



'The Phoenix' - Whitehouse News November 2018



Diary Dates

NOVEMBER

- **27th** - Milk Order for Term 2 issued.
- **28th** - Year 1 Health Appraisals.
- **28th** - Open Night for new Nursery & Year 1 pupils for Sept. 2019 from 5pm to 7pm.

DECEMBER

- **5th** - Year 1 Health Appraisals.
- **11th** - Foundation Stage Nativity @10am.
- **12th** - Key Stage 1 Nativity @ 10am.
- **18th** - Nursery Nativity at 9.15am.
- **19th** - Year 1 Health Appraisals.
- **20th** - Key Stage 2 Carol Service at 10am.
- **20th** - P.T.A. Disco..
- **21st** - Christmas Holidays begin! Early closure 12noon (Years 1 to 3) 12.15pm (Years 4 to 7).

JANUARY

- **4th**—Term begins on Friday 4th January .
- **7th**—'New Year, New You' Week.
- **8th** - 'Love for Life' Parent Workshop at 7pm. Certain year groups only (permission forms will be sent home).

Pastoral Care



Pupils' safety and care is our first priority. If you have any concerns we have a team of staff who are trained to support pupils and families. This team focuses on both child protection and wider pastoral support.

Team Leader:

Mrs R. Watson

Mrs Clifford (Early Years)

Mrs Spratt (Nursery)

Open Night

We would like to remind you about our Open Night on **Wednesday 28th November from 5pm to 7pm**. It is intended for parents who have a child/children starting Nursery or/and Primary 1 in September 2019. You are welcome to bring your child, tour the nursery unit and Primary 1 and 2 classrooms. Please pass this information on to any friends who have children starting school or nursery in September. Specific information regarding applications will be available that evening. The principal will be giving information talks at 5:30 and 6:30pm.

Year 6C have been working very hard this term!

In Literacy, we have been learning about different types of nouns. We learned that abstract nouns name ideas or concepts. These are things that are hard to describe because we cannot feel them with our senses. We wrote abstract noun poems comparing these concepts and ideas to things we can feel with our senses.



Love by Amber Higgins

Love is a piece to your puzzle.
It smells like a fully grown rose.
It tastes like a vanilla ice cream trickling down my throat.
It sounds like birds chirping at the tip of a tree.

Wealth by Noah Kelly

*Wealth is good and happy.
It smells like money and power.
It tastes like the turkey dinner you could buy with all your money.
It sounds like people cheering because they won the lottery.
It feels like the cold, hard metal of a pound coin.
Wealth lives in Simon Cowell's mansion.*



In Maths, we have been trialing a new programme called, 'Learning by Questions'. Each person in year 6 has a tablet. Our teacher can set us different maths tasks to complete on the tablet by giving us a code to type into the app. We answer the questions on the app and the teacher can see on her screen how we are getting on.



Questions for Learning is fun to do. It can also challenge you sometimes because there are lots of problem solving questions you have to think about.

Ben Gilmore



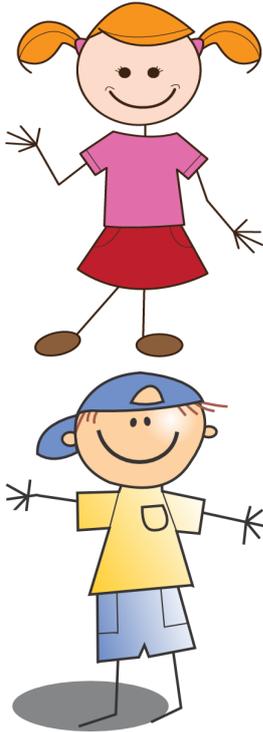
Questions for Learning is great because you can find out straight away if you got the answer right.
Annalaise Marshall

Questions for Learning is fun because we get to use a tablet to answer the questions. It is good to learn from different types of questions. There are some very tricky problem solving questions!

Chloe Nixon



Year 6H Bridge Project Work



We have been learning all about Rivers. We learned all about the Water Cycle and carried out a really cool experiment. I can tell you about the key features of a river. I really enjoyed writing a report on the Amazon River!

Brooke Johnston

I have enjoyed our topic work this term. I loved making our River Models which showed the key features of a river. Though, the best lesson was when we worked in groups to build a bridge out of spaghetti & marshmallows! It was lots of fun!

Lewis Thompson



'Step up for Pudsey' -

Children in Need Day

Friday 16th November

As always, we like to participate in the annual Children in Need campaign. This year our school council suggested an 'Odd Sock Day'.

Pupils had the opportunity to wear some creative coloured socks.

We were so impressed by the great display of colours and imagination. It was a super day and some teachers were able to incorporate the theme into their lessons.

As a school we were delighted to have raised over **£350** for this very worthwhile charity. In addition, we also supported the British Legion Poppy Campaign as well as our annual fitness charity day.



'New Year, New You'

Mon. 7th - Fri. 11th January 2019



Following on from the success of last year we look forward to bringing in the new year at Whitehouse in style. This will involve an array of activities aimed at encouraging healthy minds and bodies for 2019.

During the week we will offer fun and educational activities from nursery to Year 7. These will include activities in the following themes:

- Physical Fitness;
- Positive Mental Health;
- Healthy Eating;
- Aspirations;
- Safety (Road, Internet, Fire etc.)

Not only will this be highly educational but it will be lots of fun!

Some local organisations and businesses are supporting this week. The school are also investing funds into the project. We ask that all pupils donate **£3** with a maximum of **£6 for a family**. We would be grateful if this money could be brought in by Monday 10th December.

A booklet will be sent home soon outlining the plans for this January. A permission letter will also be provided.

This year dress up theme is 'Be Bright, Be Seen!'

Keep a lookout for the PDMU family Homework!

Blueprint 2020

September 2018/19 sees the sixth year of our dynamic six year school development strategy. This innovative and far ranging plan will bring our school to the next level in terms of learning and services to our community.

In this section we want to share some of our key strategic goals for the year ahead and then focus in on a few of the key innovations. Over the next year we will regularly report on what has been achieved and the new projects that we develop.

Strategic Leadership

To share good practice across the school and beyond to enhance staff development and pupils' attainment. This will include the development and coaching of curriculum leaders;

The continued development of Shared Education with St. James's Primary School. In particular, this will allow the schools to promote S.T.E.M. and Forest School learning as well as achieving 'Rights Respecting Schools' status;

To engage with community stakeholders to increase aspirations, attainment, early intervention and collaboration. This will include focused family learning support interventions.

Ethos

Implement and review a whole school wellbeing strategy;

Achieve the British Council's International School Award by June 2018;

Use the pursuit of the Eco Green Flag, by June 2019, as a means to educate our school community to be more eco friendly.

Learning and Teaching

90+% of pupils, in both, Literacy and Numeracy will achieve as expected or above;

November Update:

- This month our school leaders worked on developing the 'Thrive' project. Thrive is a partnership of schools and community groups in the area to achieve agreed goals. The key aims of the partnership are to improve across Newtownabbey:
Aspiration **Attainment** **Early Intervention** **Collaboration.**
- Our Eco-Team met with the Pastoral Care Team to discuss their ideas for our health and wellbeing promotion week 'New Year, New You.'
- Our STEM learning sessions with St James's Primary School have continued to be developed this term.

Pastoral Care Family SMILE Night



On Wednesday 17th October over 150 pupils and parents came along to watch a fantastic presentation of '**Jack and the Beanstalk.**'

While the pupils were enjoying the production we spent valuable time working with and consulting with parents on our pastoral care policies.

This included a focus on the Positive Discipline and Uniform Policy. Parents were then invited to ask questions and provide some feedback.

The school was delighted by the feedback from parents. There was an extremely high level of satisfaction in the work of the school.

The parents also attended the school's P.T.A. annual general meeting. The school was pleased that new parents volunteered to join the P.T.A.

Miss Blain, Chair of the P.T.A., congratulated the committee on their excellent work. She also thanked a number of members who had come to the end of their service.

World Diabetes Superhero Day



Year 5 Room 10 came to school dressed as Superheroes to mark World Diabetes Day. We wanted to show support to one our classmates who deals with diabetes on a daily basis. We really enjoyed the day.



'Keep Connected!'

If you have a computer or/and smart phone save our website to your favourites:

www.whitehouseps.co.uk

In addition please download the app **Schools NI**. Then go to **Antrim** and select our school.

By having this app you will be able to see our latest news (including photographs), view our calendar and read all recent letters that have gone home.

We are hoping to develop our e-services in a number of ways in the coming few terms:

- ◆ We would like to increase our app use to above 90%;
- ◆ In addition, to encourage more parents to sign up for emails so we can reduce our use of paper;
- ◆ We would hope to explore the use of an electronic payment system. We intend to send out an audit to assess if parents would be willing to sign up.

Talking Points: Attendance

Every month we would like to share an educational issue with our families. The need for parents and teachers to be on the 'same page' is so important to help our pupils reach their full potential. My hope is that parents would find this information useful and thought provoking.

This month we want to discuss the importance of high attendance. This year so far we have a very pleasing level of attendance. At present we have a 97.4% attendance rate.

Here are some facts and research about the link between attendance and achievement:

- 1 A child who is absent **a day of school per week** misses an equivalent of **two years of their school life**;
- 2 Research shows that **missing 10 percent** of the school negatively affects pupils' performance;
- 3 Poor attendance can **influence whether children read proficiently** by the end of Year 5;
- 4 90% of young people with absence rates below **85% fail to achieve five or more good grades of GCSE** and around **one third achieve no GCSEs at all**;
- 5 Poor examination results limit young people's options and **poor attendance suggests to colleges and employers that these students are unreliable**.

As a school we do not apologise for expecting high standards and challenging poor attendance. You can see from the research how important high attendance is for pupils' learning.

As a school we would strive for a 97% end of year attendance level. For each pupil **95% would be considered only satisfactory** (no more than 8 days off per year.)

We need to stress, however, that we accept there are very genuine cases when a child is ill or there are extraordinary circumstances when a child's attendance will be below 95%. **If this is the case then we as a school are very understanding and supportive.**

If your child's attendance falls below 90% you will be contacted and an intervention is likely to be applied. This can involve a tracking process and even the involvement of an Educational Welfare Officer.

A worrying issue is families taking **holidays during term time**. It is unfair on your child, disruptive for other pupils in the class (time taken to help your child/children catch up) and difficult for already very hard working teachers. Please try to avoid these holidays!

