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Welcome from Emma Butler (Acting Head of Education)

Dear Parents and Carers

The time has flown by since September! What a busy term we have had. Students have coped very well with changes to the school day and many have been enjoying our after-school clubs. We will be in touch in the new year to let you know what will be offered for Spring term. There will be no clubs for w/c 7th January.

We have welcomed a variety of visitors into school to deliver assemblies ranging from charities to hate crimes to Nepal. Many assemblies have also been career focused when we have invited in a broad range of speakers to let our young people know what could be available to them when they leave school. If any of you would like to come in and talk about your chosen career paths, you would be most welcome.

We have been very lucky to welcome Mr Lillyman to the team who is teaching music to our students – the introduction of trumpet lessons to some of our Year 7 students.

We had a trip to the theatre to see Nativity The Musical and Mr Clifford arranged a trip to What Career Live for some of our older students. We have also seen some of our Post 16 students successfully engage in some external provisions which has furthered their learning.

Exciting news for the new year will be the launch of Potterspurpy Lodge School's first ever Book of Words. Many students and staff have contributed to this and Mr Yaw has worked hard to put it together. Please look out for news about this early next year.

STARS OF THE TERM

RPU – Awarded by Mr Yaw

KSI – Awarded by Mrs Butler

NGO – Awarded by Mr Cameron

MGR – Awarded by Mrs Rubery and Mr Booth

TCH – Awarded by Mr Clifford

JSH – Awarded by Miss Gresty

KRC – Awarded by Miss Cassidy and Mrs Davis



Students vote on our charities for the year!

Each year we ask the students to vote on a local charity showing we have an understanding and see value in our community and a national charity to support, so who did we vote for this year?

About our chosen charities:

Mind is a mental health charity in England and Wales. Founded in 1946 as the National Association for Mental Health, it celebrated its 70th anniversary in 2016. Mind offers information and advice to people with mental health problems and lobbies government and local authorities on their behalf.



Willen Hospice is a registered charity that provides specialist care for people whose illness no longer responds to curative treatment (also known as specialist palliative care).

We provide care for people from the age of 18 years upwards and work in Milton Keynes and the surrounding areas. Willen Hospice provides services to three Primary Care Trusts - Milton Keynes, Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire. The Hospice is based at a quiet lakeside area close to the City Centre.

Cultures and Celebrations....Halloween!

We were really lucky that all students celebrated Halloween this year by carving pumpkins, there was a prize for the best one, and ARI was our winner, with CHO and NMO as runners up. The shapes and designs ranged from the Jack O Lantern to a Cinderella coach. The students worked really hard and had a great time designing them, thank you to Mr Booth and Miss Cassidy for their work making these with our students.



Remembrance 100 Years Since the end of the War!

Following our wonderful trip earlier in the Year to the Battlefields we were treated to a wonderful assembly and remembrance. Mrs David prepared a wonderful task for all the students and asked them all to write a note of thanks to the people who fight to make our lives easier. Students then all made crosses and we laid them in our memorial garden.

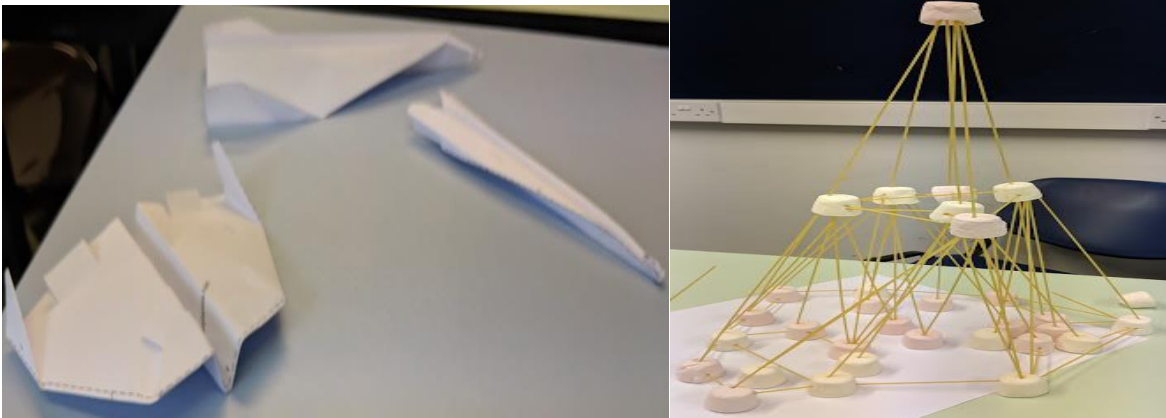


HISTORY



Things are as busy as ever in the history department! Most of our Year 11 students have been learning about the Vikings with their fascinating beliefs about Valhalla, Valkyries and Odin; many students have spotted characters that appear in the Marvel films and village scenes from Fortnite, showing how the lure of Viking legend endures. Our Year 10s have been finding out about Hitler and the growth of the Nazi Party from its tiny origins after the First World War. We have also discovered why Hitler had to shorten his moustache when he was a soldier and which tunes he whistled when he was relaxed! For Year 9, the Black Death has dominated along with some interesting medieval approaches to curing it – including inhaling the fumes from a bucket of sewage for half an hour a day! Year 7 and 8 have been learning about the Norman victory at the Battle of Hastings and have produced some superb storyboards showing the complicated series of events in 1066. I am sure that history will be at the forefront of many people's minds as we begin the half-term break, with many events planned in the UK and Europe to mark the centenary of the ending of the First World War on 11th November 1918 soon after our return to school in a few weeks. Keep your eyes

Year 7 STEM week



Year 7 took part in a range of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) activities. Activities included constructing towers out of marshmallow and spaghetti and designing and testing paper aeroplanes. All students were engaged and enjoyed themselves immensely. Some of the successes can be seen above.

Nativity The Musical!

Based on the brilliant film and adapted and written by the same person, Nativity the Musical is currently on a UK tour, so we decided we would start Christmas early and took the whole school to see the production in Milton Keynes. The students were exceptionally well behaved and represented the school brilliantly. The production featured Simon Lipkin, a well known West End performer, who is also in the forthcoming film 'Nativity Rocks' and made the young people laugh the whole way through!

As well as being great entertainment, the show focused on, friendship, being an individual and always following and fulfilling your potential - important messages which we ensure the young people in our care also value!



Birmingham Christmas Market

Post 16 Students travelled from 'Potterspurty Lodge School' to 'Birmingham New Street Station' on 6th December to visit the German Christmas Market there. The student groups headed off to 'The Bull Ring' Shopping Centre and then on to the 'New Street German themed Market' where there was an opportunity to buy unusual foods such as the 'Metre long Bratwurst' and the odd Christmas present for family. The students thoroughly enjoyed their day out travelling on trains, buying their own lunch and choosing Christmas presents.



Staffing

We are sad to say good bye at the end of this term to:

- Abi Boden – teaching assistant
- Sharon Measures – teaching assistant
- Ewa Puzan – residential support worker
- Ness Hanton - residential support worker

We all wish them the best in the paths they decided to take and thank them for their dedication to the young people at Potterspurty.

In addition we say a good bye at short notice to Susana Patricio – Clinical Psychologist, who due to family situation has decided to end her support at Potterspurty. We are currently working on a replacement and hope to have someone in post as soon as possible – I will keep you updated and appreciate your understanding with the short notice provided due to a very sudden change in circumstances

We will also be welcoming some new staff to the team in January:

- Chris Handby – cover supervisor
- Alex Lillyman – music teacher
- Shauna Cox – teaching assistant
- Jo Hines and Sheetal Patel who have joined the team on a permanent basis from January 2019

There are also a number of new residential staff and this will be shared with parents of residential students.

Cross Country

This year's cross country was run in wet and windy conditions however we still had a total of 26 students and staff running across both the junior and senior races.

In the junior race, the winner was JSH (Knights) in a time of 8:32, second place went to DCO (Royals) in a time of 9:11 and third place went to BRO (Dragons) with a time of 10:13.

The senior race saw a much larger field, and was won by JHA (Knights) in a fantastic time of 7:12, second place went to MST (Knights) in a time of 8:49 and third place went to CHO (Dragons) with a time of 9:18.

Overall scores;

Junior

1st Royals

Equal 2nd Knights and Dragons

Senior

1st Knights

2nd Dragons

3rd Royals

Overall

1st Knights

2nd Dragons

3rd Royals

Christmas Cake Display/Showing Afternoon



RPG

Friday afternoons for some students is spent far away from Potterspurpy, in the (imaginary) city of Kaer Maga, where vampires are battled and the skeletons are scared to – well - undeath.

This is an open-ended heroic role playing game (RPG) in which everyone creates and inhabits a self-generated character. The students then act as a team to pit their wits and skills against the adversaries that they encounter as the story unravels, as told by one of the older players.

Evidently, a core of students have caught the role-playing bug. They meet to play every Friday, as well as Tuesday and Thursday evening after school.

As an end-of-term treat, students organised themselves for an all-day session, and decorated the classroom in suitably gothic fashion.

Why I have developed RPG gaming at PLS

I am neither a psychologist nor a therapist, but I see the gains that the students make when they play these games, and in most cases, so do their parents.

They gain confidence and social cohesion, they affirm their imaginations and they practice communication in an environment where negotiation with a potential enemy can be more potent than an (imaginary) blow.

They can dare to gamble with a ogre or even jump on a dragon to risk death or untold glory. They can engage in a narrative which is completely liberating because it is also preposterous... and it is a narrative that is written by them and their interactions as much as by the “games-master”.

These students may already be too old and too intelligent to engage with play-therapy, but when the play-leader appears to be a-bit-of-a-nerd who appears motivated only by the fun of the game, they are perhaps a little more likely to let their inhibitions go and they become immersed in a game which thrives on its absurdity.

RPG is not for everybody. In fact it is patently not even for the majority of our students, but for about 8-10 students over the last 2 years, it may have been the most fun they have had at school... and the best therapy.

Mr Nye



Key Dates



Sunday 6th Jan- Residential students Return from 6pm

Monday 7th Jan – Day students return 8.50am

Friday 15th Feb 2019 – 3.00pm – Close for Half Term.



Merry Christmas