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Nearly the end of the first half of the spring term! Wow that’s flown!

This week a group of our children from Years 5 and 6 have represented the academy in our first ever Futsal competition at Fenton Manor. We are all incredibly proud of the effort that the children put in together as a team – they were an absolute credit to all of us. This is a new sport for us and we are learning alongside the children but we are determined to keep practising. A huge well done to the children involved for being resilient and determined even when it was tough – what amazing team spirit!

Also this week we have held our ‘Meet the Leadership Team’ meeting where we invite you all to come along to find out about developments and priorities here at Grove. We also offer you the chance to ask your questions and do our best to answer them for you. As a team we welcome your queries and this meeting is a great chance to share your thoughts and ideas. We would love to have more of you join us so please look out for the next invite, sign up on ParentPay and come along. It was lovely to hear positive feedback about how much pupils are now enjoying their reading and remembering their science! Questions were asked such as why we don’t use homework books any more, as parents don’t know how pupils have done their homework. There was also a comment thanking us for offering an early evening session for this meeting so that working parents could also attend. Many thanks to those who attended – I can promise that we listen carefully to your comments.

Year 3 have had a magnificent week which included their exciting visit to the Hanley Potteries Museum. The children represented the school well during their trip, demonstrating excellent behaviour. They had the opportunity to see different types of rocks and fossils and made links to their learning all about the Stone Age. They have continued to build on their knowledge and understanding of rocks and how they are formed through a number of investigations whereby the children have used various materials to represent how metamorphoric and sedimentary rocks are formed. The children’s enthusiasm was infectious as squeals of delight could be heard from all classrooms as their experiments progressed. In English the children have been developing their breadth of vocabulary and enhancing their comprehension skills through their exploration of the WAGOLL (What a good one looks like). The children created a ‘screen shot’ plan using these skills along with a clip from the film. Their plans depicted their visualisations of what the centre of the Earth looks like ready to support them with their writing next week. In Maths, Year 3 have begun to look at dividing a two digit number by a one digit number. They have had to use the same steps from their prior learning but slightly amend the order. The children have also had the additional challenge of exchanging tens into ones to make the process more manageable based on the factors of the number.

This week Year 4 stepped back over 100 years to explore the work of Alexander Graham Bell and the development of the telephone. They have looked at how telephones have significantly changed over the years and then created a basic string telephone using paper cups! They thoroughly enjoyed trying these out and then moved on to learn about ways people communicate when they can’t hear – they even learned how to communicate their names using sign language. The children looked at how technology can help many people with hearing impairments nowadays and how much this has changed over time. In French this week, Year 4 have been learning the names of different countries and practising how to pronounce them correctly – some are very similar to English but others are quite different. In Maths the children have continued to develop strategies for dividing numbers using the ‘part, whole’ method. They even moved on to dividing 3 digit numbers using this strategy – well done! The children have realised how important it is to know our times tables to help understand division - knowing multiples of numbers made division much easier, especially as they explored division with remainders. During English and guided reading, the children have continued to read the story of the Pied Piper, looking at how the character’s life has changed over time and the impact of these changes. They have started to write in the past tense about the orphan boy’s life before and after his accident – I really look forward to reading these.

Year 5 have continued to thoroughly enjoy their ‘Forces’ topic this week and have been working scientifically to investigate the question ‘Does everything that goes up come back down?’ using their understanding of gravity. The children have been investigating gravity and air resistance using ideas from Galileo’s experiment, dropping two different spherical shapes of different weights from The Leaning Tower of Pisa. The children were fascinated to find, within their own investigation, that weight does not affect the gravitational force. We might not have the Leaning Tower of Pisa but they worked hard on making their experiments fair and recording their results. In Maths, they have looked at improper fractions and how these can be converted into mixed numbers. The children have had the opportunity to look at a variety of fractions using different representations including pizzas - as you can imagine it also made them quite hungry! Fractions can be quite a challenge to understand so please support your child at home to enhance their understanding. In English, the children have been drafting and improving their newspaper article about Philippe Petit, the character from their curriculum class text. There have been some very interesting conversations about how he should be portrayed-madman or hero? Why not ask them to share their thoughts with you?

In Year 6, the children have written a balanced argument discussing who was responsible for the fly’s death in their class text – this is a really tricky genre to crack so well done Year 6!  They have had to use a range of technical vocabulary and present their discussion using formal language. I have seen some amazing results and have to say that I am very proud of them all! In Maths, the children have been continuing to understand decimals including converting them into fractions. This will massively support them with the understanding of percentages too and give them flexibility in their thinking. Science learning this week has been centred on their investigation into how mould grows: the children have now set up their investigation and will check their results over the coming week – I am really hoping that they aren’t growing too much mould! We have some potential architects in Year 6 as they have built their interpretations of the Spider’s parlour from our class text during their art/D&T lessons and some of them are simply amazing. In addition to this, the Year 6 children have begun their new guided reading groups this week where they have studied a range of texts and used their comprehension skills to show their understanding.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your continuing support. I honestly can say that there are many, many successes to celebrate here at Grove and we are excited for the future. Have a lovely weekend,

Mrs Carrigan