



Girton Glebe Newsletter

Issue 7

Friday 11 December 2020

Reflections on the Autumn Term

The return to school in September was a challenging transition for all, but reflecting on the last 15 weeks has been a hugely exciting experience when you see all the incredible work that our pupils have achieved since the summer break.

Now, as we head into the Christmas period, our staff and pupils can feel incredibly proud of what they have achieved in such unusual circumstances. Our pupils continue to display the most inspiring, resilient learning attitudes, producing amazing work in all areas of the curriculum. As for our staff, I cannot thank them enough for their dedication, flexibility and commitment in delivering such consistently high standards in teaching in ever-changing circumstances.

The governing body and FOGG have continued to provide incredible support to Girton Glebe and Eastern Learning Alliance has provided such strength and facility in their first term with us.

I would like to extend huge thanks to our incredible pupils and our fabulous parent community for their continued support. The situation since March has been incredibly challenging and the patience and understanding that parents and staff have shown has been truly incredible, as schools across the country navigate ever-changing times without a blueprint for doing so.

We appreciate that the uncertainties that this has presented cause significant challenges for us all. It has been an incredibly stressful period for parents and staff alike and, as we move forward into the New Year, I request that we continue to bear these factors in mind and continue to communicate with shared understanding and respect.

Staffing Update

Some of you may be aware that, for the last four weeks, Ms Cansdale has been unwell and absent from Girton Glebe. Unfortunately, Ms Cansdale remains unwell and, during her period of absence, has made the decision to retire from the teaching profession.

I know that Ms Cansdale will not have taken this decision lightly and we wish her all the very best in her future life outside of the classroom. I would like to take this

opportunity to thank Ms Cansdale for her service to Girton Glebe over the last five years and to wish her a safe and speedy recovery. For the remainder of this academic year, Ash Class will continue to be taught by Miss King and supported by Mrs Tate.

School Development

Last week's staff meeting focused on the redesign of our long-term curriculum plan, with staff spending time reviewing the sequence of topics for single year group structures.

This week, the session (which was held virtually) was split between KS1 and KS2 staff. KS1 colleagues spent time completing additional phonics training, whilst KS2 staff began initial training for Classics for All, which includes the introduction of Latin to our pupils.

Contact Tracing over Christmas

I would like to draw your attention to the email that was circulated earlier this week relating to school closures and contact tracing as it includes two key pieces of information:

Please be aware that the final day of the Autumn term is now **Thursday 17 December**.

The email also included an **emergency contact number** and timetable for how and when parents should inform us of a **positive Covid test result** during the Christmas break.

An additional copy of this letter will be uploaded to the Covid tab of the school webpage for ease of access.

Winter Grant Scheme

Information was also shared this week regarding the Winter Grant Scheme. This grant is intended to provide a range of support to families when schools will be closed during the Christmas break and over February half-term.

Vouchers will be issued directly to parents and carers between December 16 and December 18.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/coronavirus/winter-grant-scheme> and via the Covid tab on the school webpage.

Oak Class

An Oak Class update from Mr Austin:

The children in Oak Class have, as ever, been working very hard over the last couple of weeks. They were very pleased to be able to share their class poem, 'The Emotions of War', with their families at home earlier this week and, in spite of the sometimes erratic camera angles, seemed to enjoy seeing themselves on screen. Fired up by this success, they have another poetic treat in store next week for those at home.

I am thoroughly looking forward to reading the children's latest pieces of written work (historical analyses of the Battle of the Somme) over the forthcoming weekend. They have engaged fully in their topic work this term and have produced some wonderful writing, inspired by their studies. In maths, we have been continuing to practise our reasoning skills, ensuring that while we do so we apply the arithmetical skills that we have mastered over the course of the term.

In art, the children have been working hard on producing some powerful portraits. We have also started to get into the Christmas spirit by producing class decorations and Christmas cards.

Willow Class

Willow news from Miss Jolly:

This week, Willow class have been working incredibly hard to finish all of our World War One work and the children have produced some wonderful leaflets and scrapbooks, as well as beautiful pieces of artwork and poetry. After reading a variety of WW1 poems by soldiers who fought in the war, the children have created their own, in memory of all those who sacrificed their lives in The Great War. Here is an excerpt from Harley's touching poem:

As the lightning flares shone in the air,
I thought to myself: This isn't fair

The war was starting to get haunting,
But to me, it was more daunting

As the five-nines dropped,
My ears popped
Then as the gas covered the air,
I didn't dare to breathe

As I was drunk with fatigue,
I fell to my knees
And said: "God, if I die,
Please remember me"

I have been incredibly impressed by all of Willow class' continued enthusiasm for their learning and their resilience in what has been a challenging, but very enjoyable first term. The children are very excited to share their work with you all next week - and even more excited for Christmas!



Cherry Class

Cherry news from Miss Pyle:

We have been very busy in Cherry recently. The children have really enjoyed their 'Gods and Mortals' topic this half term and have loved learning about the life and times in Ancient Greek.

Recently, they have written a recount of Daedalus and Icarus, finished their fantastic stories based on Theseus and the Minotaur and have written some gruesome recipes for 'something disgusting on toast' for the Minotaur. As you can imagine, we had lots of bizarre and grotesque things to feed him!

In maths, we are still working hard on speeding up our times tables. This week, we have been recapping addition and subtraction methods and applying them to word problems. We are also working hard to use the most efficient method depending on the numbers involved in the calculations.

This half term, the children's art skills have really improved and they have all produced some fantastic drawings using tone to make objects look 3D and realistic. It has been lovely to see their skills develop - well done all!

Lime Class

A Lime update from Mrs Knowler and Mrs Barber:

In Lime class recently, we have been busy practising our lines for a special virtual Christmas show - we hope you will enjoy it. In Muddy Maths, we made frames from sticks outdoors. Squares were lashed together with string and we gathered objects to make different arrays. We used a metre stick to measure the correct length and Mr Smart showed us how to cut with loppers!

We have been enjoying learning about the Romans and mosaics and even started writing letters to Apollo, who is a character in our storybook *Roman Diary, the journal of a Young Slave*. It is amazing how many amazing patterns there are in Roman mosaic pictures. It has been fun this half term but we are ready for a break now!

Birch Class

Birch news from Miss Evans:

A huge well done to Birch Class for all of their wonderful hard work throughout this term! The children have developed so many skills, both in their academic learning and about our Core Values and growth mindset.

After Christmas, we will be finishing off a piece of writing, which is our letters to the Queen. We will also be starting a new topic, which will be called 'Moon Zoom'. We will learn all about space, the planets and famous people who have travelled to space.

If your child is interested, they could look at some books about space or they could do some research on the internet about space travel ready to start the topic. I hope everyone has a happy and safe Christmas holidays and I look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

Maple Class

A Maple update from Mrs Cawley and Mrs Daw:

We want to begin by giving a BIG round of applause to Maple Class for all their hard work this term. They have shown perseverance, respect, compassion, and excellence every day. We are looking forward to some fun Christmas activities in the next week to get into the festive spirit.

During the last couple of weeks, Maple Class have been consolidating their addition and subtraction within 10 and working on comparing statements, i.e. $4 + 5 = ? + 3$.

In English, the children have been writing their own version of the dinosaur poem "Five Crazy Dinosaurs". They enjoyed reading the poem together and making actions. To add to the dinosaur fun, Maple Class have been drawing dinosaur fossils, and experimenting with different lines to create a range of imprints.

We want to wish all the Maple Class families a Very Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year. We hope you all have a restful holiday and look forward to welcoming the children back in January.

Ash Class

Ash Class news from Miss King:

Last week, Ash Class continued their Light and Dark topic, focusing on the Whatever Next! story. They created mind maps of their story ideas, enjoyed a space-themed finger gym carousel and produced some wonderful festive forest decorations during our Forest School session. One child commented, "I love coming to school".

This week, we have started our Christmas celebrations, which have included our surprise online Christmas event and other Christmas craft surprises! We have also been thinking about repeating patterns and learning the meaning of the Christmas story. We are really looking forward to our further celebrations next week!

FOGG Dates for your Diary

Please put the following dates in your diary for upcoming FOGG events:

Friday 8 January - Break the rules day

Sunday 10 January - FOGG Tree Shred

Thursday 28 January - Bags2School items collection

Further information regarding these events will follow.

Virtual Christingle

Please see the following Christingle announcement from St Andrew's Church:

This year's Christingle service is going online. We will be giving away free DIY Christingle bags outside the school gates after school on 16th and 17th December.

You can choose to join us on either 22nd December at 4pm or at 3pm on Christmas Eve from the comfort of your own home. All are very welcome! For more details and to sign up for the Zoom link, please visit

<http://bit.ly/christingle2020>

If anyone is missing singing Christmas carols this year then all are welcome to come and listen to some great recordings in the church from 10am-4pm from Monday 21st to Wednesday 23rd. For up-to-date information on what's happening please visit www.girton.church

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a safe, relaxing and wonderful Christmas. Best wishes to you and your families and I look forward to seeing you again in the New Year.

Thank you for your continued support,

Mr Andrew Spencer

Headteacher