

Muswell Hill Primary School

February 2019: Newsletter No.8



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In **Reception** our topic this term has been dinosaurs. We know lots of facts about different dinosaurs; we even had a dinosaur egg in class and made some 3D dinosaurs. In science we made exploding volcanoes and experimented with frozen dinosaurs. During art lessons we made some dinosaur fossils. We can also sing a song called the prehistoric dinosaur parade, ROAAAAAR!!



We're sharing some of our learning in this newsletter, so each of our year groups has shared some highlights from this half-term.

Year 6 kicked off their learning this term with an Ancient Greek day that included mosaic and candle making; performing Ancient Greek myths and dances; and trying some Greek delicacies! The Ancient Greek theme was carried over into English where we retold the story of Odysseus and the Cyclops using some breath-taking descriptive language. Finally, we made the most of the inclement weather by going to the Grove and building snowmen and having a snowball fight!



This term, **Year 5** children have been learning all about the ancient Egyptians. At the very start of term we had our immersion day where the children were able to create their own artefacts as well as learning a song and an Egyptian dance in the afternoon. Since then, both classes have loved learning about mummification, the different Egyptian gods - their roles and responsibilities - as well as learning how to write their name in Hieroglyphics. This has also dove-tailed nicely with our class novel, 'The Secret of a Sun King' which the children really love.

We have received some fantastic home-learning projects – keep them coming!

A great first half of the year for **Year 2** - the children loved learning about 'London Today' and 'The Great Fire of London' especially making shadow puppets and writing diary entries in the role of children experiencing the fire.

Our new topic is 'Healthy Me' and the children have been learning about the importance of exercise and eating healthily, as well as the different types of traditional food from around the world. We had an amazing international food day on 14th, thanks to all the parents who brought in such wonderful food!

Children in **Year 3** have been busy exploring shadows in the playground for our Science topic 'Light'. We're waiting for the sun to come out to try out our sundials!



In **Year 1** 'toys' have been our major focus. The children brought in their favourite toys from home and created their own information books about them. In science we have been looking at materials, and conducting lots of fun experiments in order to find out about their properties.



All year groups enjoyed watching our Chinese New Year show – the children celebrated the Year of the Pig by watching an incredible display of Chinese dance, music and martial arts.

We all had fun in the snow!



Sporting Highlights from this half-term

At the start of the Spring term, 30 children from year 6 attended the Haringey Indoor Athletics Heats at Heartlands school where they competed in a number of track and field events such as the high jump, long jump and several different distance running races. There were some great performances, notably from Jonah in the running and Balazs and Charles in the chest push, and the school finished in third position. The children had a good afternoon and for those who had not taken part in a competition before it was a great new experience.



More recently, the school sent both a mixed and a girls' team to New River to the Premier League Football Tournament where teams from around the area battle it out to represent Tottenham at a nationwide tournament. While the mixed team unfortunately lost in the semi-finals, the girls squad triumphed and went on to play a further qualifying tournament at Tottenham's training ground on the 13th February where, despite great play, they unfortunately didn't make it through. Congratulations to all members of the team.

Musical Highlights from this half-term

The choir joined other schools to sing together at Alexandra Park School on Monday 11 February and they will be performing again on Saturday 2 March at the Baptist Church singing with other schools to help raise both awareness and funds for the Soup Kitchen there.

Children from Years 3 to 6 can join the choir which practises on a Wednesday after school between 3.30 and 4.15pm, there is a cost of approx. £25.00 a term to cover the cost of the Choir Leader. There are a few places left so if your child is interested in joining after half-term please contact the School Office.

Music Night - Muswell Hill Unplugged - took place on Friday 8 February

A note from the parents who organised this fantastic event:

“We were delighted with how Music Night went on Friday. We felt it went really well and we were delighted to have over 30 children performing. Mr Howes and Lara were both fantastic and we massively appreciated their help. The children did themselves proud with lots of enthusiasm and good behaviour which allowed us to stay bang on schedule so the evening ran smoothly and on time. The quality of the performances has noticeably improved over the years which has been a delight to witness.”

Massive thanks to Yvonne, Burcu, Emily, Bianca and Hugh who worked incredibly hard to organise and/or help with this event – it was a real showcase of musical talent.

News from Mr Howes

Dear Parents/Carers,

After twenty years in London and twelve years in Muswell Hill Primary, my family and I are moving away from London to relocate to Hebden Bridge in Yorkshire.

I have been so fortunate to work in Muswell Hill Primary, even spending my first teaching practice as a student in Gold class with Toby, and I will cherish all the memories I have from the children, the parents and my amazing colleagues.

This hasn't been an easy decision by any stretch and if I could take the children with me, I would. But our flat is getting smaller as our son is getting bigger, and I find myself yearning for the same open fields in the summer months for my boy, that I enjoyed when I was his age.

In the meantime, there's still teaching to be done, assemblies to deliver, reports to write and musicals to stage manage.

Mr Howes

Mr Howes will be leaving at the end of the school year (July 2019) - we will be saying thank you and good-bye to Mr Howes properly then.

Latest News about School Meals

Our catering company, ABM, will be introducing the new Spring menu after half term, it is on the school website and you can see it by following this link:

<https://muswellhillprimary.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Muswell-Hill-TASTIES-3-Choices-Feb-19-1.pdf>

Following feedback from Mandi's consultations with parents and children, and in response to further feedback in the recent parent questionnaire we now have a working group of parents/carers who are looking at ways we can improve our school meals. They met with the ABM area manager and had some constructive discussions with her. They will be visiting some other schools and looking at the Food for Life programme that runs in many schools in Enfield as well as tasting some of the school meals here.

ABM has been asked to re-tender with their proposed improvements when their contract comes to an end later this year and we will also be approaching another provider.

All the school meals are assessed by a nutritionist to ensure that they meet the government's school food standards:

<https://www.gov.uk/school-meals-healthy-eating-standards>

ABM has also confirmed that they can provide gluten or dairy-free lunches **provided this is requested along with GP evidence that your child has a gluten or dairy intolerance**. These meals can be provided only with this evidence. Please see the School Office for the necessary forms.

We are currently exploring other options for school lunches such as a cold deli counter where a school lunch could be a sandwich or a wrap but further details on this will follow in due course.

Some immediate improvements to our school meals will start with the new Spring menu:

- on four days of the week only a healthy dessert will be offered – a yogurt or fruit or crackers and cheese or an unsweetened fruit jelly
- Fridays will be a 'treat day' when a pudding will be served.

We hope that those parents/carers who provide a packed lunch for their children will join the rest of the school with this initiative and only provide a treat for their children on a Friday – this shouldn't be sweets or crisps which we ask you not to provide as part of a healthy packed lunch but could be something like a chocolate biscuit or a piece of cake.

**THIS SCHOOL IS
NUT FREE**



No outside food or drinks allowed.

Please ask the teacher about policies for snacks & birthday treats.

THANK YOU
for keeping our school safe!

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You will have noticed this poster outside the school gates – just a reminder that we have a number of children who are severely allergic to a variety of different nuts so please don't bring any into school.

We are really grateful for your co-operation.

Buying T-shirts, sweatshirts and school PE tops

A number of you have asked about buying school T-shirts/sweatshirts and PE tops outside of the two times that were arranged with our supply company (July and September). We have also recently reminded everyone in Years 3 to 6 about the necessity of having a school PE shirt.

We have contacted the company and they have agreed to provide another print run (assuming we get enough orders). We have therefore produced an order form – which will be available from the School Office after half term. Please clearly indicate the items you require (tick colour and size and complete name and class details), make a note of the total cost, and ADD £2.00 to cover postage and packaging per order (not per garment) then make the payment on Parent Pay. Parent Pay will show one item but with variable payment so it will be up to you to total the cost of your order, add the £2.00 and then make the payment.

Please pick up an order form and then make the payment on Parent Pay by **THURSDAY 28 FEBRUARY** so we can place the order that week. This will be the last opportunity to purchase these items until July so do please bear that in mind when making your orders.

Start Sporty

It's getting lighter in the mornings – there are still some places available at the Start Sporty classes that are available for Years 3 to 6 at 8.00am on Monday to Friday.

It's currently hockey on Mondays, football on Tuesdays (class is full at the moment), tag rugby/cross country on Wednesdays, athletics on Thursdays and Kwik-cricket on Fridays.

Please contact the School Office if you are interested.

Parent Consultation Feedback

Thanks again to all parents who completed this survey. To avoid information overload we will be sending feedback on Monday 25 February.

Reminder of some dates for your diaries

Friday 15 February – Staff Training Day so no children at school, after-school football, Little Monsters and Jam Art clubs as normal

Saturday 2 March – Choir sing at Baptist Church – Sing for Soupy – fundraising for the soup kitchen

Thursday 7 March – **World Book Day** – children encouraged to dress up as their favourite character from a book

Monday 4 March to Monday 11 March – Parent meetings on selected days

Tuesday 5 March at 5.00pm – Draft vision presented to parents together with 5-year plan (30 places)

Wednesday 6 March at 6.00pm – The above meeting is repeated to give parents another opportunity to hear about the draft vision and 5-year plan (30 places)

Friday 8 March – Staff Training Day so no children at school although there are some parent meetings taking place **ALSO another opportunity for parents to attend a meeting on the draft vision/5-year plan at 2.30pm in the KS2 hall**

Week beginning 11 March - British Science week

Thursday 4 April – Night at the Exhibition – come and see the children showcasing their learning

Friday 5 April – break up for the Spring holidays at 3.30pm

Tuesday 23 April – **Summer Term starts**

Some early notification of Autumn dates:

Wednesday 4 September – Autumn Term starts for the children (2 and 3 September are Staff Training days)

Autumn half –term – break up at 3.30pm on Friday 18 October and return on Tuesday 29 October (Monday 28 October is a Staff Training day so no children in school)

Thursday 19 December at 1.00pm – break up for Christmas break

Other term dates for next year will be finalised before the Easter break.

Inspirational Leadership Award for Mandi

Mandi doesn't know we have included this in the newsletter so it will be a surprise for her to see this published!

We couldn't resist telling you that Mandi has just won a prestigious award from Potential Plus UK (previously known as the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)).

Potential Plus UK are an independent charity which supports children with high learning potential (gifted and talented) by working with their families, schools and other professionals. The charity hosted the 2019 Above and Beyond Awards ceremony on February 11th at the International Conference Centre, Birmingham. At this ceremony they celebrated parents, young people, teachers, support staff and other professionals in the UK who go 'above and beyond' to help children and young people within the UK achieve their high learning potential.

Mandi was nominated for the **Inspirational Leader Award** which recognises a person 'who has inspired and led others within high learning potential education and/or support'. We persuaded her to go to the ceremony and we were absolutely delighted when she won the award which was presented by Bobby Seagull (Maths guru). Opposite is an extract from the website that explains the reasons for the nomination and the judges' summary. Needless to say we are very proud of Mandi.



Winner

Mandi Howells

Carlton Primary School/Muswell Hill School

Reason for Nomination: Mandi helped Carlton Primary School to refocus its policy regarding high learning potential children, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds. When the school redesigned the curriculum, she adapted current thinking about learning to make it child-friendly and accessible. In addition to developing the focus of teaching within the school, she also produced leaflets for parents to help them support their child with high learning potential, instigated a reading group for more able children and works with the community to make learning 'real' for children. Mandi shares her ideas with teachers across Camden borough.

Judges' Comment: *The judges commented that Mandi worked with her school to develop their thinking about facilitating discussions with learners regarding meta-cognition and self-regulation. She has actively supported professional development in other schools through Challenge Partners and she led Carlton Primary School to achieve Potential Plus UK's High Learning Potential Best Practice Award at Gold Level before taking up the headship at Muswell Hill School, September 2018.*

Have a restful half-term break and we look forward to seeing the children again on Monday 25 February at 8.55 am.