, Mrs Bridget Crabtree, cut the ribbon initiating the use of these great new assets for our school.

Class 5B had the great privilege of being the first to go for a ride in the minibuses, and this was because of their winning the best attendance competition, since September. Similar competitions will be organised for children throughout the year and winners will be able to choose from a number of educational outings, to celebrate their achievements.



These minibuses will prove to be a great new asset for our school, and we are keen to ensure that every child's educational journey at Mount Pleasant is further advanced, through their use!

SCHOOL OPEN DAY

Come and visit our **amazing new primary school** and experience what we can offer your child!

DATE & TIME (to be announced)

THINK BIG - AIM HIGH



Limited places due to Covid-19 restrictions. Call **01484 223198** to book your place!
www.mountpleasantschool.co.uk

We had planned to hold a school open day over the half-term holiday break but decided to postpone this for the time being (due to the rise of local infection rates). For now, we have organised a virtual open day tour of the school and this will be available through our new website which will be launched within the next few days. People who have expressed an interest in attending an open day at the school will receive notification of the virtual tour, and a goody bag will be posted out to them with various school stationery as well as some fun items for children! If you, or someone you know, would like to receive notification of the virtual tour, then please email the school office on office.mountpleasant@kirkleeseducation.uk and register your interest. We will also post out a special goody bag for you as well as notify you as soon as the re-scheduled open day has been set. Watch this space!

Parent Feedback – Just as in the past, we asked three questions to parents in the hope that feedback will help with future planning. Thank you to everyone for their comments, a summary of which are below:

- 1. Parent feedback on how we have managed as a school to reopen our school safely for everyone.** Parents have been hugely positive about how we have managed the risks and made reopening as safe as possible. Some suggestions were made about signage reminding all parents to wear masks during drop-offs and pick-ups and these have been put into place.
- 2. Feedback on digital technology as more work is set online. This is due to the school needing to reduce the need of sending paper and printouts home.** Most families found this approach is working well. For the few families who are experiencing problems due to the lack of appropriate technology etc, we are looking at ways of supporting them also. More details will follow in due course!
- 3. Comments and suggestions about our school in general.** Parents mentioned that the thing they find most amazing is our school's parent-staff relationship, which is believed to be overwhelmingly positive. Parents see staff as being highly nurturing of children under their care. Also, they witness how staff have invested heavily in each and every child to ensure that they receive the very best learning experiences – the lockdown period did not see this care diminish in any way, rather the opposite was seen!

Once again, thank you for everyone's comments. Please do not hesitate to share your comments and suggestions as we are always seeking ways to improve our offer to all our families.

Nursery Memorable Experience

THERE'S NO STOPPING US!



We love playing in our woodland playground whatever the weather. During our woodland playground session, the children went on a shape hunt which they thoroughly enjoyed.



They worked together, helping each other to find different 2D shapes in the environment. This was a great way to get children to become more observant of their environment and hence, recognise everyday shapes that are around us.



We are sharing some pictures from our shape hunt with you. We hope you enjoy them.



Reception Memorable Experience

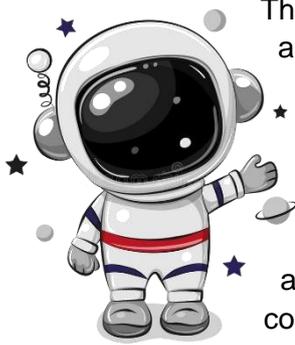


The Reception children are loving their outdoor learning. Each week in their woodland session the children have been looking for signs of Autumn. First, they used a range of information books and the internet to research the season of Autumn. The children used their findings to create an autumnal checklist. The children began their Autumn hunt by observing huge piles of leaves on the ground. Some children noticed how the leaves had changed from being a lovely green colour to reds, yellows and browns. Next, the children used their listening skills to hear the different sounds that the dry, crunchy leaves made as they jumped and stomped through the wooded area. Throughout their Autumn hunt, they

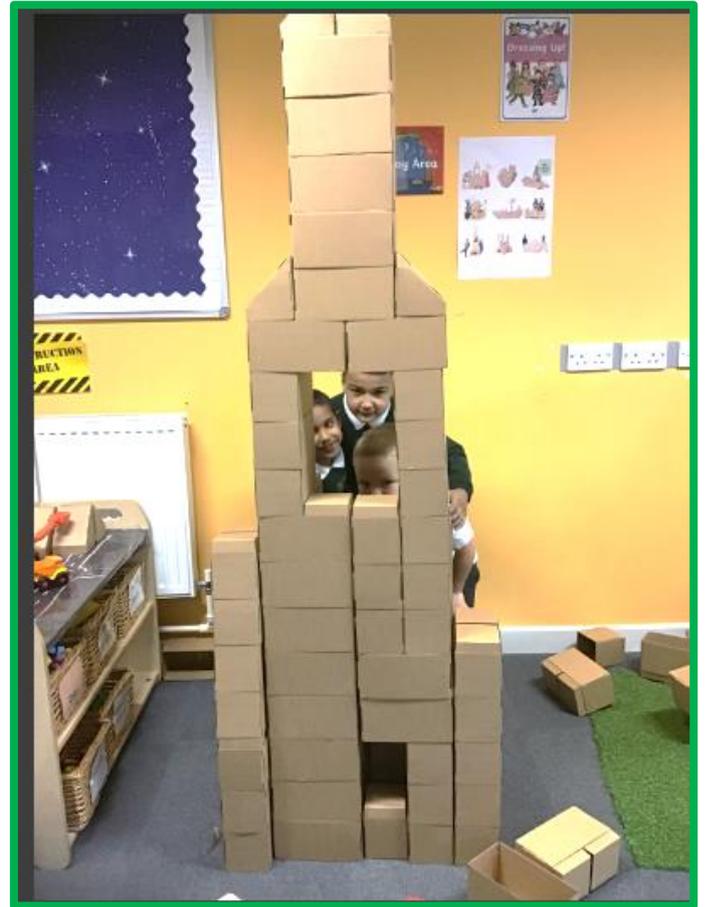
found a range of acorns, mushrooms and conkers too. Finally, we used our Autumn treasures to create a special seasonal crown to wear as we paraded around the woodland area sharing our new autumnal information.

Year 1 Memorable Experience

This half term the children have really enjoyed learning about 'Space'. They have created their own aliens and imagined what it would be like to go to space.



The children created their own astronaut costumes from cardboard boxes and used a variety of construction toys to create their own space vehicles. They have been very resourceful in their play and were able to work collaboratively to create some amazing rockets!



Year 2 Memorable Experience



We have been learning about Captain Cook and his adventures around the world! The children enjoyed role-playing the story.

This is Ezequiel, Hirah, Hadiqa and Waqas trying to row across the sea!



Year 3 Memorable Experience



In Year 3 we had a Greek themed day as part of our memorable experience. As part of this we dressed up as Greek characters and completed a variety of Greek themed activities.

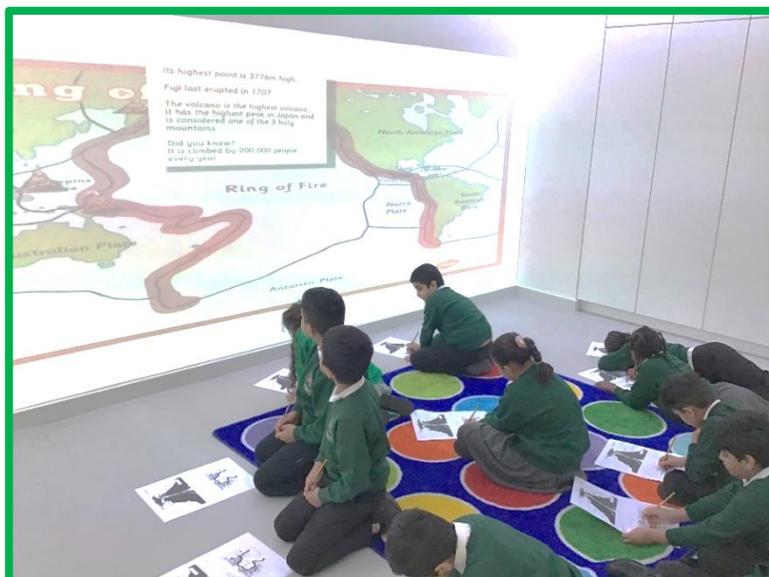
These included food tasting, participating in Greek games, completing a fact-finding hunt and we even had a mini Olympics! The children thoroughly enjoyed the experience and learnt lots of new things.

Thank you to all parents for helping their children dress up and participate.



Year 4 Memorable Experience

For year 4's memorable experience, we went to the Holodeck room to learn the different parts of a volcano. We also learned how volcanoes are created. Finally, we moved on to learning and recording information about some of the volcanoes located around the 'Ring of Fire'.



Year 5 Memorable Experience



Year 5 has been learning all about Ancient Egypt. Our memorable experience involved the children watching the gruesome process of mummification. To investigate this further we had a go at mummifying in class – not a dead body, but a tomato!

Tomatoes had their 'internal organs' scooped out (the seeds) and we packed them with salt to dry them out. We will unwrap them before the end of term to find out how well they have been preserved!



Year 6 Memorable Experience



This half term, Year 6 have been studying the Victorians. Children started the school term by experiencing a school day as a Victorian child with lots of rote learning and handwriting practice - using their right hands only! It was quite an insightful memorable experience as many children were unaware of just how strict conditions were in that era and were certainly glad they live in current times in comparison!

Children also learnt how to make their own version of a popular Victorian toy – the thaumatrope! Some of them may replace their iPads for it!

Furthermore, children have also explored the work of William Morris and have been inspired to do some drawings of their own, which they have then used to create their own wallpaper pattern.

Special Assembly Winners

Well done to all these amazing children who were chosen for simply being brilliant and embodying our school core values of **Aspiration – Connect – Happy – Immersed - Energised – Valued - Empowered – which together make **ACHIEVE!****

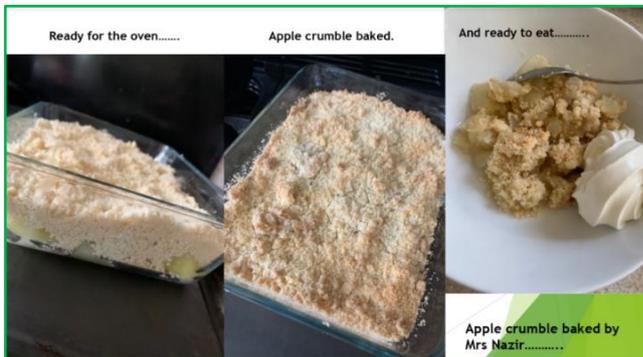
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|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Holly Fatima Zahra | 1A Salmah Aliyu | 2A Jawad Shahzad | 3A Mohammed Mrabet | 4A Inaya Ishaq | 5A Iremide Nasiru | 6A Hasan Munawar |
| Maple Muhammad Hasnain | 1B Jotham Onabiyi | 2B Aaminah Faraz | 3B Muskan Zenab | 4B Sarya Hassan | 5B Uzair Ashfaq | 6B Gohar Khan |
| Willow Hirah Shahzad | 1C Laibah Anwar | 2C Ajit Singh Dosanjh | 3C Subhaan Saleem | 4C Azaan Zahid | 5C Hadiqa Imran | 6C Xinyi Chen |

MPPS Baking Competition 2020

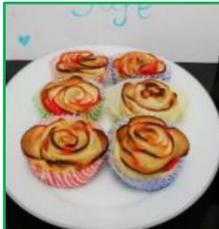
GET SET, BAKE!



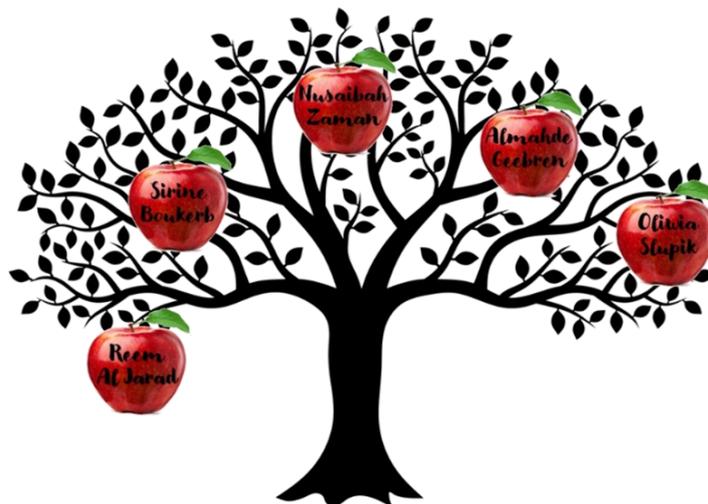
This term, we held our very first baking competition. As you all know, we have our garden area that grows a variety of fruits and vegetables. Over the lockdown period, our apple trees grew an abundance of apples, so we asked all children from years 3 to 6 and staff to pick and take-home apples to bake with. Apples had to be the star of all dishes.



Children and staff got busy in their kitchens and produced some fantastic dishes. They were all very imaginative and looked delicious! Although it was a very hard competition to judge, we managed to pick some winners and they won some wonderful prizes.



Congratulations to our amazing winners



Times Tables Rockstars!

Times tables are the building blocks of maths. Once you know the basics, the rest is much easier as you can work out answers more quickly. That is why it is crucial for your child to keep practising their skills. Every child has a login for TTRS and knows how to use it because we use it in school.



Please encourage your child to have a go at home as well – can you keep up with them?



We will be using pens to celebrate children learning specific times tables.



Which one will your child get first?



Mrs J Gamble (Acting Assistant Headteacher)

Oxford Reading Buddy



Oxford Reading Buddy **BETA**

We will continue to use Oxford Reading Buddy this year; all the children have received their new logins.

Oxford Reading Buddy contains hundreds of digital books and book-quizzes all matched to each child's reading ability. Children can earn badges for good reading behaviours, be coached in their understanding by their personal 'Reading Buddy', take quizzes and record all the reading they do. Everything is captured so that your child's teacher can see how they're getting on.

Do encourage your child to use it daily and discuss what they are reading with them. We recommend you watch them reading one or two of the Coaching eBooks because Reading Buddy is a good model of how to support and encourage children's comprehension skills as they read.

If you don't have a tablet or PC at home, the service works on smartphones as well.

Mrs S Ashtiaq
(Deputy Headteacher)



Seesaw



We are going to continue to use Seesaw; the online learning platform which we used during the national lockdown. Teachers will continue set weekly tasks on there for children to complete.

If your child needs to self- isolate, teachers will also be posting paper copies of other work to complete alongside the work set on Seesaw.

All children have received a bookmark which contains their login details for a number of web-based programme our school has purchased: Education City, Oxford Reading Buddy and Times Table Rock Stars. Please encourage your child to access these and complete tasks on there too.

Mrs S Robbins (Acting Assistant Headteacher)



Name of Child

 Oxford Reading Buddy

School code: cx4iy
Username: ----
Password: -----

 Seesaw

Text code:



 EducationCity

Username: -----
Password: -----

 TIMES TABLES
ROCKSTARS

Username: -----
Password: -----

Coronavirus

As you are aware, we are taking all the necessary precautions, following the government guidelines on Covid-19. These include

- Designated areas for pick-ups and drop offs for different year groups, including markings on the ground to guide people to safely social distance both inside and outside on the school grounds.
- Whilst in school children and most staff members are working within bubbles; this has meant changes to lunchtimes so bubbles can be maintained.
- Rigorous handwashing routines for children throughout the day.
- Enhanced cleaning routines throughout the day, which has meant hiring an extra housekeeper.
- Assemblies, staff meetings and parents' evenings are carried out over Zoom.
- The curriculum and teaching and learning methods have been adapted.



The above is a summary of key areas changes have been made to; we have a detailed Covid risk assessment which can be found on the school website.



Diary Dates

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|--|--|
| Friday 23rd October | School closes for half term. |
| Monday 2 nd November | Children return to school. |
| Friday 18th December | School closes for Christmas Holidays. |
| Tuesday 5th January | Children return to school. |
| Friday 12th February | School closes for half term. |
| Monday 22nd February | Children return to school. |
| Friday 26th March | School closes for Easter Holidays. |
| Monday 12th April | Children return to school. |
| Friday 28th May | School closes for half term. |
| Monday 7th June | Children return to school. |
| Friday 23rd July | School closes for Summer Holidays. |

IMPORTANT: Can parents please take note of the term times above, and only book holidays in the school holiday periods.