

22 January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Junior School Weekly Update – 22 January 2021

As we come to the end of another successful week of remote learning, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for the time spent to get in touch with the teachers to convey your messages of positivity, support and feedback regarding our new timetable and increase in live teaching. I encourage you to read Mr Murphy's letter this week for the link to our parent survey. Having already received feedback from the pupils through our incredibly articulate Junior School Pupil Parliament representatives, we are keen to have an accurate account of how parents feel our new timetable is working in order that any tweaks come directly from the needs and views of our St Dunstan's community, incorporating feedback we have also received from staff.

Nursery and Reception

The theme of the week for Nursery this week has been den making and dance! Never deterred by the rainy weather, the dens have provided necessary shelter in our Woodland Classroom. As if this was not fun enough, we hosted the grand opening of our Mud Kitchen Café, featuring an elaborate menu of delicious chicken goujons and mud cupcakes. Pupils have also enjoyed their regular dance sessions with our new Teaching Assistant, Ms [Champion. Reception highlights this week have included discovering that the special delivery was a penguin! The children enjoyed a first-hand experience of democracy when voting for the penguin's name – Flipper! Pupils also developed their identification skills when learning about one more than a given number by watching Ms Rose consume marshmallows to demonstrate the learning taking place. Ms Isaac was particularly inventive this week when teaching the 'ow' sound. Learning was brought to life when she decided to cover herself in plasters and then pulled them off one by one crying 'ow' each time.

Years 1 and 2

The Big Bad Wolf has been on the loose in Year 1 this week! The pupils stepped into the shoes of the three little pigs and imagined what it would have been like to build their own houses, before facing the wolf as he tried to blow them all down. They wrote letters and postcards to Mummy Pig to let her know what had happened and that they are safe; we could not have mummy worrying! If you think you know the story of The Three Little Pigs, think again; the children created puppets to retell the story in their own words and we even had a go at imagining alternative endings. We were treated to some very imaginative performances, which was most welcome in a time when a trip to the theatre is on hold. We also made a new friend this week in Pez the pigeon, who flew in through the window and began to join our lessons. Pez has already embraced the College value of curiosity and he is forever asking questions! This means the children have to be really focused in lessons so that they can explain the learning to Pez as the session draws to a close. In maths this week, Year 2 have been collecting mini beast data for pictograms. They have enjoyed collecting natural objects in the park as data for block graphs and sorting skittles for tally charts. In IPC, they have been getting to grips with some historical vocabulary and have even travelled back in time

with explorer Ibn Battuta! In English, they have been putting adverbs to work to describe actions within a sentence, also having great fun retelling the story of Jack and the Beanstalk through a challenging independent writing exercise.

Years 3 and 4

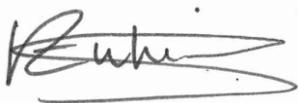
The theme of the week for Year 3 has been random acts of kindness, which have spread a great deal of happiness to many people. They have also shown great confidence and courage by acting out a well-known fable live on Teams in front of everyone! Pupils enjoyed using props to bring the story of 'The Wind and The Sun' to life. Fed up with not being able to go shopping? Well, Year 3 pupils have a solution – set up your own shop at home! This is exactly what the Year 3 mathematicians have been doing this week to help them learn about money. This week, Year 4 became top journalists, reporting on the trapping of the Iron Man, and even managing to publish their own newspaper articles. They had another big responsibility in Skills for Life, choosing their top ten rules for the world. We would certainly be in for some surprises if Year 4 were let loose to run the world! In IPC, they have been learning about creation stories from different religions and have impressed us with their ICT skills to produce some really beautiful pieces of work to retell those stories.

Years 5 and 6

Over the last few weeks in English, Year 5 have been reading 'Oranges in No Man's Land' by Elizabeth Laird. The book follows the story of Ayesha, a young girl living in Beirut, Lebanon during the Civil War. We were fortunate to be joined by a Year 5 parent during one of our English lessons this week who was born and grew up in Beirut during the Civil War. The children were amazed by how similar his experiences were to Ayesha, the protagonist of our book. We learned about the dangers of the city during the war, completing homework by candlelight, evacuations to the mountains, passing through armed checkpoints, trips to air raid shelters, schooling and much more. It was an incredible experience for the children (and teachers) to listen to this real-life experience and we would like to thank Mr Karaki for an experience we will never forget. The Year 6 IPC topic for this half term is 'Go with the Flow,' where they have been learning all about rivers. After successfully constructing and testing their very own boat designs last week, this week Year 6 have been having fun doing some independent research projects, gathering information about cities located along rivers and presenting it in a creative way. There has also been lots of enthusiasm for the active elements of the timetable, including morning fitness and PE. There have even been some parents joining in, demonstrating superb athletic abilities including the splits!

As we go into another weekend, I very much hope you all have your aprons, rolling pins and ingredients at the ready for our House Bake Off competition. Some very keen beans have already sent their entries in, which have set the bar high for what we are positive will be another exciting House competition. Please try to remember that it is a competition for the children, and not the parents!

Yours sincerely



Miss L Whitwood
Head of Junior School