

PRENTON PREPARATORY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2021

Issue No. 79



CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

This term we have seen some wonderful productions and performances from pupils of all ages across the school. It was a shame that we could not welcome our usual audiences into the School Hall but we hope you enjoyed the recordings of these productions.

The Foundation Stage pupils performed "Shine Star Shine!" The children looked lovely in their costumes and the confidence and enjoyment in performing at such a tender age was fantastic. They sang and performed excellently and we received many positive comments.

This year's Infant production of "A King is Born" which was a delightful portrayal of the Nativity. The children all performed beautifully, with confident voices and superb singing. Everyone who saw them commented that it was a lovely production.

The Junior Carol performance told the Christmas story through a narrative and song. The children's beautiful singing was a joy to hear and they really enjoyed putting the production together. We also greatly enjoyed putting together the whole school performance of "12 Days of Christmas" and it was lovely to see all the pupils involved.

The hard work and commitment of the staff in putting on these presentations is exceptional and much appreciated by all.

It was heartening that Father Christmas was able to visit the school this year for our Infant Christmas parties, it was lovely to see the delight on the children's faces! Conversely, it was a great shame that our Christmas Fair didn't go ahead but a HUGE thank you to everyone who supported the raffle.

As we move into the New Year could I remind parents that the home-school diaries should be the main method of communication between home and your child's teacher for day-to-day occurrences. Please ask your child to let their teacher know that they have a message and it will be responded to in a timely manner. Emails should be used for any more sensitive matters and to report daily absences.

PPS IN THE COMMUNITY

Although it has been a challenge to hold our usual charity events, once again Prenton Prep. has been actively working in the wider community. We were very pleased to welcome parents to our Carol Service in St. Saviour's Church and also delighted to collect £227.00 which has been sent to the NSPCC to help in the wonderful work they do to support children nationwide.

Wirral Food Bank was delighted to receive the donations collected at our Harvest time and we were proud to donate to such a worthy cause. It was also lovely to be able to support this worthy cause further through our annual MUFTI Day. We raised collected over a quarter of a tonne of donations, a staggering amount, which, I am sure will be put to great use. In preparation for Christmas, Year 4 have been doing a reverse Advent Calendar bringing in food items to be donated to charity. We were very pleased with the response to their charitable efforts so thank you everybody.

We are very proud to support and raise awareness of local and national causes and thank all parts of the school family for their generous contributions.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

We continue to have issues arising from un-named uniform items. Therefore, please would all parents ensure that all items of uniform are clearly and indelibly labelled with their child's name.

The children should continue to wear Winter uniform when we return for the Spring term, including sensible, flat black shoes and **black or navy coats** without coloured trim.

There have also been numerous issues of children arriving at school in incomplete uniform. As we aim to maintain high standards, please ensure that all children arrive at school each day in correct and complete uniform, including coats.



THESE UNPRECEDENTED TIMES

This term was expected to be more normal after four particularly challenging terms due to the pandemic. Indeed we have managed to get extra-curricular clubs and trips up and running again and school life has been more normal for the children.

Despite this Autumn 2021 has remained especially challenging for everybody; children, staff and families. However, I remain extremely proud of our school community and the way in which we have responded to the necessary changes.

I would like to thank every single one of our Prenton Prep. family for their ongoing support. You are all amazing and you make these times so much easier.

THANK YOU!!!

STAFF NEWS

Mrs. Roberts returned from her maternity leave in September, as did Miss Davies in November, and we were delighted to welcome them back and to hear all about their new lives as first-time mums! We would like to thank Mrs. Rowan McManus who did a sterling job covering for Mrs. Roberts. We have already welcomed her back into school on several occasions this term and hope to be able to do so in the future as well.

We have also been delighted to welcome Mrs. Liz Ellis, Mrs Carole Hayes and Mrs Suzanne Donaldson onto the Prenton Prep staff over the last term. Both ladies have joined our team of teaching assistants and already contributed very positively to the education of our pupils.

Mrs. Louisa Wilson has also joined the team as the "new Mrs. Dodd!" and has settled well into her duties as playground supervisor and domestic.



TRAFFIC ISSUES:

Over the last term we have, once again, had several complaints from our neighbours and parents of the school regarding parking issues and unsafe driving on Mount Pleasant at busy times.

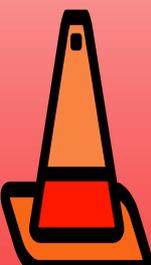
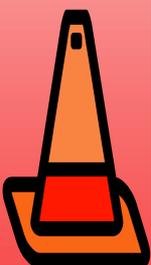
The safety of our children is of paramount importance to us all at Prenton Prep. and we ask that all parents consider the pupils arriving or leaving school at busy times. We do not want an incident to remind us of our responsibilities!

Also please ensure that, should the emergency services need access to School or any other part of Mount Pleasant they would be able to pass through. At present this is a genuine concern!

Please also park considerably as our neighbours are entitled to immediate access and exit from their own properties.

Another issue which has been raised again is that Nun Close is a private road and that this should not be used for school parking. I have been advised to warn parents that traffic wardens and police have been requested to monitor the situation in the future.

Also on this issue would parents please try to observe the unofficial one-way policy we have on Mount Pleasant at drop off and pick up times (passing with school on your right) as this makes life easier for all.





Foundation Stage News



PRE-SCHOOL NEWS

What a wonderful and fun filled term we have had in Pre-School. The children have all settled in so well and have made some lovely friendships. It is so nice to see new and old friendships blossom.

It was so lovely to get to know all about the children through our topic 'All About Me' at the beginning of the year. The children learnt all about each other's home lives, what things they have in common and what things make them different to each other. The children also learnt all about autumn. We went to Ashton Park in West Kirby for an Autumn Walk. The children were looking for all of the different signs of autumn. They noticed leaves of all different colours; red, orange, brown, yellow and even some gold leaves! They observed that lots of leaves had fallen on to the floor and could hear them rustling under their feet as they walked around the garden. The children also collected some leaves, acorns and pinecones and looked at these under magnifying glasses when they were back in school. The leaves which were collected were used to make some beautiful leaf wildlife pictures which are displaying in the classroom. The children also enjoyed focusing on the story, The Little Red Hen and became familiar with the story, it out brilliantly using the small world characters. Pre-School also completed some brilliant Little Red Hen writing, pencil control, shape work and even made some delicious homemade bread, just like the Little Red Hen.

Pre-School enjoyed learning about a number of different celebrations during Autumn 2. The children learnt about; Bonfire Night, Poppy Day, Diwali and Christmas. Some beautiful and creative arts and crafts have been made for each of the different celebrations.

It is also wonderful to see how much the Pre-School children have enjoyed learning their letter sounds this term. The children have loved our daily All Aboard Phonics sessions and are going to make excellent readers one day. It is so much fun jumping onboard the pirate ship at the beginning of each phonics sessions and pretending to be pirates!

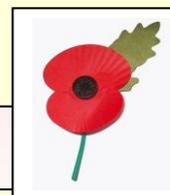
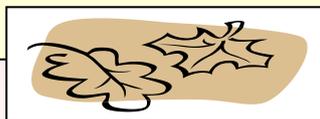
The Christmas performance was outstanding! The children enjoyed our rehearsals and worked so hard to learn all of the songs and accompanying actions. Although we were unable to perform to you all in our school hall, we hope you enjoyed the recorded version and it brought some festive cheer to your household! I am sure it will be a memory to be treasured for years to come.

Another highlight of our busy Autumn Term was the trip to Santa's Grotto at Gordale Garden Centre. All of the children were extremely well behaved and Father Christmas loved talking to all of the children, telling them all about the North Pole, his reindeer and how the toys are made by his elves. After a chat with Father Christmas and receiving a special present, the children sang a song to Father Christmas and his elves.

We have also welcomed back Miss Davies to Pre-School after her maternity leave. The Pre-School children have been so lucky to work with Mrs Taylor, Miss Jordan and Miss Davies this term.

I hope that everyone has a truly magical Christmas and New Year and I look forward to seeing you all again in January.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,
Mrs Roberts



KG CHRISTMAS NEWS

It is hard to believe that we are already at the end of the first half term for the children in KG. The children have adjusted well to the more structured routine, in KG and continued to work hard, despite all the sickness they seem to have experienced this term. Their hard work has shown in the progress they have made in their reading, writing and number work. They have also grown closer as a group and clear friendships are continuing to develop.

Celebrations and Festivals

Our topic this term has been Autumn, Winter, Celebrations and festivals. It is a good time of the year to cover this topic as there are so many celebrations and festivals for the children to discover. We began by celebrating the Hindu festival of Diwali, also known as the Festival of Light. We found out that in some ways it is very similar to Christmas, as it is a special time when families get together, dress up, enjoy special food and exchange gifts.

The children then learnt about the traditions of Remembrance Day. We talked about the significance of wearing a poppy and we were very impressed when all the children sat quietly to observe 2 minutes silence at 11 o'clock on the 11th of November.

More recently we have been celebrating the Christian Festival of Christmas. We have read many different versions of the Christmas story and of course, the children acted out the story for our nativity – "Shine Star Shine." They demonstrated how much they have grown in confidence during both performances of the nativity. It has been a busy term rehearsing for the nativity, but also an enjoyable term, because the children have been enthusiastic and excited about it right from the start. We have also found that performing the Christmas play enabled them to develop a greater knowledge and understanding of the Christmas story. We hope you enjoyed watching it, as much as the children enjoyed performing it.

Visit to Santa's Grotto, at Carr Farm

On Monday 13th December, we visited Santa in his Grotto at Gordale Garden Centre. The children wrote letters to Santa, which they posted in the special North Pole post box. Santa's elf met us at the door and took us into the Grotto. It was very big inside. Santa spoke to all of the children and gave them each a gift. The children had their photograph taken with Santa and we sang Jingle Bells and Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer. Santa checked his lists and said that all the children were on the good list but told them that to stay on the good list and get presents at Christmas, they have to continue to be good for their Mummy's, Daddy's and Teachers. Santa thanked the children for being so well behaved and said that he had really enjoyed himself, especially listening to them sing.

Next Term

Our topic will be Space and beyond. We will be learning about the solar system, space travel, the first landing on the moon and aliens. Hopefully, there will be a trip to the World Museum, to watch the Astronaut George Show. Further details will follow nearer the time.

We will continue to develop the cursive writing style and read on Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday every week. Phonics will focus upon keywords, decoding, rhyme, writing words as we hear them and building up sentences. In Maths we will be revisiting subtraction, addition and estimation and introducing doubling, halving and sharing and Number Bonds to 10.

We will continue to send home the weekend diaries. Please encourage the children to write in the diaries themselves, sounding words out and writing them as they hear them.

From January in addition to reading, I will also be introducing handwriting/phonics homework on a Monday and Maths on a Wednesday.

Please continue to encourage your child to practice fastening buttons and zips on clothing. Your support is very much valued.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.





Infant News



YEAR 1 NEWS

Year One enjoyed their trip to Conwy castle this term. We found out that the castle was built high up on the rock and painted white so that it could be seen for miles around. We walked up the ramp and saw the place where the drawbridge used to be. It was raised to try to prevent enemies from getting in. We found the groove in the wall which was where the portcullis used to be. This was lowered to keep people out.

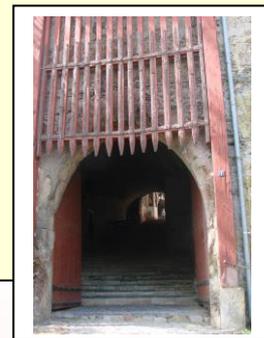
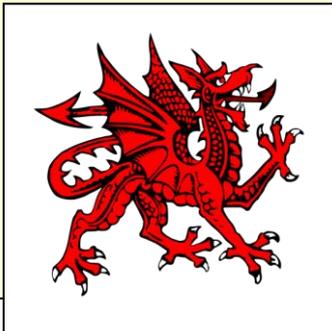
We climbed some more steps and looked at the view of the walls built around Conwy. Then we arrived at the main gatehouse to the castle. We saw the big holes in the walls where big beams were used to try to stop the enemies getting any further if they'd managed to get that far. There used to be a platform above the gatehouse, from which the soldiers would fire their arrows. They also threw hot tar and stones down through the holes.

When we were inside the castle we could see where the rooms used to be. There was a big oven in one room which was for baking the bread. The top of the bread was the best bit and was eaten by the king, queen and important people. The middle was eaten by the ordinary people and the bottom of the bread wasn't edible, so they used it for their plates. Then it was fed to the animals. We saw the great hall where they held their feasts. The important people sat on a table which was higher than the others.

We discovered that the most important thing in a castle is water and we looked at the well which was where the water for Conwy castle came from. There used to be another castle near to Conwy but it didn't have a well, so when enemies attacked it the people inside couldn't survive.

Then we came to another gatehouse which led to the rooms where the king and queen stayed when they visited their castle. They had their own chapel and the king would sit in a room above the chapel and look through a window to see what was going on. The queen had her special place to sit, too. It was an alcove with a window seat.

We looked at a model of the whole castle and walls as it used to be. Then it was time lunch in the queen's gardens.



YEAR 2 – Autumn 2021

Well what a busy term we have had in Year 2! The children settled into their routine quickly and with enthusiasm and motivation and have worked their socks off ever since!

So far, our little Maths Magicians have tackled place value, addition and subtraction calculation strategies and have been practising using their 2,5 and 10 times-table facts. Fractions of shapes, simple money, Time and length have also been a focus for our learning.

In English we have enjoyed reading fables, stories, poetry and riddles and have learned how to use dictionaries. We have explored information texts and used the internet for research purposes too. Our writing has taken many forms including narrative, poems and lists. Santa also requested that we each write to him on a daily basis, to keep him up-to-date with the antics of his mischievous elf!

As always, the children have enjoyed the practical and creative aspects of learning with a particular interest in the Great Fire of London and artwork by Russian artist Kandinsky. We were also lucky enough to spend some time with Mr Joliffe the ukulele teacher, who led a music workshop one morning.

The trips that were eagerly anticipated were unfortunately cancelled due to covid restrictions at separate venues. However, the children delivered an excellent performance of the 'Christmas Story' and provided delightful, homemade calendars for the residents of Corona House. I have it on good authority, that all calendars were gratefully received and much appreciated. The panto at the Floral Pavilion was enjoyed by all and 'bean treat' and party days were much deserved!

A big thank you to a super class of Year 2 children. Merry Christmas and all the very best for the year ahead. Thank you!

Mrs Anneke Beecroft





Lower Junior News



YEAR 3 NEWS

Year 3 have settled extremely well into the Juniors with their fabulous behaviour and work attitude

Year 3 Trip to Gillmoss Recycling Discovery Centre by Sienna

On the 24th November 2021, Year 3 visited Gillmoss Recycling Discovery Centre. We left school at 9 o'clock in the morning and we went on the minibus. I sat next to Isabella. We went through the tunnel to Liverpool and it was dark in the tunnel.

When we got to the recycling centre, we went up the steps to the top of the building. A lady showed us where to put our snacks. My snack was a banana. The lady showed us the 3 R's on a screen. The 3 R's are reuse, reduce and recycle. We played a tiptoe game where we had to decide whether the answer was reuse, reduce or recycle.

The lady put green and grey bins on a mat and we had to decide whether the rubbish should go in the green or grey bins. We then sat at a table to eat our snack. My table was light green.

Isabella, Olwen and Liliana shared my table with me. After lunch we sorted more rubbish out before going to see the factory. We saw the workmen who worked there pick out rubbish that had been put in the wrong bins. We saw a truck, it was yellow and the driver was wearing a safety helmet. We sat on the floor next to an elephant made from recycled rubbish, while the lady was telling us some information.

We lined up, ready to get back on the minibus because the trip was over. We went through the tunnel again on the way back to school. We got back in time for lunch. I really liked the trip. The factory was my favourite part.

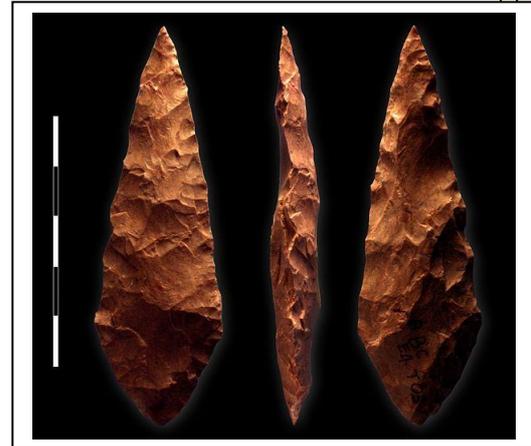


Autumn Term Year 4

Year 4 Stone Age to Iron Age Workshop: Tatton Park by Minnie Reynolds

Year 4 went to Tatton Park and learnt so many new things like...how to make fire, what people of the Stone Age ate and what it would be like without electricity and running water. It was so much fun. We even experienced how the Stone Age people looked for and gathered food. It was a bit muddy, too! We thank the teachers so much for taking us to Tatton Park. The class loved it and we can't wait for the next school trip!

George: My favourite part of our Tatton Park trip was the wattle and daub. I think everyone else would say the same! It was very fun learning things there and everyone was nice. There were loads of animals and it was muddy! Learning about the Stone Age is soooo much fun!



Year 4 Pen pals

Evie: We had a great time writing to our pen pals. We were very excited when we got our letters back from New York! We shared photographs, our interests and what we do in school. We asked questions about the school they go to, what they do for fun and what their favourite food is. I hope they write back soon.

Imogen: We had a great time writing to our pen pals in New York. It was really fun. I really enjoyed reading my pen pals' letters and writing back to them.

We shared photographs and wrote about our hobbies. They asked questions and we answered them. Then, we did it the other way so we asked questions and they answered them! They told us about their families and shared lots of information. I am very excited to write back to my pen pals and I am sure everyone else is, too!





Upper Junior News



YEAR 6 NEWS

The children in Year 6 have made a good start to their final year at PPS. They know that that it is a very important year for them and they have to work hard and do their best.

Much of their efforts at the start of term were, understandably, focussed on preparing for the 11+ and entrance exams for schools they might like to go to next September. This was a very busy time for them, as they juggled schoolwork and homework. Hopefully, their determination and hard work will mean that they secure places at their preferred schools. We'll have to wait until next March to find out!

Year 6 Trip to The World Museum, Liverpool

In October of this term, Year 6 spent the day at The World Museum in Liverpool, accompanied by Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Hogg.

The main focus of the trip was to study the amazing collections of artefacts that the museum has from the cultures of Ancient Greece and Ancient Egypt. We toured the galleries in the morning and found some truly amazing things, particularly regarding the Ancient Egyptian mummification process. It was very weird to see things that are so ancient and so personal to the people who lived all that time ago. At lunchtime we went into the park opposite the museum to eat our sandwiches, where, fairly soon, we got drenched by a sudden downpour! We beat a hasty retreat to the museum shop and dried off in there, making, of course, a selection of shrewd purchases while we were there! In the afternoon we toured round some of the other galleries at the museum. We particularly enjoyed the dinosaur and other natural history galleries.

The next day, back in school, we surveyed what remained of our rather soggy booklets and worksheets and shared what we had learnt from the trip. A great day out was had by all!

Buying The School Christmas Tree!

A couple of weeks ago Head Boy [George] and Head Girl [Matilda] took a trip to Church Farm in Heswall to help choose the school Christmas tree for this year, accompanied by Miss Raynor and Mr. Hogg. After much deliberation, a splendid specimen was selected and purchased. Once back in school the tree was put up and decorated to form a truly grand entrance to our school for the festive season. Well done to everybody who helped- it's a wonderful sight and it really gets you in the mood for Christmas!

YEAR 5 NEWS

What a fantastic start to year 5! It's been a busy autumn term with focus on preparing for 11+ and entrance exams. We've really enjoyed reading Michael Morpurgo's *War Horse* and explored the experiences of soldiers in the First World War through writing diary entries and looking at life in the trenches. Watching the *War Horse* film on the last days of term (complete with popcorn!) enabled us to compare and contrast the differences between book and media.

However, the highlight of our term has to be our two-night trip to Colomendy! Back in October, in torrential rain, we set off on our adventure. We encouraged each other to brave new heights and overcome fears, hungrily ate together after building up an appetite, and there was certainly a midnight feast or two! Despite the rain, we all experienced a downpouring of teamwork!

We're all looking forward to new challenges in the New Year as we increase our exam preparation and explore the Victorian era alongside reading Berlie Doherty's *Street Child*. It's hard work, but fun and rewarding in year 5!



SPEECH AND DRAMA REPORT

After a tough two years, we have thoroughly enjoyed relighting the children's imagination and inspiring creativity in our speech and drama lessons. We have been busy devising and improvising, creating small scenes, and rebuilding confidence to perform original work which has been most fun. Towards the end of the term Years 5 and 6 have worked on a script, where the audience watch themselves as parents on stage, this was challenging to stage and required the children to think outside the box. They managed this well and have created funny, realistic characters and we hope to show this later next year. Sadly, we haven't been able to host our annual speech and drama assembly due to not wanting to mix the whole school and add unnecessary risk. However, as always, the children have been busy working on their skills in public speaking and we have worked on some poetry and communication skills.

On 18th and 19th March 2022 all the children who attend speech and drama will have the opportunity to take part in the Wirral Speech and Drama Festival should they wish to. This is a fun day out, where children perform poetry in front of other competitors and their families. There is a small adjudication at the end. A letter will be emailed out inviting your child to enter the festival, if you wish to enter please make sure you send the form back before the entry deadline. There is no pressure to enter The Wirral Speech and Drama Festival, and lessons will not be structure around the festival, we will continue to build acting and performance skills.

If any new pupils wish to join the fun of Speech and Drama, please contact Miss Curry or Miss Cottier directly (07901822481) email: ravanne@hamerholdings.co.uk, to reserve your place. All new pupils to Kindergarten and Nursery are also very welcome, our Nursery Day is Thursday next year.



All the Staff at PPS would like to wish you a wonderful and enjoyable Christmas and look forward to the new term which commences on Wednesday, 5th January 2022

