



High Ash CE School

Weekly Newsletter/Blog

Friday 17th December 2021

'Let your light shine' Matthew 5:16



Grow Together Shine Forever

To all our families,

It has certainly been quite a week, however we have managed to continue with face to face learning and implement our COVID19 contingency plan. We have walked a fine line this week with the need to mitigate risk and also ensure we offer our usual provision- we have managed to achieve this with the great partnership between home and school- thank you.

I would especially like to thank all parents for completing daily lateral flow tests as this has seen cases in school decrease in the latter half of this week; however we know we go into the Christmas break with the risk still there. Public health advice continues to be to continue with 7 days of lateral flow testing if you have been a close contact of a known positive case.

We have continued to liaise with local Public Health team and I have spoken to the Director of Public Health Bucks personally re our plans and they have been in agreement of them.

Many thanks also to my amazing staff team here at school who have acted professionally and compassionately all throughout this week and I know you will all join me in wishing them a safe and restful break and much deserved time with their own families.

As for January and the return to school, well we are all waiting to see how the next couple of weeks pans out and then we can let you know as soon as we do. We remain committed to carrying on as we have been doing, yet as you can understand this new variant has presented the nation with a bit of a curve ball. I will of course communicate to you as soon as we know and I only hope the Government provide us with more notice than last January!

My advice for now is to focus on the present, follow the guidance to limit socialising and spend time with those you love the most as safely as you can.

We are asking though that your child (if over age five) completes a daily lateral flow test on the morning of the 5th January 2022 before they return to school and only send to school if this is negative. You may wish to plan ahead and order lateral flow tests as they become available again from Government website.

I don't want the whole of this newsletter to be about COVID so....

What else has been going on in school this week?

Foundation and Year One and Two- This week the children made their Christingles and learnt about the meaning of the Christingle orange and what it symbolises. We had a lovely Christingle Service in school in the hall for these year groups (socially distanced) and it was quite a moment of excitement and wonder when the candles lit up in the darkness and the children sang 'Silent Night' to the candle glow.



Many thanks to Christopher, Maeve, Lara, Cleo, Mathilda and Sebastian for narrating the readings during the service.

A special mention needs to go to Ellie and Alatheia in Foundation who impressed their teacher in their Phonics lessons this week- well done!

Year Three and Four- Even though this year group have had the most children off isolating, those that are in have continued to work hard and do their best. Well done to those at home also working hard with work that has been sent home to you. We are proud of you all!

I was impressed with the art work and use of shading techniques shown by Alissa, Eve, Gianna and Uma and here are the photos of their work linked to the 'Iron Man'

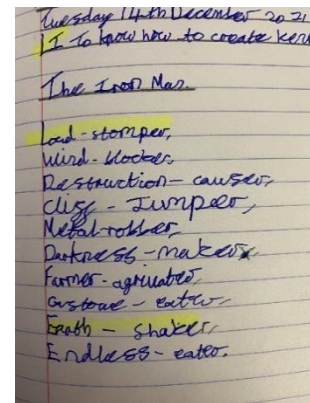
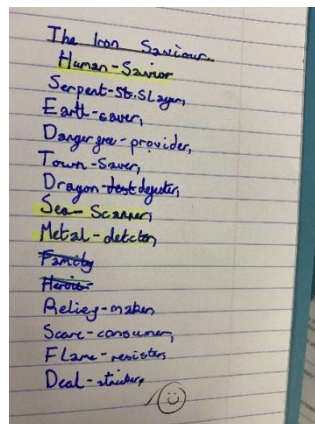


In Art this week, all classes have been developing their sketching and drawing skills. They began the week by experimenting with different pencil grades and making a range of marks with pencils, before moving on to exploring chalk. They then produced drawings of the Iron Man in chalk, using the techniques they had learned during the week. Miss Hearne, Mr Fellows and Miss Woods were blown away by the children's pieces of art and so am I!



Alissa also came to show me her narrative writing and was joined by Phoebe, Flora, Kimi and Fleur- well done!

Year Three and Four have also been writing Kenning poems this week all about the Iron Man. They have been focusing on using alliteration and high-level vocabulary in their poems. They also performed their poems using actions! It was a pleasure to read kenning poems by Amelie, Jerrold and Uma as they did make me smile! They had clearly thought hard about word choice and how to sum up the characteristics of the Iron Man using this genre.



Year Five and Six- To end their topic on Antarctica, in Science this week, the classes have been writing up about the features of plants that can survive in this environment. It was great to see that Liviya, Ava, Hollie, Isabella, Polly and Varsha had received Gold Stars for this.

There has also been a lot of Gold Stars in Maths this week! The children have been consolidating their fractions knowledge and also their mental arithmetic and recall. I have seen super progress in this from Sam H, Sakhile, Oscar, Polly and Jake- keep up the good work!

Finally, thank you to Michael for sharing his poem with me- it was so good and really made me smile!

Christmas Carol Concert...

We managed to still have a Carol Concert in school by reducing the numbers of children in the hall and splitting by year group, as well as social distancing.



Thank you to Miles, Esme, Malachi, Nicole, Archie, Georgia and Polly for their readings and prayers.

It was also a treat to hear the beautiful singing of Luca B-B and Liviya as they performed the first verse of 'Once in Royal David's City' as a duet.

Christmas Fair...

This morning we had our Christmas Fair in school to raise money for our charity World Vision and their Christmas appeal to support refugees with aid and educational support. Many thanks for supporting this cause as the children are keen to raise awareness about this. I think you will agree from the photos what the children made was really quite impressive!



HASA Update....



Many thanks to HASA and to parents who as the fundraising has provided for the KS2 Christmas gifts and also the entertainer for Foundation and KS1. We have had to postpone the entertainer due to COVID, however, he will be coming to school at some point next year.

Here is a photo of some of the gifts funded by HASA for KS2. The children were given a decoration set that included the decoration and paints to then get creative and make the decoration their own.

Congratulations to our Christmas raffle winners Sid Cooper, Linda Wren and Binal Anandji, and thank you to everyone who has supported HASA in any way, we are thrilled to have raised over £2,000 this term!

We would also like to publicly pass on thanks to the local businesses who have donated towards the hampers: Lemon Lemon 27, Stoke Hammond Village Shop, Red Physiotherapy, Great Finish Cleaning Services, PL Wheelie Bin Cleaners, Beauty Just for You, Homestead Window Cleaning Services, NJ Barbering and Tesco Bletchley.

We could not achieve any of this without your support - thank you and have a very happy Christmas.

Staffing news....

This week we say goodbye and good luck this week to Miss Danks and Ms Harrison- we wish them well in their new ventures.

Miss Purr, who works in WRAP, also leaves us this week as she takes up her university place in January and we thank her for all her hard work too!

Thank you for Christmas cards and gifts...

On behalf of the staff at school, thank you to families who have given gifts and cards- it has been very thoughtful of you, especially with everything going on at present. We are very touched and everyone likes to feel appreciated, so thank you again. I have also loved the home made cards and messages from the children too and I do keep them!

Walking Bus...

You will have received a text to confirm if you have a place on the Walking Bus. As a reminder, the Walking Bus will leave at 8:40am from the Parish Hall Car park each day from Wednesday 5th January and will be supervised by school staff and community volunteers. Only pupils registered with the Walking Bus will be able to use this service- thank you!

See you in January....remember our new start and finish times...

I started this newsletter talking about not being sure what January will hold; however one thing I do know is that our school will be as determined as ever to continue to provide a great education for your children. I will keep you posted and I will endeavour to give you as much notice as possible of any key updates.

As a reminder, we are going back to the start time of 8:50am and finish time of 3:20pm for KS2 and 3:25pm for Foundation and KS1. With the Walking Bus starting at 8:40am, Breakfast and After School WRAP and after school clubs restarting, then this does have a similar impact to staggered start and finish times and actually these have had in our experience, little impact on COVID mitigation. Daily lateral flow testing has far greater impact for example and we have found that any main COVID outbreaks have been within year groups who arrive at the same time anyway.

I do accept we will need to look at this with any new Government guidance, yet we are staying with this plan for now.

All that is left for me to say is to have the best possible Christmas you can and to stay as safe as you can too.

I leave you with Lottie's (our Roving Reporter) Christmas news this week!

This week has been all about Christmas! Callie, Alisha, Tatiana and Ariya are all looking forward to spending time with family this Christmas. No children can forget the presents though. Rupert is hoping Santa will bring a spider this Christmas (that's very brave of him!) and Georgia is hoping for a new Barbie. I hope everyone has a really happy Christmas!

Best wishes and a Merry Christmas!

Sara J Boyce

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