Blog w.e. 13.12.19

We are well and truly on the Christmas countdown now and the children are getting increasingly excited as each day passes. However, even with all the festivities, there is still structured learning taking place in all year groups as the children finish off their topics and complete their current learning journeys.

There are so many exciting events taking place at the moment that I almost don’t know where to start! This week our amazing choir performed at the Victoria Hall and they were simply fantastic. I was so proud of how well they represented the academy – their behaviour was exemplary, they looked super smart and sang their hearts out! I am sure that those of you who had the privilege of being in the audience would agree that the performance was beautiful - I know that I came away feeling far more Christmassy!

We have also held our Christmas fayre this week and what a brilliant evening that was too! It was so lovely to see so many of you there enjoying time with your children and supporting the academy and I send sincere thanks for your help in making the event a complete success! There was a super atmosphere and everyone had a great time. We are still counting up the money to find the total amount raised but we will let you know as soon as we have the final figure.

Next week is also jam packed with our Year 5 Christmas performances at 9.30am and 2.00pm on Wednesday, Thursday is Christmas dinner and Christmas jumper day and ‘Carols in the Community’ 3.30pm – 4.30pm and then Friday is Christmas party day! Wow what a busy week! Please can I also remind you that the academy closes at 12.45pm on Friday 20th December for the Christmas break and then we reopen on Tuesday 7th January 2020!

Now, back to our learning for this week!

This week Year 3 had the opportunity to travel back in time to the Stone Age with our special visitor from ‘Portals to the Past’. They had a fantastic time handling and seeing Stone Age artefacts. The children were amazed by the size and weight of the mammoth tooth they held and astonished when they saw the skull of the first man in Britain. They really learned a great deal from this super hands on experience. In English staff have been awed by the children’s narratives of the day the storm hit Skara Brae. The children wrote narratives including dialogue, suspense and a range of diverse adverbs. The children then developed their narratives further through editing and up-levelling. Wow Year 3 – what clever writers you are becoming. In Maths the children have progressed to multiplying and dividing by 8. They have been looking at the different methods that can be used to solve these problems such as number lines, arrays and grouping. They have been having mathematical discussions linked to which method is most appropriate and why; discussing speed and the probability of error. Year 3 have also begun to discuss and write about the transition from the Stone Age to the Iron Age. The children have been researching how tools, housing and clothes evolved during these periods in time. The children then went on to consolidate their learning through written descriptions of each time period.

Hufflepuff have been re-creating the wonders of the Egyptian pyramids this week. They were tasked with replicating the pyramids and applying their knowledge of Egypt into their design. They focussed on the detail of the inside of the pyramids and the reasons they were built in the first place. The children included the majestic River Nile and the vast desert landscape, not to mention the glorious sunshine they get. If you aren’t sure about why the pyramids were built please ask your child and they will be able to tell you all about how the Egyptians used them. In English Year 4 have been using this information to prepare themselves to write a report about Egypt. The children have been researching holiday brochures, google maps and online holiday companies to explore what Egypt has to offer as a holiday destination. I think it’s safe to say that they would all like a trip to Egypt right now (myself and the teachers included), especially to snorkel in the coral reefs of the Red Sea! In Maths the children have continued to work on multiplication and division. They are getting much better at their times tables, but these are an absolute priority and still need to be practised every single night please.

This week in Year 5, the children have been working really hard on this year’s Christmas Concert! They have been practising all the songs for ‘Bah Humbug!’ and have been learning how to manipulate their voices to change how they sound for different parts of the songs. They have spent time rehearsing their lines but also taking to the stage. It has been wonderful to see all the children in their costumes creating a real Victorian era atmosphere! Using all the props and putting on their acting hats, the children brought the story to life during their dress rehearsal, which Years 3 and 4 thoroughly enjoyed watching. Both children and staff are elated and cannot wait to perform in front of their parents/carers and friends! In Maths, the children have been looking at perimeter. They have worked with their partners to understand what perimeter is and have engaged in stimulating activities. It would be lovely if you could discuss real life examples of perimeter over the weekend so children can see how this is applied in our everyday lives!

Our year 6 children have also continued to impress this week. They have shown fantastic observation skills in English as they have unpicked the characters of Skuli and Gunnar in the text ‘Viking Boy’ and used comparative conjunctions to compare and contrast the two characters. In Maths, the focus has been on ordering and comparing fractions: children have had to convert between mixed and improper fractions in order to identify the largest and smallest options and, also, place them into ascending and descending order. Their topic work on the Viking shows how well the children are recalling key information they have been taught. Why not ask them where the Vikings originated from or what religion they practiced – I am sure that you will be wowed by their responses! In design and technology, Year 6 have turned their initial designs of Viking pieces into clay based models- there are many incredible results that the children have been very proud to show off. We are all very impressed with their super art work – well done Year 6!

On Tuesday we held a meeting where parents/carers were given the opportunity to come into school and discuss Grove’s current priorities for improvement. We are on a journey of continuous improvement and you are all a valuable part of that. We want you to understand and support the changes and developments that we put into place here at Grove. We know that we are never going to make all of the people happy all of the time but rest assured that any decisions made are absolutely with the children at heart. My team and I are absolutely committed to driving Grove Academy forwards and it was lovely to see those of you who were able to come along and share your thoughts and views with us. We will hold more of these meetings during the year and we encourage you to come along and share your thoughts. We would much rather you tell us than tell someone outside as if we don’t know we cannot act on things. An open and honest culture is absolutely what we want.

I am sure that you are all busily preparing for Christmas yourselves but please do try and have a restful and enjoyable weekend as we get ready for the last week of term.

Thank you again for your continued support

Mrs Carrigan