



Mount Pleasant Primary School

Parents Newsletter - Issue 29 (Dec 2020)

Dear Parents/Carers,

2020 has been a very strange year for everyone, with so many global changes and challenges brought about due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite this, I have been humbled to see how the staff, parents and the whole school community came together to work through these challenges, adapt and maintain focus to ensure that we can have the best outcomes for the children.



It is most important that we continue to follow all the rules and safety guidance that the Government has shared. This is the only way we can keep ourselves and our families safe. Whilst announcements have been made that restrictions will ease slightly over the Christmas Break (from 24th to 28th December), care must still be taken to ensure that this time of great joy and happiness is not spoiled as a result of loved ones becoming poorly. We have all worked so hard and must continue doing so for the sake of our families, our neighbourhoods and community at large.

In September, there were serious national concerns about the negative impact on children's education and mental well-being from school closures in the first Lockdown. However, I am pleased to say that our teachers have been working hard, identifying gaps and addressing these, and through our children's determination and drive, we have seen from the recent assessments and moderation, that our children have made excellent progress, and catching up any missed learning. Well done children!



To ensure that our school can be prepared to operate in the Post-Covid way, we carefully planned and implemented a number of remote learning systems and platforms, such as: Zoom, Seesaw, Oxford Reading Buddy, Timetables Rock Star and Education City. Just as with every other school, at times, we have also had to ask a few bubbles to isolate over this last term. By using the above-listed online resources, together with the hard work and focussed determination of our staff, we are able to ensure that the children's learning continues uninterrupted – even if they are required to isolate again in the New Year.





We had an amazing final day of term with Special Assemblies that rewarded children for demonstrating excellent behaviour and having a great attitude to learning - despite the challenges and changes brought about by Covid-19. There were so many wonderful prizes to choose from and the children's excited smiles said it all to me. They truly made me proud, and I am sure their parents felt the same way.

To top this off, we had lots of Christmas parties (in bubbles) again this year. Children always look forward to these as there is such a great festive spirit across the school. I wanted this year's parties to be extra special because the children all deserved and needed a well done, especially after such a strange and difficult term.



I would like to end my welcome to this newsletter by thanking my staff for working extra hard this term, with classroom learning as well as online learning for isolating children. Thank you also to all our families for adapting and supporting children with their online home-learning. Together, we will ensure that our children achieve the best outcomes from their schooling. I wish everyone a lovely well-earned holiday. For all our families celebrating Christmas, I hope you have a wonderful time. Happy New Year to everyone!

Mrs N Nazir (Headteacher)





Christmas
Jumper
Day





**Christmas
Jumper
Day**



Memorable Experiences

Nursery

This half term in Nursery the children have enjoyed reading traditional tales. They made their own butter and jam sandwiches and created amazing teddy bear hats to wear for their picnic. The children enjoyed their teddy bears' picnic in the school's orchard and tucked into their yummy sandwiches. The teddy bears' picnic finished with a tasty biscuit treat.



The children have also enjoyed exploring different materials to learn which material will build the strongest house. To test this the children did an experiment which involved rolling a ball into three different material structures and discovering which was the strongest. Children worked with their peers to build collaborative structures to test, and found this thoroughly exciting. In Nursery we love working together and helping our friends.



Reception

This term the Reception children received an important invitation to attend a special Fairy Tale Day. The day began by talking about the special costumes we wore, discussing our new imaginative characters and making up our very own class Fairy Tale story. The story started with Goldilocks, princess butterfly, a brave knight, and a very hungry dragon. They got lost and locked in the enchanted woods where the prickly hedgehog saved the day and all the characters lived happily ever after!



Next, Goldilocks took the children on a trail to the three bears' house. We came across a basket of sweets and a trail through the forest that lead us to a sweetie house. We wondered whether it would be safe to go in, but the Gingerbread Lady told us a tale of 'Hansel and Gretel' where they managed to escape from the witch, and she was never seen again! The children took the risk and tip toed into the sweetie house to find a basket full of chocolate and some instructions that must have been left from the witch. It read, "How to make a yummy lolly!" The children listened carefully to the prickly hedgehog and created their own individual lollies to take home.





To the children's surprise they stumbled across a very strange, tall, green magical beanstalk. It had grown in the middle of the group room. The children investigated, discussed and made predictions about the mysterious items and decided that they must belong to the giant that lived at the top of the beanstalk. Before the giant could hear us,



we sneaked back out and planted the magic beans we had found. The children followed instructions and researched what they would need to do to look after their magic beans to grow their own beanstalk.

Finally to finish

the day, we went on a Fairy Tale parade to show off our fabulous outfits. A great big shout out to all the parents for getting involved with us and sending your child to school dressed up, it really made the day even better.

Year 1

This term Year 1 have thoroughly enjoyed the topic 'Superheroes'. The children had fun dressing up as their favourite superheroes and used their newfound superpowers to help Supertato foil the Evil Pea's dastardly plan and save the day. They enjoyed learning about the real life superheroes Florence Nightingale and Rosa Parks.



Year 2

Year 2 had a very exciting afternoon on the 11th November. As part of the Remembrance and Diversity day we learnt more about Christianity and Hinduism. We discovered that Christians pray in a church and many churches have stained glass windows which often tell an important story. We made our own stained glass windows by drawing and colouring a pattern, before painting the back in oil to make our paper transparent. This made them look great!



We also learnt that Hindus celebrate Diwali, the Festival of Light. Many Hindus will decorate their houses with Torans to celebrate religious festivals such as Diwali. We had lots of fun making our very own Torans and decorating the classroom with them.

Remembrance Day



The whole school observed a minute's silence to remember the soldiers who lost their lives for our country. See the wonderful displays that classes made and decorated their doors with.



Year 5

This term Year 5 have been studying space. We have been learning all about the Solar System, the planets and the moon and looked at the amazing photos taken by the Hubble Telescope. We looked at the work of textile artist Karen Rose and have been inspired to create our own space-themed textile art.



We also had a lot of fun during our science experiment where we made our mini rockets fly high into the sky. We did this by putting a vitamin B tablet and some warm water into our miniature rockets. We tightened the lid, gave them a good shake and counted down until blast off. We learnt all about how the vitamin tablet releases a gas as it dissolves which causes pressure in the container causing it to 'blast off' high into the sky.



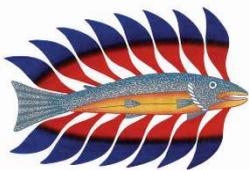
Year 6



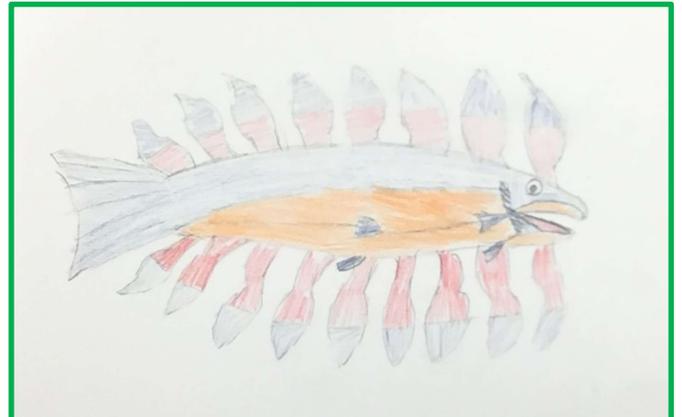
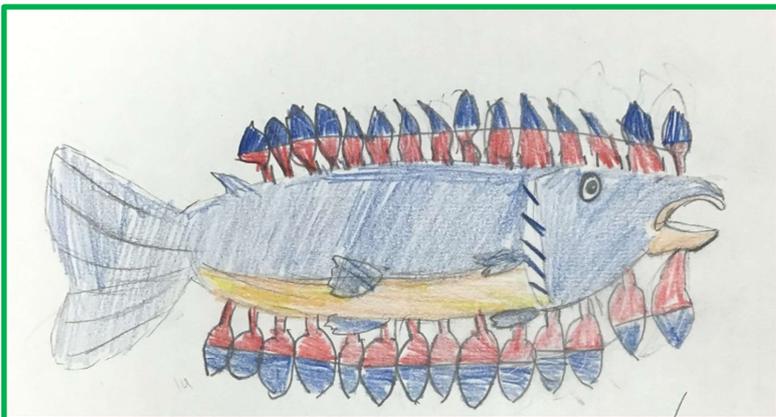
In Year 6, this half term our topic focus was Antarctic exploration. As part of this we looked at the history and geography of the Polar regions. A fabulous spectacle that particularly caught our attention were the Northern lights. Inspired by the beauty of this natural light display in the sky, we decided to create our own art using Brusho - an incredibly vibrant, water-based powder paint. It did get quite messy at times, but it was a lot of fun to work with!



We also looked at the renowned work of Kenojuak Ashevak. An Inuit artist from the northern polar regions.

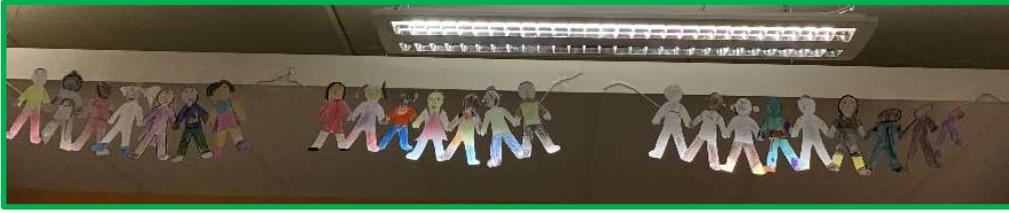


Some of our brilliant drawings !



Anti-bullying Week

The children were reintroduced to what bullying is and we looked at different scenario cards and how to deal with the different types of bullying. The children role played a scenario in front of the class and discussed what was happening.



All children were given a human cut out which they decorated and then wrote their personal qualities

on the back – for example ‘sporty’, ‘friendly’.

The children discussed how we all look different and we all like different things and that that is okay. As a class, the children explored differences – for example, hair colour; what we like to do at home; favourite colour etc. Then we were all very happy to make biscuits and choose whether we wanted raisins or chocolate chips.

We introduced the idea of teamwork. What is teamwork? What does it mean to work as a team? In this lesson the children had to work as a team so that no-one was left behind!



The children looked at the difference between being unkind and bullying. We discussed different scenarios on cards and decided which category each one fell into – ‘unkind’ or ‘bullying’.



Presents

We have been fund raising and have worked with different community organizations to give many of our children a Kind Christmas Gift. The children and families have been delighted with the lovely gifts, and we hope this will go some way to helping families during this difficult time.



Attendance

It has been a challenging term for attendance, due to some children having to self-isolate. However with the determination of the children and the continued support of parents we have persevered, and attendance is currently averaging the same as national. Well done and keep sending your children to school, every day.

Please do ensure that your child comes to school every day, however, if they are not well enough to be in school please leave a clear message on the absence line to let school know what is wrong with your child; for example, headache, tummy ache, vomiting. It is very difficult if a message is left just saying, "not feeling well today or a bit of a temperature". In such cases, we will call parents back to find out what exactly the illness/temperature is and what symptoms they have, and whether parents should book to have a test.

If you suspect your child is developing coronavirus symptoms, please do not send them to school but ring the NHS Covid line 119 for advice and keep school informed. It is very quick and easy to get a test and the results are coming back within 24hrs enabling your child to get back to school safely as soon as possible if they receive a negative result.

Remember that children who attend school regularly and have at least 95+ attendance make fantastic progress and really develop their learning.

On a very positive note, we have **187 children** who have achieved **100% attendance** and they will receive a fabulous certificate and a reward. Let's see if we can increase this number for the Spring term!



Notices

- On Tuesday 5th January NEW Nursery starters will come for one hour stay and play sessions.
- Please note that Nursery will be closed on Tuesday 5th January for returning pupils (September starters).

Term Dates

Can parents please take note of the term times below and only book holidays in the school holiday periods.

Tuesday 5 th January	Children return to school for Spring Term.
Friday 12 th February	School closes for half term holidays.
Monday 22 nd February	Children return to school.
Friday 26 th March	School closes for Easter holidays.
Monday 12 th April	Children return to school for Summer Term.
Friday 28 th May	School closes for half term holidays.
Monday 7 th June	Children return to school.
Friday 23 rd July	School closes for Summer holidays.

