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What a busy January it has been! Our Year 6 children have been out and about in the community this week when they visited Hanley Forest Park to enhance their learning in Science. Their behaviour was fantastic and we were very proud of how well they represented Grove Academy. It was great to make use of the facilities in our area and we will definitely be doing more of this as we move forward. In fact, Year 3 are off to Hanley Museum next week to support their learning in geography and history.

Next week some of our Year 5 and Year 6 children are taking part in a Futsal competition at Fenton Manor – they are extremely excited to be our first Futsal team and can’t wait to go and show off their newly learned skills. We know that, win or lose, they will be amazing!

Back to our learning for this week! Read on to find out all about what has been going on in each year group over this week.

This week has been a tricky week in Maths for Year 3. The children have had to use their previous knowledge when multiplying two digit numbers by a one digit number and apply this to the written column method. The Year 3 pupils have not been phased by this new strategy which demonstrates their inspirational growth mind-sets and desire to achieve. Why not try asking them about the four steps they need to follow? In English, Year 3 have had a very busy week. They completed their number poems about the different layers of the Earth using their class text ‘Street Beneath my Feet’ as their stimulus which uses some astounding adjectives and diverse adverbs. The children were so proud of them they even asked the teachers if they could write up their edited draft in neat so they could be ‘published’ and put in their class reading area. It did not stop there, the children have now begun to look at the story ‘A Journey to the Centre of the Earth’. Due to the complexity of the novel published in 1864 the Year 3 teachers have decided to apply a more modern day twist through the use of film clips from the 2008 film version. The children are going to be using this to support them in writing a descriptive piece about what it is like at the ‘centre of the earth’. They ended the week using drama to help understand how the character would have been feeling upon seeing this magnificent, undiscovered location for the first time. In Science the children have completed their experiment into the different properties of soil and are currently monitoring the effects of this on the cress seeds they have planted. Next, the children are moving on to look at the properties of rocks and how they are formed.

It has been another interesting week in Year 4. Pupils have started to read more of their class text ‘The Pied Piper of Hamelin’. This is going to support them in their next big write. They are looking at comparing the differences in the orphan boy’s life from when he had to live in the Shanty Town, to where he becomes the Mayor’s personal ‘rat-boy’. The children are focusing on using the main skills of past and present tense. In Maths Year 4 have been learning about division including division with remainders, using multiples and applying their skills to problem solving activities. They have also been continuing to learn their 8 times tables so please work on this at home too. During their topic learning pupils have learned how to count to 20 in French and have been using musical instruments to create different sounds to represent movement. They have also listened to music and learnt about tempo and pulse. In Science children have learnt about Alexander Graham Bell and why he is so famous, including looking at how telephone technology has changed over time and creating their own telephones and testing them!

Year 5 are continuing to have a super half-term. In Maths this week, Ravenclaw have been looking at dividing a four-digit number by a one-digit number. They have learned how to do this using exchanges and how to know whether or not a number sentence will have a remainder from looking at the initial number (how very clever!). The children then put this knowledge into practice when trying to solve worded problems. In English, Year 5 have started to write a newspaper article on famous high-wire walker Philippe Petit and his dare-devil act of walking between the Twin Towers. The children have also discussed the importance of making a headline attention-grabbing and the skills required to do this. They came up with some very amusing headlines for other recent news stories – well done! In Science, Year 5 are exploring how friction works and have even used their shoes to explore friction scientifically. The children are continuing to enjoy swimming and we are very proud of how the children are pushing themselves beyond their comfort zones.

Year 6’s week began with their visit to Forest Park; though cold and windy, the children thoroughly enjoyed exploring around the lake and undergrowth on the search for living things. They managed to find and classify a range of creatures from swans to millipedes! Please ask your child to identify the classes of any animals you may see in and around your home – I am sure that they will impress you with their knowledge. In Maths, the children have begun grouping according to their needs identified in last week’s SATs testing. They have settled in well and begun to develop their understandings of decimals and percentages. In English, year 6 have started to develop their ideas for a balanced argument after being posed the question of whom was responsible for the fly’s death? The children used the drama technique ‘conscience alley’ to pose their view-points using evidence and formal language. In art, the children have been using a range of recycled materials to begin building their model of the Spider’s house. These look fantastic so far and I cannot wait to see the finished work.

Please can I remind you that PE is a statutory subject within the National Curriculum and as such all children must take part regularly. The only exception to this would be if a child has a medical need, supported by a medical professional, which means that they cannot access the subject. We are continually finding that children are either not bringing their PE kit to school or have the incorrect kit. The uniform for PE is the purple logoed t-shirt and navy blue shorts. Navy joggers can only be worn if PE is taking place outside in cold weather and leggings are not allowed under any circumstance. We are going to be revisiting consequences for non-participation and children will be set work to complete during the lesson if they are not taking part. Participation in PE is being closely monitored and will form part of the judgement for uniform in the end of year report.

Next Thursday at 5pm we are holding our ‘Meet the Leadership Team’ meeting in the main hall. We look forward to welcoming you and sharing our developments and aims as well as answering some of your questions about our academy.

Wishing you a restful weekend and sending thanks for your ongoing support

Mrs Carrigan