

Finham Park Multi Academy Trust

World Class News

October 2022

Edition 27



Finham Park 2 – Kingswood



Meadow Park - Star School



Lillington – APF Exhibition



Finham Primary - Outdoor Learning



Finham Park School – STEM club



Lyng Hall – “One Day”



Pearl Hyde – International Dot Day



Welcome from Mark Bailie

Dear Parents and Members of the Community,

Welcome to the latest edition of World Class News, with a special welcome to any new children, families, and members of staff. I have been delighted with how quickly children in all of our schools have settled into the new academic year. It has been a pleasure to visit all the schools in the FPMAT and I have seen some excellent examples of children's learning. The start of a new academic year brings with it great opportunities to engage and excite learners in their education.



It is exciting to see the Multi Academy Trust growing and to be working with the newly created Education Development Team. I would like to give a warm welcome to Liz Allton as Head of Education Development, Claire Denton as Director of Primary Education and Matt Gaynon as the Secondary Support and Innovation Leader, who join Emma O'Toole as the Primary Support and Innovation Leader. They are all deployed to work across the schools in the FPMAT, improving teaching and learning and the experiences of our young people.

It is fabulous to read about all the successes that have happened in our schools over this first half-term and to hear about the wide range of out of school experiences children are able to participate in, such as residential and theatre visits.

As a Multi Academy Trust we continue to focus on the use of Instructional Coaching to develop our teachers and improve the quality of teaching and learning. One of the benefits of being part of a MAT is that staff can work together on co-construction activities to share best practice and develop curriculums together. Colleagues from across the primary schools and secondaries have all met this term to begin this work.

We are in the process of planning the annual MAT training day on Tuesday 3rd January and it will be fabulous to have colleagues from all the schools join together for a day of continuing professional development.

I am very excited for the year ahead and look forward to seeing more examples of the children's learning and experiences they are able to benefit from. I would like to thank students and their families, as well as staff, for enabling such a positive and smooth start to the year. I hope you all enjoy the half term break.

Mark Bailie
Executive Headteacher
Finham Park Multi Academy Trust



Education Development Team



Liz Allton – Director of Education Development



This half term I have been working at Lyng Hall and Meadow Park schools. I have really enjoyed working with the teams, visiting lessons and meeting the students. It has also been really lovely to be welcomed into the Central MAT team and as I'm sure everyone who has visited the MAT recently will know that my office door is always open there...

At Lyng Hall I have been establishing a baseline for the SSAT EFA project that Lyng Hall have launched this half term. I have focused on where the school is with formative assessment by meeting with subject leaders, students and triangulating it with learning walks. It has been brilliant to see the good practice already going on and the vision that subject leaders have for where they want to get to this year. I have also really enjoyed working with the Art, Design and Technology department looking at T&L, QA and Curriculum planning.

After my secondment to Whitley in the summer term of 2021 I was looking forward to heading back there this term. However, a transformation had taken place over the summer which saw the launch of Meadow Park School. It is so impressive to see how much hard work has gone in to launch the new school for September and it is great to be part of this exciting journey. The staff team at Meadow Park are so dedicated to making the new school a success and I have really enjoyed visiting lessons, meeting with colleagues and getting to know students and staff. I have been looking at QA of T&L and meeting a number of subject leaders to look at curriculum planning.

With co-construction a core value of our trust I was delighted to facilitate subject leaders to plan and lead a wide range of successful co-construction meetings in secondary. It is an exciting time for all colleagues to be working together to support, share good practice and co-develop subject areas across the schools. Thanks to everyone for their work on this. Having the co-construction groups for SEND and KS3 Assessment as well working across both our primary and secondary schools shows what a positive experience it can be working together and I look forward to more of this throughout the year.

"The schools in Finham Park Multi-Academy Trust are proud of their constantly evolving curriculum and the opportunity to work in a co-constructive way and ALL schools in the MAT have a responsibility to invest in this fundamental pillar of our philosophy." From the FPMAT co-construction Terms of Reference

Claire Denton – Director of Primary Education



What a busy and productive half term that has passed in the blink of an eye. Allow me to start by passing on my thanks to all the schools within the Trust I have visited and have extended me a very warm welcome. With particular thanks to Lillington Nursery and Primary School, Pearl Hyde Community School and everyone at the MAT offices as these are the places I have been primarily based. There is so much celebrate in each of our schools however, I have endeavoured to pick some highlights.

At Pearl Hyde seeing children access their newly built Phiz Lab to complete science experiments has been joyful, I was lucky enough to be part of a lesson exploring and categorising materials with year 1 and 2 children. We carried out an experiment testing absorbent and waterproof materials, that was a wet day! The discussion that followed defining and remembering key vocabulary was impressive.

At Lillington I have been spending some time in EYFS. Lillington has provision for 2-year olds, a nursery and a reception class. There has been a fantastic transformation in the learning environment and all three areas not only look amazing but encourage children to enquire about the world around them, developing their language skills. It is notable that there is thread running through all of the learning areas showing a consistent approach but also progressive challenge and new areas to explore as children develop from age 2-5. We have been working on improving children's fine motor skills with a range of opportunities from writing in glitter, using tweezers to chocolate scented playdough!

I am looking forward to a new half term as part of Finham Park MAT, visiting more schools an getting to know more staff and children.

Matt Gaynon – Secondary Support and Innovation Leader



It's been a fantastic half term and I have been so grateful to the staff at Meadow Park, Finham Park 2 and the MAT offices for welcoming me into their organisations and making me feel like part of their team from day one. The amazing transformation to Meadow Park in such a short period of time has been a big highlight of the term so far. From the new signage to new systems and processes to support the students, the start has been incredible.

With lots to celebrate and share I've picked out a few examples from Finham Park 2 and Meadow Park as particular highlights.

Working closely with Mark Werner at Finham Park 2 it was great to be involved in the launch of the learning group. The group quickly established a clear focus to look at "intentional monitoring" processes as a strategy for effective responsive teaching and developing a framework for well-planned lessons in their first meeting. It was then so great to see this group of very committed and excited teachers go out to their classrooms to trial these strategies, ready to report back. I am sure that these approaches will quickly become key parts of the teaching and learning strategies in place at Finham Park 2 in the days and weeks to come.

At Meadow Park the focus has been around the establishment of the "house" pastoral structure. The introduction of 4 houses, Fulmen, Sol, Lunar and Orbis plus the 6th form house Stellae is already making a big impact at the school. I am fortunate to be working alongside the new heads of house and deputy heads of house to embed the routines and systems. It is so nice to see the pride that students and the staff at Meadow Park are taking in the house they are in.

Emma O'Toole – Primary Support and Innovation Leader



This first half term of the year has flown by. I have been working in all three of the primary schools and as part of the new Educational Development team, which is brilliant to be part of. In just a few weeks there is already so much to celebrate, and these are some of the memorable experiences.

At Finham Primary the children in year 3 have been learning all about rivers. They have been finding out all about a river's source, mouth, and tributaries. They have been comparing the River Severn and the River Nile. I was particularly impressed with their prior knowledge and use of key vocabulary in discussions. In reception the children have been learning to orally retell the story of the Gingerbread Man using a text map and actions to help them internalise the story, which they are retelling confidently and enthusiastically.

At Lillington, Year 1 have made super progress in maths learning all about place value using various concrete materials, pictorial representations, and abstract symbol, the CPA approach. They have begun to record the answers to arithmetic questions in their maths journals, remembering to put 1 digit in each square, and are enjoying being the teacher and marking their own work.

I had a very interesting day accompanying a group of children to the APF forestry, woodland arboriculture show at the Ragley Hall Estate. The children learnt about how woodlands are managed, and had the opportunity to observe chainsaw carving, shire horse logging, and exciting tree climbing competitions.

At Pearl Hyde it has been brilliant to see the children developing their reading skills through reading a range of high quality, diverse, challenging texts. As part of Black History Month, they have been reading about Rosa Parks, Catherine Johnson, and Michelle Obama and thinking about their impact on society and why they are remembered.

I am looking forward to continuing working in the primary schools next half-term and being involved in some exciting projects.

Out and About

Kingswood Activity Centre

Our Year 8 students were treated to a brilliant treat right at the start of term – a day at Kingswood Outdoor Pursuits Centre. The coach arrived very early to collect us, and despite much traffic (!) we were eventually in the heart of Staffordshire to start our exhilarating day. First up was archery at which I discovered that we have some very talented bowman amongst us! After this we undertook 'nightline', an obstacle course in the dark. This really tested the teamworking and communication skills of our young people! After lunch we took part in caving, and finally the zip line. Mrs Kerr and Mr Bolatti (happily) demonstrated how safe it was and were swiftly followed by all 30 of our Year 8 students. It was an amazing day which we will definitely do again.



Six the Musical

What is the best way to learn about the life and times of the six wives of Henry VIII? Go and see 'Six the Musical'! 40 students were nominated for their excellent attitude to learning and invited to attend this musical production at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry. It was absolutely amazing – a pop concert sung and performed by arguably the most famous spouses of all time. All of the students were singing along and completely engaged. If only all 'lessons' could be like this!



Harry Potter & the Cursed Child

A group of our Harry Potter aficionados were lucky enough to experience to an extravaganza of a trip to London. We left school at 8.00am and arrived in a marginally overcast Covent Garden at around 11am. After a bit of culture, sightseeing and lunch we made our way to the Palace Theatre to watch the first part of Harry Potter & the Cursed Child. I cannot say anything of the story for fear of Ministry of Magic repercussions, but safe to say the stagecraft and story were phenomenal. In between shows we paid a customary visit to Foyles bookshop, and a popular fast-food outlet! The second part of the show did

not disappoint, with spectacular special effects and a brilliant ending. We caught the coach back to school with some very tired but very happy students.



Godiva Day Parade

We were delighted to have been invited to take part in the city's annual Godiva Day procession. Twelve students from Finham Park 2 were selected to carry banners representing the ethnic diversity of Coventry. The parade was incredibly colourful and students resplendent in their smart uniforms. It was an honour to be involved.



Phoenix Rise

A number of our students continue to be involved in the filming of new BBC programme '@phoenix Rise'. The latest day of filming really went to show that life on screen isn't all glitz and glamour! The students were being filmed at a football match that is to be set in July, but was filmed on a cold, wet and windy day in September. Umbrellas, coats and hot water bottles were on hand all day and whipped away at the last minute to give a convincing scene! And in between takes? School work (and warming up!)



International School Activities

Paris 2024

Following on from our work with Zambia on the Commonwealth Games, we have now started work towards our part in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. We will continue to work with our cluster partners; Earlsdon Primary, Moseley Primary, Corpus Christi, and Riverbank. Our first even of the year was held here at Finham Park 2. Activities included team sports, run by our very own student leaders, a dance workshop, and a logo design session. The best logo designed will be chosen to go onto our Paris 2024 t-shirts.

We are looking forward to our next meeting, when we will some Christmas food for some very special sporting guests!



German Partnership

This term we have started work on an international peace project with Riccarda-Huch-Schule in Kiel, Germany. Our students are combining together, with some from Finham Park, to work towards both the Coventry Peace Award, and a UNESCO Peace Education award. The work so far has been based around sharing our thoughts on peace, writing letters to our overseas peers, and making introductory videos of the Coventry Peace Trail. We are looking forward to continuing this relationship and meeting up with our friends from Germany when they visit in June of next year.



And finally.....

Finham Park 2's second Guide Dog puppy, Cici, has just officially qualified as a working Guide Dog. She will be supporting a young college student in her day to day life. Well done, Cici!



'Forest Friday' - Outdoor Learning

The benefits of outdoor learning are enhanced personal and social communication skills and increased physical health. Research has shown an increase in academic results and a higher motivation to learn, and problem solve. It has also been shown to improve behaviour in class. Outdoor learning can reduce stress in children resulting in a better well-being. In Reception we have spent our first few Forest Friday sessions learning our rules and exploring Autumn.

We have learnt the 'stick rule', if a stick is longer than an arm, we need a friend to help us. This is linking to our maths curriculum comparing lengths. Children collected sticks and compared their lengths with other children in the class.



During our whole class times, we have been learning our fire pit rules. Once children have learnt to not walk across the fire pit, then we will be able to have a real fire with marshmallows. The children have been practising their manners, saying please and thank you to the teachers as they are invited to collect items from the fire pit.

The children have really enjoyed exploring Autumn whilst being outdoors. We have been on an Autumn walk, learnt the song 'Autumn Leaves are Falling Down' and sorted leaves. This links to Knowledge and Understanding of the World by exploring the seasons and maths in terms of sorting and matching.



In Nursery we have used our senses to explore our woodland area, seeing what we can find and what different objects feel like. We are also searching for minibeasts linked to the story 'Superworm'. Over the coming weeks we can't wait to explore our outdoor area more to find signs of Autumn.

EYFS Team, Finham Primary School





Meadow Park School named BBC CWR's Star School



Students were hitting the airwaves on BBC CWR's Breakfast Show thanks to Meadow Park School being named Star School of the Week at the end of September.



One student, Maria, explained how settling in as a Year 7 had been so much easier than she had thought – and that everyone had been hugely supportive as she took the big step from primary school through to secondary school.

Liam also talked about our new House system which is helping us to provide even more pastoral support and leadership opportunities. Liam is perfectly placed to talk about this as he came up with the names for them.

Aadi (Year 8) had this to say: "It was thrilling and at the same time exciting to know people across the West Midlands would hear the stories of our Meadow Park School."

Meadow Park School's first Open Evening

Meadow Park School is a fantastic school in Whitley, Coventry.

This is an exciting time for our school. The first examination results since the pandemic show that we are amongst the most improved schools in the city. With a new Headteacher, outstanding outdoor space, an innovative curriculum and a fantastic new programme of clubs and enrichment activities – the future is very bright indeed.

We are also further raising our ambitions and aspirations for each and every student, which is why we have also launched our new vision and identity.

Meadow Park School is a thriving community where we work tirelessly to ensure that every student grows and succeeds.



Meadow Park School opened its doors to prospective parents for our first Open Evening under our new name.

Parents and Year 6 pupils heard from the Headteacher, MAT CEO and the Chair of Governors. They then listened to two students talk about their experiences at the school whilst they modelled our new uniform, which will launch in September 2023.

Visitors were able to collect our prospectus and explore the school, visiting classrooms that were full to bursting with wonderful activities and examples of student work, ably demonstrated by our enthusiastic teachers.

Keerthana (Year 9) said: "It was very interesting to hear the opinions of the current year 5 and 6 pupils. Whilst taking them around the school, quite a

number of them asked me how I felt when I started year 7. Then they told me they wanted to be independent as soon as possible when they start year 7 (of course at our Meadow Park school)."



Whole school 'International Dot Day' collaboration at Pearl Hyde Primary School.

On September 15th, 2022, our school community celebrated **International Dot Day**.



Author and illustrator, Peter H. Reynolds released his book 'The Dot' on September 15th, 2003. In this book, the main character, a little girl named Vashti, felt that she couldn't draw and was reluctant to put pencil to paper. Her art teacher would not accept that. "Just make a mark, and see where it takes you," the teacher responded. Vashti made a small dot on her paper. When Vashti returned to the classroom the next day, she was surprised to see that her paper with the dot upon it had been displayed upon the classroom wall. She was so proud of her work that she then started creating drawings with different kinds of dots, and her confidence flourished. At the end of the story, Vashti passes on words of encouragement to another child who presents with the same self-doubt, and thus the story continues. This story provided the inspiration for International Dot Day.

At **Pearl Hyde** we are keen to nurture this self-confidence and faith in one's own creative abilities and recognise that any form of recorded work begins with just that initial mark upon a blank page. That tiny mark is the first step. On the afternoon of the 15th September, the whole school devoted themselves to creating dots and marks. We experimented with mark-making techniques in our sketchbooks, then went on to create coloured dots and circles for our whole school display. Just like the anonymous art teacher, we aim to encourage our pupils and give them the confidence to 'have a go.'

Mark-making in Year 1 sketchbooks.



Some brilliant individual dot designs...



All of our creations were displayed together at the end of our afternoon and we are very proud of our rainbow of dots!



Whole school hall display - Pearl Hyde Primary School.

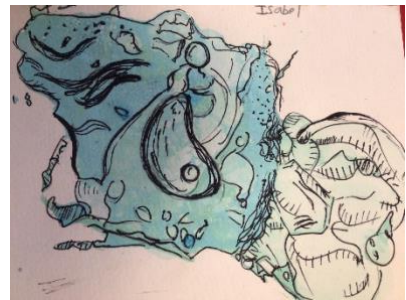
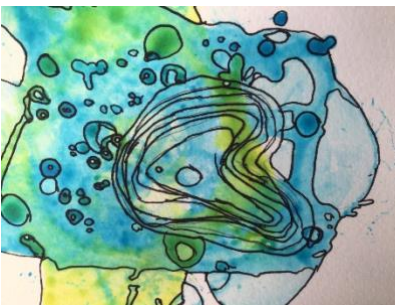
This year at Pearl Hyde Primary School, all of our individual classes have been given a sea creature name. On transition day in July, we introduced the children to their new class identity via a class reading book, then set about creating some artwork based upon our animal. Some of us just had a tricky time deciding which art design to plump for (I settled on large mosaic dolphins!) whereas other staff members were faced with a more difficult challenge (I'm thinking of the lobsters and anemones in particular.) Ideas were bounced around and then we all set off with our usual gusto and aplomb. This week we have had the pleasure of assembling the display across our huge hall wall, and we are beyond delighted with the result.

This is our school...



Art work from Turtle, Starfish, Seahorse, Dolphin, Octopus, Anemone, Lobster, Jellyfish, Seahorse, Orca and Oyster classes.

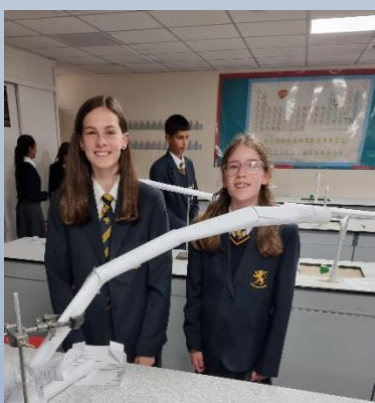
A special shout out to these amazing designs using pen and ink in Oyster class.



Mandy West, Year 1&2 Dolphin Class



Rehearsals have begun for our next Drama production which will be Annie Jr. The drama department were absolutely overwhelmed with the talent of the 100+ students who came along to audition. Watch this space!



STEM club

Science staff have been delighted and overwhelmed by the huge turn out for STEM club this year – over 50 students! There are lots of exciting activities planned.



Kennedy and Mr Walker. The resulting thought-provoking presentation was shown to all year groups in mentor time.

Students from Y7-12 stepped up to take part and record our Black History Month assembly with Mr





Remembering the Queen

Staff and students at Finham Park marked the death of Queen Elizabeth II with a communal silence and moment of reflection to honour the 70 years' service she gave to our country.

Music Mark

We are proud to announce that Coventry Music would like to celebrate our fantastic Music department and the value that we place on music at Finham Park, and has invited us to become a Music Mark School.



PROUD TO BE A
MUSIC MARK
SCHOOL
2022 - 2023

Open Evening

Open Evening was a fantastic showcase of all the very best of Finham Park School. We had amazing student helpers from tour guides (including those who offered tours in other languages from Russian to Polish!), those in departments, and of course our phenomenal Head Student Team who were there to meet and greet parents and prospective students and answer all their questions.





APF Exhibition

On Thursday 22nd September children from Key Stage 2 attended the APF Exhibition at the Ragley Estate in Warwickshire. The APF Exhibition was the UK's largest forestry, woodland, arboriculture, fencing and biomass show.

Children from Lillington had a fantastic opportunity to learn about what happens in a modern, working woodland. They got to see first-hand what goes on in a woodland, where timber comes from and the uses it can be put to as well as the vital role trees and woods play in the environment and helping to reduce climate change.



The children also got to see some of the state-of-the-art machinery and equipment that is used in forestry and arboriculture and saw some of the career opportunities that exist in forestry.

During the morning session, the children explored the site alongside two guides from the forestry commission. They talked through some traditional woodland practises that showed how working in woods has changed over time. We also saw a chain-saw carving competition in which competitors had to carve an animal within a 30-minute time limit. There were some impressive carvings! Other activities the children saw included tree climbing, tree rescue, axe throwing, horse logging and the World Pole Climbing Championships.



It was an exhausting day – there was a 2km exhibition route - but the children had a good experience of how woodland is worked and managed. Here are some photos showing some of the activities the children experienced.



Mat Holt



Music

On October 5th, music tutors from Coventry Music came to show year 7 students the joys of playing an instrument.

The school already has an established relationship with Coventry Music, which has been built up over the past 5 years alongside our work with the National Youth Orchestra. The school has lots of visiting music teachers, who teach strings, woodwind, brass, piano and voice every week in school. Unusually, all instrumental tuition is paid for by the school and instruments are provided by Coventry Music, meaning that this really is an opportunity available to anyone.

The Coventry Music tutors did workshops throughout the day and brought over 120 instruments with them, meaning that everyone could try out violin, cello, flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet and trombone. They also worked with our young people on basic musical skills like rhythm work.

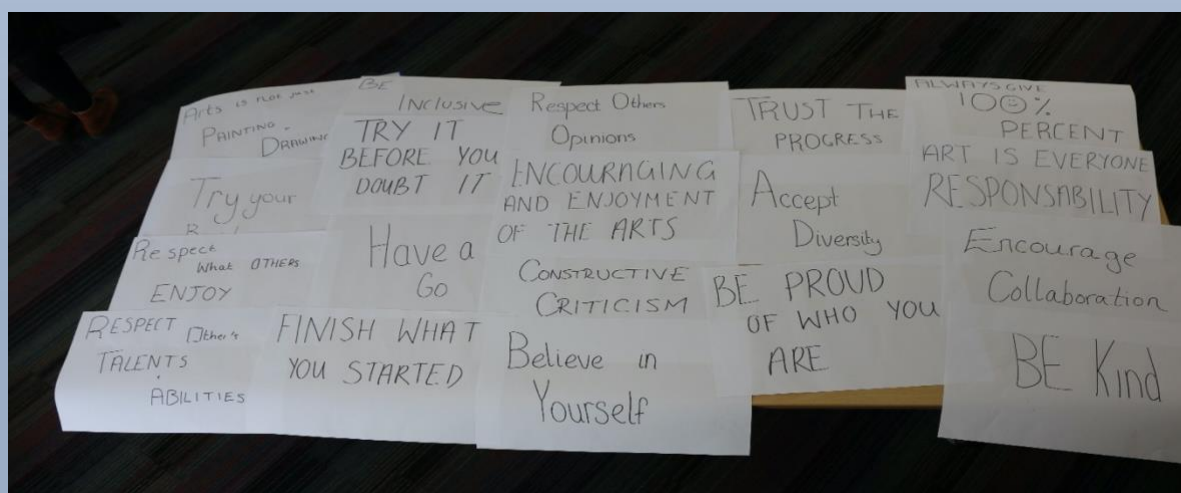
The staff involved have already had lots and lots of requests to start lessons. If you would like your child to start lessons then please contact Mr Sanford-Casey on:
dsanford@lynghallschool.co.uk





On October 12th, Lyng Hall hosted the Coventry Junior Arts Council. The aim of the council is to promote collaboration in the arts between Coventry schools, and representatives from several primary schools attended. The event was led by 9 members of Lyng Hall's student college. They gave a presentation on everything that goes on within the arts at Lyng Hall and then encouraged the young people from other schools to share updates from their own settings.

They also showed the respect charter that we created in school last year as inspiration for a Junior Arts Council charter. The schools worked together to create an overview of what that charter might look like, with striking statements such as 'try it before you doubt it'. Mrs Scott also made an appearance to run a fantastic physical theatre workshop. Feedback from teachers and pupils was very good - they were especially impressed with our student leaders.

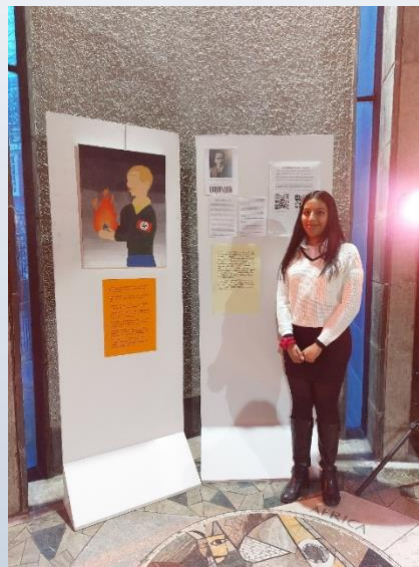
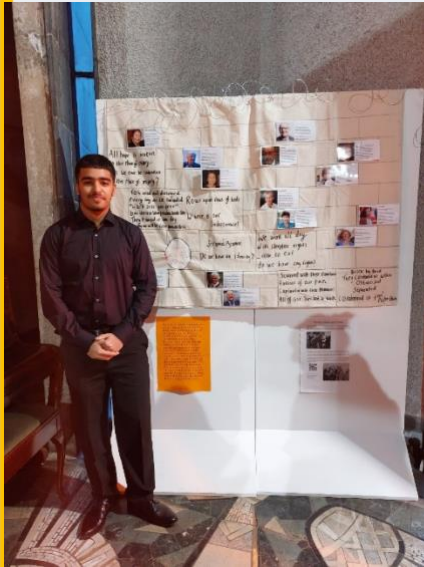


**“One Day” –
A contemplation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
By Miss. Hagan and students of 11M**



What came first, the flame or the phoenix? The answer, a never ending cycle, a series of death after death, patterns throughout history. The flame that burns bright even in death and what is to come of it. The flame stolen from the Gods themselves in Greek mythology with a tale that ended in another circle. Prometheus who stole the fire and his infamous punishment of being chained to a cliff, a giant eagle eating his liver by day and him growing it back by night just for the same thing to happen each morning. The phoenix who dies again and again only to face it all again each morning. The phoenix, like our history, is a repeating cycle, and will travel with us through one part of the worst pattern of ordeals mankind has ever faced- the Holocaust.





The flame that ignites passion, and the phoenix who grows from it in confidence. Who uses its knowledge to adapt to our ever-changing world, and learns and grows with every life. For, you see, to die again and again means to be born again each time: anew. It means to take what we have learnt and change with the world- to learn from our mistakes and say "never again" and to mean it. To practice compassion in our day-to-day lives, recognise our privileges and biases, and to make a difference. To ignite our inner phoenix and constantly learn more, to come back from hardships and allow it to make us stronger as people and communities. One day, we will be. One day, our human rights will protect everyone on our planet because of our impact. One day; rebirth.

On Monday 31st January, it was my privilege to host our students' exhibition in the Chapel of Unity, in Coventry Cathedral. I am incredibly proud of the work, empathy and collaboration the students have invested into a project that began in October 2021. Coventry City of Culture and The British Council teamed up and have been working with some of our students to produce work bringing the issue of Human Rights to life. Through the Autumn term, they were dedicated in their research and successfully delivered a powerful education seminar to a number of schools in Zambia. Building on from this research, they have then been in the process of designing and creating an art installation which articulates their interpretation of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The artworks will ultimately come together and form a new digital resource for schools and young people that will be made available internationally, inspiring future creative



learning around the world. It will both animate the Declaration, promote the importance of creative responses to the fundamental question of human rights, and above all provide a practical resource and guide to future groups engaging with the issue.

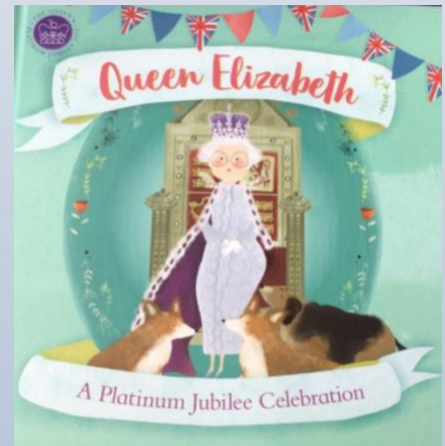
This project has encouraged them to explore challenging ideas that have forever shaped human history. Their creative articulation of these concepts has inspired me – the exhibition is being displayed until 26th February. I would encourage you to visit and be inspired also. A significant number of schools across the city have already visited on a school trip to reflect on the thoughts, and work, of our students. Working alongside them, hearing their thoughts and interpretation of history, gives me a significant amount of safety when I consider my future, that these young people will be the shapers and creators of that world. Have you ever pondered the thought: One Day?



Remembering Queen Elizabeth

Upon hearing the sad news of Queen Elizabeth's passing, at Pearl Hyde Primary we decided to take time to reflect, celebrate and give thanks to our Queen. We began the day reflecting on her life during a whole school assembly and watching a video about her reign as our monarch.

This period of reflection continued in class by reading 'Queen Elizabeth: A Platinum Jubilee Celebration, where the children were able to learn new and interesting facts about the Queen, what she did during her life, for our country and the commonwealth. The children were eager to learn and ask questions about what would happen next and who the new monarch would be.



In Year 3 and 4 to celebrate her life, the children wrote meaningful words to describe her including loyal, kind and outstanding. These words were then used to complete the sentence 'Thank you for being...'. Finally, they were put together to create a piece of artwork which will remain in the corridor until the coronation of King Charles III.



In Years 5 and 6, we all attended the assembly, where we learned about all of the things that Queen Elizabeth has given us over her reign.

When we got back into the classrooms, we reflected on the Queen's reign and all that she achieved during her 70 years. We talked about how Queen Elizabeth II had been an influential and aspirational role model to millions of people around the globe. We also discussed her dedication to the armed forces and how she led them with such strength and compassion. The children went on to learn about the Queen's role during WWII and how she put herself forward for active duty as an engineer and spoke to the children of the

nation on the radio. The children also remembered her fondly from her Jubilee scene with Paddington Bear and talked about how warm and funny Queen Elizabeth II had been.

Once we had collected our thoughts and feelings around the Queen's passing, the children decided that they would like to write letters of thanks.

Here are some of the things our children wrote:

'Thank you for serving our country, not only us, but all around the world. You will be missed by all of us.'

Kairan, Year 5



'Thank you for making the people of our country happy, especially in times of darkness. Your 70 years on the throne will always be remembered. We hope you rest in peace.'

Kulthum, Year 5

'The amount of time and dedication you have given to us is amazing. It is unbelievable that you've ruled for 70 years! You are an inspiration for everybody because you never gave up. Enjoy as many marmalade sandwiches as you want. Thank-you ma'am, for everything.'

Coral, Year 6

'Aberdeen is where your family home is, it's also where I was born. Isn't it a beautiful place? I lived there for three years. I even had a small Scottish accent! Thank you everything you did for our country, giving and attending charities, working hard during the war, representing our country around the world and for giving all of your time.'

We are so proud to have had you as our reigning Queen.

Thank you.

Zara, Year 6



Thank-you Ma'am, For Everything



Welcome to Year 1!

This half term Darwin class have been settling into the new rules and routines of Year 1! The children have been working hard to build their independence in all new lessons and making a great start in their books!

In Maths we have been exploring place value, using various concrete resources including cubes, tens frames and counters to support our learning. Darwin have begun to use their Maths journals to answer arithmetic questions and are even marking them themselves! We are enjoying using the White Rose books to answer our questions and having a good attempt at reasoning and problem solving questions.



In English Darwin have explored the story 'Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge'. We learnt about lists and captions and used this learning to create a memory basket of our own. We used toolkits to help us remember the key components needed for successful lists and captions.



In Humanities we have been exploring our 'Childhood' topic. We began our topic playing various playground games from the 1950s including duck, duck goose, hopscotch and tig! We've created timelines and explored special memories of our own.

In Science Darwin are enjoying finding out about everyday materials. So far we have been on a materials hunt and are learning all about natural and human-made materials. Soon we will complete an investigation to find the best material to create bunting.

Recommended Reads for Autumn



Pick A Story – Sarah Coyle & Adam Walker-Parker Farshore 3+

The best picture books can be read time and time again - with this you read a different story each time. Vincent's dog has disappeared, what has happened to him? Well, that's for you to decide – Pirates? Aliens? Lost in the jungle? Can you make the right choices to reunite them? Will you find your favourite story?

Space Blasters – Katie & Kevin Tsang & Ay Nguyen Farshore 6+

Good novels for younger readers are sometimes hard to find. This is perfect for those early readers (and older readers too). Suzie's inventions aren't always the successes that she planned ... When she invents the Super 3DTV Gizmo, she ends up being transported into her favourite TV show 'Space Blasters'. Will her inventions finally find a use? Can she save the day?



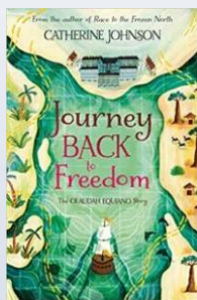
Alex Neptune, Dragon Thief – David Owen Usborne 8+

The perfect book to hook in those reluctant readers. For as long as Alex Neptune can remember, the ocean has been trying to kill him. So, he's not too happy when a bunch of sea creatures drag him to the abandoned aquarium on the hill, where an imprisoned water dragon needs his help but how can he say no to a magical creature?

Mouse Heart - Fleur Hitchcock Nosy Crow 9+

A historical murder mystery set in the heart of a theatre community. With fantastic characters and a mystery that will keep you guessing until the exhilarating climax. Mouse shows us that the right thing to do isn't always the easiest to do, especially when others are making it harder.



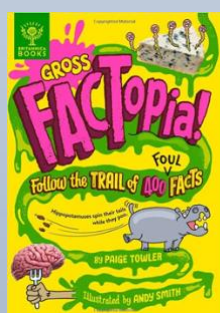


Journey back to Freedom – Catherine Johnson Barrington Stoke

A super-readable format, which is great for dyslexic or less confident readers, or for reading aloud. From the horrors of the slave trade to a book that changed the world, Catherine Johnson celebrates the incredible life of Olaudah Equiano in this gripping true story. Journey Back to Freedom focuses on Equiano's early life, demonstrating the resilience of the human spirit and one man's determination to be free.

Which Way to Anywhere – Cressida Cowell Hodder Children 8+

From the bestselling author of How to train Your Dragon comes an out of this world adventure. Cressida Cowell is back with a new adventure that is bound to excite readers everywhere. Twins K2 and Izzabird and sworn to secrecy about their family's magic but when their little sister is kidnapped, they have to let the cat out of the bag and enlist the help of their step siblings.



Gross Factopia! – Paige Towler Britannica Books

Follow the trail of 400 foul facts, that kids will love. Did you know that sloths poo only once a week? Or that poo from crocodiles was sometimes used as make-up in ancient Rome? Poo from the lac bug is used in jellybeans and other shiny sweets. Welcome to Gross FACTopia! Follow your curiosity (and your nose) through this ridiculously revolting world of facts!

Birdsong by Katya Balen Barrington Stoke 8+

A fantastic new novella for reluctant readers from Katya Balen, author of October, October which won the Yoto Carnegie Medal in 2022. There is music everywhere – if you know how to listen ... Birdsong tells the moving story of a girl unable to play her flute after a devastating car crash and she retreats from the music she's always loved. Then she meets Noah, who shows her the blackbirds' nest hidden in the scrubland near their flats. As their friendship grows, the blackbirds' glorious song reignites Annie's passion for music. But when tragedy strikes again, will her fragile progress be put at risk?



Emma O'Toole – Primary Support and Innovation Leader