

HOLYWELL SCHOOL

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Update Letter – 22nd January 2021

Dear Students, Parents and Carers



As I reflect back on the week, it has been another eventful seven days since my last letter. I hope that you all stayed safe during the storms – it's hard to believe we had such awful weather now that the sun is shining on this crisp, frosty Friday (thanks to Mr Johnson for the photograph)! The continuing rise in the number of deaths from Coronavirus is a constant concern and our prayers and thoughts are with Holywell families who have been directly affected. The slight decrease in the daily numbers of cases gives some hope and the more we all stick to the rules, the quicker

the rates will come down. The vaccination programme is another 'ray of hope' and I know that some of our parents have been directly involved in this – we're all so grateful for your determination, dedication and hard work – it must be very uplifting to be a part of this programme ... however, we all recognise that it comes at a cost to your own families and we are grateful for everything you are doing to keep your children safe and learning. We are indeed, grateful to all our parents and carers for the incredible way you have adapted your work and family life to support all of our students at home. Please keep in touch and, if there is anything we can do to help, please get in touch via the school office.

This is particularly true of technical issues and, following on from last week's 'Tech Special' recommending the use of GoogleDocs and the other related programmes, Mr Crapnell has also raised awareness that Microsoft Office is available as a free version at office.com. This is a slightly cut down version of the full Microsoft Office Suite but is fine for most common tasks. It also runs online which means it will work on a range of devices eg an ipad. Years 5,6 and 7 are currently doing a module of work on Excel and Mr Crapnell has a video lesson which walks you through how to access Microsoft.com <https://youtu.be/6pBr2X65Q7M> - the video is linked explicitly to Microsoft Excel, but is equally applicable to the other products.

The inauguration of the new president of the United States of America was another major event this week and, for me, the highlight was Amanda Gorman's amazing inauguration poem. Amanda is a 22-year old poet and her poem 'The Hill We Climb' is not only a beautiful and well-crafted piece of writing, but also an inspirational message and invitation to 'dare to be the light' in this dark world. I have used this in our school assembly this week and you can watch this together as a family through this link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CpcW2Ljs3wn-YLPZdCewKLsvrcnaUJUu/view?usp=sharing> ... if you don't watch the whole assembly, at least have a watch of the poem!



We also had our first virtual parents' evenings this week - a huge 'thank you' to Mrs Donnellan, Ms Brumsden and the office team for all their hard work sorting out the arrangements. It was an interesting experience (especially as the whole system crashed for 10 minutes last night!) and I hope it was an acceptable alternative to our face-to-face meetings. The strict time limit kept us all very focussed and made sure that we were all punctual! I hope that Year 5 parents received all the information needed – we're happy to follow up discussions if you need more information. Year 6 Parents' Evening is next, so watch out for further information next week.



Headteacher: Mr MG Simpson MA, NPQH

Deputy Headteacher: Mr S Van Der Merwe – Deputy Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead: Miss A Stewart

Assistant Headteacher: Mrs H Donnellan – Designated Safeguarding Lead / SENDCo: Mrs J Davies

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Our home-learning programme seems to be working well for most families and we have had some lovely work sent in from students. Mr Brown shared these two brilliant poems from Year 5 students inspired by their English work focussed around Walter de la Mare's "The Listeners":

The Forest

There she was:
a tall shadowy figure shifting from one foot to the other in the cold,
eerie sounds floating towards her;
bats soaring above her head, circling as if to tell her something.
A night as dark as this, as silent as this, only nights like this have a full moon.
Untold tales of the forest, casting ominous shadows across the moonlit floor.
A lifeless wooden shack blocking her view of the forest,
tree branches growing around it like witch's arms gathered round a cauldron.
The wind whistling through the hollow trees.
Whispering.
Waiting.
She was cautious
for she knew there were wolves in this forest.
Leaves scattered across the floor, being swept up as if by magic and blown into tiny
hurricane swirls.
She knew the forest was trying to tell her something...
But what?

By Poppy Reavley 5AJS



... and to balance out the scary writing from Year 5, here are Freya Cranston's cookies baked in response to last week's challenge of the day!



I wake up lying in an empty room,
Staring anywhere that there's light.
Spooky, scared, I feel someone there,
I jump up, startled, with a fright,
A noise echoes down the halls,
To the creaky door I hesitantly walk,
CCREEAAKK,
Too scared to move but the need to know.
Panic sets in as I walk the harrowing hallways,
Suddenly I stop, banging is coming from a room ahead of me,
BOOM, BANG, CRASH,
I take a risk and enter.
I see something unimaginable like you only see in your darkest
nightmares, then,
BANG, BANG, BANG.
I wake up again,
I am back in my house,
The house I have lived in my whole life,
I am so happy to be home.

By Isla Sibbald 5AJS

Stay safe and keep in touch.
With all best wishes
Mr Simpson