

HOLYWELL SCHOOL

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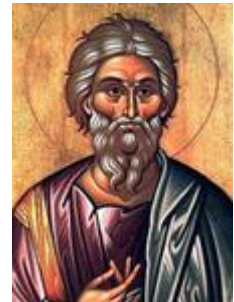


*A Church of England School
providing a Values Based Education*

Update Letter – 30-11-2021

Happy Saint Andrew's Day!

Students in St Andrew's House have been enjoying their 'Blue' Multi-day today ... so I thought it might be time to reflect on St Andrew and what we can learn from him. We don't actually know a lot about St Andrew! It is believed that he was born between the years 5 AD and 10 AD in a place that is now part of Israel. According to Christianity, he went on to become one of the 12 disciples of Jesus Christ. The disciples were 12 people chosen by Jesus to closely follow him. Andrew's brother, Simon Peter, was also one of the disciples. They both lived in Galilee, where they were fishermen.



Saint Andrew was a 'networker' - a fisherman but also the one who brought the Gentiles (non-Jews) to Jesus and preached about him as far as the Black Sea. We can all take inspiration from St Andrew and share in spreading kindness and the Christian values we all share at Holywell.

In 1320, St Andrew officially became the patron saint of Scotland when the country's independence was declared with the signing of The Declaration of Arbroath. Although St Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland, he never actually stepped foot in Scotland his whole life! The bones of St Andrew did make it to Scotland and there are lots of stories as to how they came to be there! One story is that they were brought to St Andrews about 732 AD by Acca, Bishop of Hexham (near Newcastle), a well-known follower of Saint Andrew. Around the year 832AD (although some say 735 AD) the Northumbrian King Athelstane is said to have camped at what is now Athelstaneford in East Lothian, before his battle with the Picts under King Angus mac Fergus. Saint Andrew appeared to Angus in a dream and promised victory. During the battle, a saltire cross was seen in the sky, giving hope to the Scots.



From Courage to Hope

As November turns to December COURAGE becomes HOPE! Our focussed value-of-the-month is HOPE and this was one which our Values Ambassadors found difficult to describe. Eventually, they settled on the following: "Hope is believing that no matter how dark things get, there is always a light." They referenced the lines in our school prayer:

Holy Spirit

Guide us in our darkest moments

And lead us towards your Light.

The Values Ambassadors have also been thinking about how can we show 'HOPE' at Holywell. Here are their challenges for the month:

- Believe, never give up and find someone who can help.
- Dream BIG, think BIG, learn BIG.
- Say 'I can't do this YET.'
- Be the hope and the light for others.



Headteacher: Mr MG Simpson MA, NPQH

Deputy Headteacher: Mr S Van Der Merwe – Deputy Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead: Miss A Stewart
Assistant Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead / SENDCo: Mrs J Davies – Senior Leader: Mr James Ulph

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Hope is also represented by the first advent candle and, for Christians, we believe that the ultimate 'HOPE' is represented by Jesus. As we start to prepare for Christmas, we reflect on the Christmas story. This clearly shows that the hope of the universe is a person. Hope was what the angels sang about. Hope lay in the manger. Hope caused Mary to wonder in her heart. It was Hope the shepherds came to worship. Hope was presented with gifts from the Magi who had travelled so far. The Advent story is a hope story because it chronicles the coming to earth of the One who is hope. We will be exploring the Christmas story over the month of December and we certainly hope to be able to share this with our Holywell community in some form of Christmas service – this may be limited to students in school, but we will certainly try to ensure that, even through the pandemic and the ongoing Coronavirus restrictions, the HOPE of the Christmas story will shine through.

Caring for others and fund-raising

Thanks to the contributions from students during our recent 'Children In Need' mufti day, we raised a wonderful £604.41. There will be a charity Christmas Jumper Day on 10th December (to fit in with our Christmas Lunch arrangements).



Asymptomatic Lateral Flow Testing

Following on from the recent WEDUC notification that we will be offering on-site testing for all KS3 students when they return to school in January – here are some further details (mainly from the DfE):

What are the Government's testing plans for schools and colleges over the Christmas Holiday?

- Staff and students who are not attending their setting during the holiday period may wish to take a rapid lateral flow test in situations where they are more likely to catch or spread COVID-19. This includes spending time in crowded and enclosed spaces, or before visiting people who are at higher risk of severe illness if they catch COVID19.

What are the Government's testing plans for schools and colleges on return in January?

- KS3 students at Holywell should undertake one test on-site at the start of term in our school asymptomatic test site (ATS) followed by one LFD self-test at home 3-4 days after their on-site test. They should then continue to test in line with government guidelines.

Why do KS3 students need to test onsite when they return after Christmas?

- Testing onsite on return is an effective way to reduce the risk of transmission in school and support the continuation of face-to-face education, by identifying positive cases and isolating those that are the most contagious as soon as is practical. The DfE recognise that testing on site is an additional ask of us at school, so to minimise educational disruption, we are being asked to plan to deliver one test onsite in the first week of term.

Is testing mandatory?

- For students, as they are all under 16, testing on site requires active consent from parents or legal guardians. Any student who does not take part in testing will still be able to attend school or college unless they develop symptoms or they have tested positive with a PCR or LFD (they may return to the setting if a positive LFD result is followed by a negative PCR within 2 days).

We are continuing to monitor the covid-19 cases in school – thank you to everyone who is wearing a face covering – the more we can do this, the safer we will all be. A reminder to all students travelling on buses that this is now highly recommended.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding and here's HOPING that we have a great December at Holywell. Best wishes

Handwritten signature of Mike Simpson.

Mike Simpson
Headteacher