



March 2020

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Headmistress's Message

When we talk to staff, pupils and parents about life at Normanhurst School, the most common phrase that people use to describe their experience is that it is like being in a family. Pupils young and old describe how they feel they belong; their teachers care about them, and they feel well-supported.

As we face the Coronavirus crisis and walk through this unprecedented time of school closure, self-isolation and social distancing, it is important to remember that we remain a family. Yes, it is going to look different over the next season; we will be connecting remotely, using technology to keep us together, but at its heart Normanhurst remains the same. We are a family, a community in which one cares for the other, in which we support, encourage and sustain each other.

As I read this newsletter I feel incredibly thankful: thankful for the wonderful pupils, the super committed staff and the extremely supportive families in our school.

You are all in my thoughts and prayers. With my very best wishes,

Mrs Claire Osborn
Headmistress

Storm on the High Seas

Inspired by Shakespeare Week, Year 2 had great fun creating a piece of collaborative art work based on 'The Tempest'. They had lots of discussions around the storm and decided to create art work based on this. The children



worked together to make the 3D background based on a big storm. They then each created their own ship in a bottle using different shades of black and white chalk. The effect looks great!!

Hatchlings in Early Years

On Tuesday 10 March, the children in Kindergarten were intrigued to find eggs and an incubator in the classroom. Over the next couple of days they were thrilled to find that eight chicks had hatched and were now firmly part of our Normanhurst Early Years. The children in Breakfast Club took on the responsibility of cleaning and feeding them each morning. All of the junior school have been able to come down to hold and enjoy getting to know the chicks.



The boys in Reception decided that they were going to create a playground for the chicks; here they are working together and what a wonderful job they did! One little chick certainly appreciated their handiwork.



Little Scientists



During Science Week, the children in the Early Years thoroughly enjoyed a trip to the local mini zoo where they had the opportunity to get up close with some animals.

Ozkar was very brave as he volunteered to hold the snake. The giant lizard was popular with all of the children and everyone loved the guinea pigs. The children were particularly in awe of the singing and dancing cockatoo when he performed 'Baby Shark'!

Like the rest of the juniors, Early Years took part in the Silly Science workshop and had great fun helping with the experiments.

Professor Nitrate taught us lots of interesting facts and finished the workshop with a very impressive demonstration of aerodynamics using what has become a precious commodity in these strange times!



Heave Ho!

In Mathematics, Kindergarten have been learning about heavy and light. To support their understanding, the teachers set up a variety of challenges that they could explore independently. A favourite challenge was to see the difference between how hard they had to pull to raise the heavy bottle with the pulley and how much easier it was to lift the empty bottle.





NEWSLETTER

Book Week

Year 1 love to dress up, so dressing up for World Book Day is a highlight of the school year for the class. Many of the children embraced the Magic theme and came as characters such as Mary Poppins and Harry Potter; others chose to dress up as characters from popular fairy tales and children's films.

Year 1 used the stunning picture book, 'Leon and the Place Between', by Grahame Baker-Smith as a basis for their lessons during Book Week. "The lanterns went out. In the darkness the crowd fidgeted with excitement. There was a cough, a whisper and then A LOUD HUSH. At last a soft, blue glow lit the stage and the curtains twitched ... and slowly parted ...". The children's imaginations rose to the challenge as they drew what they thought was behind these richly blue and gold braided curtains. They then enjoyed doing their Big Write using noun phrases to add effect to their writing.



Reading Buddies

On a Friday morning, Year 1 love having the senior pupils visiting their classroom to read with them. The Reading Buddy scheme has already had a positive impact on reading results in the latest assessments and has helped foster a love of reading among our young pupils.

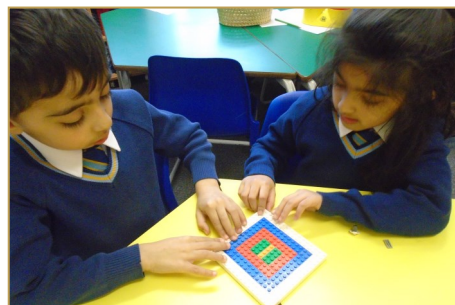
The senior pupils share their reading experience with the younger pupils, discuss the stories in greater depth and most importantly listen encouragingly to the children read. Thank you to Year 10 for coming in early and spending time with the younger children. We think you are all amazing!



The Tempest Art

Year 1 were rapt with the riveting performance of The Tempest by the one man Shakespeare show that visited the school. The Tempest is a play about magic, betrayal, love and forgiveness. This was Year 1's first experience of one of the playwright's great works and it created a strong and lasting impression. The actor made excellent use of an enthusiastic audience to act out a retelling of the play. In such capable hands, the complicated plot was made much more easily understandable.

Year 1 looked at some of the imagery used in the play and decided to base their art work on the fairy spirit Ariel. In a key moment in the play, Ariel, alone with Prospero, turned himself into a humming bird, then a butterfly and then a winged unicorn. The children used the Dutch artist Piet Mondrian as inspiration to cover a large cardboard unicorn in bright primary colours. The children then used Kandinsky's concentric circles to decorate a giant butterfly. The overall effect was stunning and created an effective reminder of this play. A few children then decided to recreate Mondrian's style of abstract geometric art using Lego bricks.





NEWSLETTER

Fifty Book Challenge

Readers may recall from our November edition of this newsletter that a reading challenge was launched in the Autumn Term to encourage our junior pupils to develop their love of reading. Year 1 are leading the way in this popular challenge and have been devouring books at an impressive rate!

Caitlin has become the first pupil in the school to have completed the challenge this year! We hope that children will continue to read regularly at home, so that they can share their reading experiences with their classmates and teachers when we return to school.



Fashion Show Ancient Greek Style

Year 4 have been revisiting their History topic on Ancient Greece. The children were investigating the ways in which the Ancient Greeks dressed, and they worked in teams to design and style one person in their group. They learnt about the names of the traditional clothes 'peplos' and 'chitons'.

There was excellent team work by all and lots of fun was had.



World Book Day

We celebrated World Book Day at Normanhurst on what turned out to be the last day in school. The theme was 'magic'. Children from Kindergarten to Year 6 have been doing some work based on the book 'Leon and the Place Between' by Grahame Baker-Smith. The book inspired some magical thinking across the school and many children were inspired by various magical characters from different stories. Everyone had a great day and enjoyed being a character from our favourite books! As you can see, the staff made as much effort as the children to look fabulous on the day!



Pancake Day at The Spinney

On Pancake Day, all of Year 5 went on a wonderful trip to The Spinney (a care home near Normanhurst). We got to meet the residents. In my opinion this was a transcendent experience! I think this because the unforgettable experience helped our skills of confidence. After a few minutes, we got to make our pancakes! Some residents helped stir the mouth-watering mixture to create the pancakes. I asked a few peers in my class and this is what they said. Let's start with Bobby, he said "I liked meeting all the people at The Spinney, and eating my pancakes." Matias said, "I enjoyed talking to the residents and making pancakes with them."

By Tiago, Year 5



NEWSLETTER

The Tempest in Kindergarten

The final week at school this term was Shakespeare Week.



Kindergarten found magical ways to explore the story of The Tempest, including creating their very own tempest in a bottle in their Science lesson. The children made potions whilst learning about capacity, empty and full.



In the role play area, pupils created an island with sand and rock pools and even a galleon. Circus skills featured in their PE lessons and in outdoor play. The children explored plate spinning, juggling, stilt

walking, diablos and other skills games you would see at the fun fair. They ended the week with our magical dressing up afternoon.

Science Week in Year 2

Year 2 took full advantage of Science Week to take part in lots of fun educational activities. They made different types of paper aeroplanes by following instructions online. The children made ones including The Sprinter, The UFO and The King Bee. They predicted which one they thought would fly the best and why.

The class discussed 'blubber' and what animals have this and why. They then tested how the 'blubber' keeps animals warm. The children put one hand into a sandwich bag into ice on its own and covered the other hand in fat before putting it in the bag. The children noticed the difference between the two bags. One pupil observed "this hand is nice and cosy and my other one is freezing".



Year 2 also did some exercises and talked about humans sweating and the purpose of sweat. They discussed how some animals do not sweat and have to cool down in other ways. For example, dogs cool down by panting and sweat through their paws.

In the February half term, the children took part in a Bird Watch as part of their homework. In class, the children made a Lego bar chart of the animals they saw.



During our 'Day of Art' the children worked on creating an 'under the sea' piece of art. The children made different types of fish, one out of clay and one out of tin foil. They also created sea horses using shaving foam to create a marbled effect. Different types of star fish were made and to finish it off, they collaborated to make a big octopus. This was lots of fun and the children have created a great big piece of collaborative art which is on display on the landing outside their classrooms!

Science Week included lots of other activities, including a Silly Science workshop with a visiting 'professor', sorting activities and house challenges, and a visit to local mini-zoo 'Get to Know Animals'. It was a very enjoyable week with lots of learning taking place in a fun way.





Science Week in Year 5

"From Monday 9 March to Friday 13 March, we had Science Week! At the beginning of the week, we had a Science assembly. The assembly was all about water. They had a lot of experiments including: a lava lamp (made of vegetable oil, water and an alka seltzer tablet), two balloons – one filled with air, once filled with water – that were put on a candle flame. The one with air popped, and the one with water went black and the flame went out. Another experiment was making water into wine. Then, we did a Big Write about a famous scientist.

On Tuesday 10 of March, we had a Silly Science workshop at the church on Buxton Road. Our instructor was called Professor Nitrate and he taught us about fire, how to make fire, the three states of matter, the power of aerodynamics, thrust and lift. For the states of matter, I helped by being water particles while being frozen, melted, evaporated and condensed. After we had a house challenge, which we had to work together in houses to get a car to the other side of the table without touching the table of the car. You could use the following materials: a balloon, a piece of string, a straw, a pipe cleaner and masking tape.

On Wednesday 11 of March, we went to 'Get to Know Animals' and saw a lot of animals including hedgehogs, skunks, cockatoos, guinea pigs, rabbits, snakes and many more. I touched a hedgehog and had a chameleon on my arm! It tickled a bit. Nigel the cockatoo was very clever and responded to us. Then, we had another house challenge on puzzles. Warren and Connaught both drew two-all and we had animal jigsaws so it was more fun. We also did our animal presentations. There were a lot of animals including dogs, hamsters, penguins, snakes, owls, cats, dolphins and koalas. There were a lot of interesting facts that I did not know.

On Thursday 12 March, we did an activity about the life cycle of a butterfly. We had to stick in the stages of the cycle in the correct order. After that, we saw baby chicks! They were sooo cute! Next, we went to the forest with the Year 6 and we made maps of Pole Hill and we made names for standout objects.

On Friday 13 March, (the last day of Science Week) we went litter picking on Station Road and we got quite a few compliments from the public. Then, we got to hold the chicks! I was so excited! The one that I got kept on bobbing his head around. At the end of Science Week, we had Art and we chose an animal and we drew the fur/skin on an A3 piece of paper. Then we cut out the animal from a piece of black paper to make a silhouette of the animal and then we stuck it on the A3 piece of paper."

By Matias, Year 5





Shakespeare Week in Year 6

After their assessment week earlier in the term, the juniors were able to have some fun and enjoy a range of activities relating to Shakespeare Week. Two Year 6 pupils describe below a couple of the interesting events.

One Man Shakespeare Show During Shakespeare Week, we were told by Mr Dograr that we were going to watch a one man play about one of Shakespeare's plays: The Tempest. The actor's name was Antony Glenn. The first thing I saw was his poster. The hall was filled with props. I was expecting something funny and educational! Then he walked in. I could see that he was ready to start the show. Other classes came in and the show was about to begin...



Before long, it started. He gave us a sample of what he might do to volunteers. He asked Amber to help him demonstrate some moves. When Amber sat down, he asked Jan to be a flash and shout 'Flash!' whenever he called Jan's name. Then, Jasmine was asked to say 'Boom!' as soon as Jan shouted. We were setting the scene for a storm.

On went the show. Around the middle of it, I got to be the character Miranda and had to marry prince Ferdinand, who was acted by Mert! The show finished and everyone cheered and clapped. It was a very good show.

I would definitely rate it 4 stars! It must have been really hard for Antony to do the show all by himself with only some volunteers to help. They made the show funnier. I enjoyed the performance very much and would definitely like to see him again. I loved being a part of the show and being Miranda. **By Poppy, Year 6**

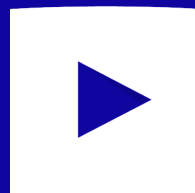
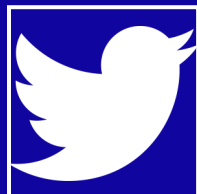
Shakespeare Art On Friday 13 March, our class (Year 6) used buttons to create Shakespeare's characters. My group included Jan, Konrad, George and I. We were designing Shakespeare's portrait. Jan drew Shakespeare's outline so that we could see the lines. The resources we used were a rectangular piece of cloth (to stick buttons on), colourful buttons and PVA glue.



Firstly, we ordered the buttons into colours so it would be easier to find different shades. After a while, we finished sorting and started to place the buttons onto the cloth. We all did different sections of it to be quicker. I started with the hair, which we did in red. Jan did the feet and George did the body. Eventually, we all completed our parts and did the face quickly. At the very end, we got the glue and stuck the buttons carefully, slightly apart from each other.

At the end, it turned out better than I thought, and it was really fun! It took a long time, but it was worth it. **By Alicia, Year 6**

Getting Social





ISA A Capella Competition

On 28 February, the A Capella choir took part in the first ever ISA A Capella Competition. A Capella means only using your voice and body percussion in a performance.

The choir travelled to Leighton Park School along with fourteen other groups who were taking part. The standard was very high and it was extremely enjoyable to listen to the other groups perform. There was a wide variety of styles and some amazing arrangements. The Normanhurst choir sang their own arrangement of Wayfaring Stranger, an old folk song which has been covered by a number of artists and was even used recently in a film.

The judges were 'The Sons of Pitches', a professional A Capella group who won Gareth Malone's televised A Capella competition, 'The Naked Choir' in 2015. After the school performances the Sons Of Pitches treated us to a concert and we were all amazed at their skill. They finished their performance by asking for suggestions from the audience and improvised a whole song about Derby City in the style of Yodelling and Bollywood!

Although we didn't win, we got a very good score of 208 and some great feedback, saying "Really nice to see a pupil leading off stage. This is just as important as the vocals for musicality. Percussion was effective. Really great effort. Enjoyed the amount of soloists with lots of people in the group having a go". They also gave us



Charity Assembly

On of our parents, Mr Tosh, came to our whole school assembly to talk to the children about the water aid project run by Samaritan's Purse, one of the charities we are supporting this year. Money from fundraising and donations for the charity's water, sanitation and hygiene projects gives safe water to children, families and communities in the world's poorest nations.

One of the aims of the charity is to raise enough money for families to have a water filter in their homes or village, to filter the dirty water from the rivers in order to make it safe for drinking. The filter that the charity is raising money for is called a Biosand water filter. When dirty water is poured into the top, the dirt and nasty bugs are removed using biologically active sand which traps and eats the wicked water bugs! The clean water then comes out of the pipe on the side- ready to drink! Mr Tosh demonstrated the difference between unfiltered and filtered water with water bottles, and had two teams asking true or false questions.

This was an eye-opening assembly for our pupils, and was followed by the annual charity netball match between staff and pupils.



Charity Netball Match

On Monday 2 March, our Years 10 and 11 netball team enjoyed playing against the teachers in a charity match to raise money for Samaritan's Purse. The close game was won by the teachers, with Miss Barnard receiving Player of the Match. We managed to raise £79.20 for Samaritan's Purse.

Thanks to everyone for playing!





Senior House Breakfasts

A new initiative that started this half term was the House Breakfast that was to be enjoyed by each senior year group on Monday mornings. The purpose of the House Breakfast is to allow pupils to build positive relationships with their peers and key pastoral staff, as well as to give them the opportunity to express their opinions on school life.

The Year 7 and Year 8 breakfasts took place on consecutive Mondays, and many interesting points were raised during the informal discussions. On the whole, pupils were very positive about their school experiences, and cited a great number of aspects that they feel the school does well. Included in this list were:

- Good working relationships with teachers and support staff
- Pupils feel they are listened to and treated fairly
- Lessons are well planned and fun
- Interesting events and activities throughout the year
- Show My Homework works well
- School food has improved

On aspects that pupils would like to see changed, comments ranged from improvements to playground facilities to stricter adherence to homework schedules. It was useful to hear pupils' views, so that they can be considered when planning for the future.

The breakfasts were an enjoyable start to the week for both pupils and staff, and it was heartening to hear that pupils had so many positive experiences of school to share.



Oak-Tree Mental Maths Challenge



Two pupils from each year group from Year 3 to 6 were picked to take part in the competitive Oak-Tree Mental Maths Challenge. The pupils were very proud to be representing their school in such a highly anticipated event, and really gave it their all. Year 3 started off the challenge, working together in pairs to answer a series of questions, with only a few seconds to answer each one. Year 4, 5 and 6 then had their turn, with the questions

getting increasingly trickier as the challenge went on.

It was a very close competition, but after all the scores were added up, Coopersale Hall came out as Maths champions, well done!





Astronomy Talk

On Friday 20 March, Year 9 and 10 pupils, from both Normanhurst and Braeside, were lucky enough to have Colin, an astronomer, come to Normanhurst to present a talk to them. Colin has worked with some very famous astronauts including the UK's famous Tim Peake and was able to offer both personal and in depth information surrounding all astronomy related topics.

Colin did two one-hour talks. The first was titled 'Our Rebel Star', discussing all details regarding our Sun and its dynamic environment. He even explained how the Sun's erratic behaviour can directly impact the Earth. The second talk was titled 'How to Live on Mars' which discussed how we can travel to Mars, how we could exist on another planet and how astronauts survive living at the international space station. The pupils really enjoyed his engaging talks which used real photographs and videos from NASA.

Pupils were incredibly engaged, with many thanking him for his time and even buying his books titled 'How to Live in Space', 'Mars: The Traveller's Guide' and 'The Rebel Star: Our Quest to Solve the Great Mysteries of the Sun'.



Normanhurst Sports Report

U8 Tag Rugby v St Nicholas School The U8's had their first ever tag rugby fixture against Saint Nicholas and played extremely well, running out winners by 14 tries to 12 in a game where attacking took centre stage. All pupils who took part made some excellent runs and passes, leading to a large number of tries. Well done!

U11 Hockey v Avon House A chilly evening down at Ashton Playing Fields was made all the better with a 1-0 win over Avon House in a game which we dominated. The team played some excellent hockey, creating a large number of chances with the Avon House goalkeeper making numerous excellent saves. We finally took the lead part way through the second half and never looked back, looking solid and restricting the opponents to very few chances.

U10 Contact Rugby Coached Session Some of our Year 5's ventured to Saint Nicholas School, Old Harlow, for a coached contact rugby session. All of our boys who went took a huge amount from the session and then put in some excellent displays against boys who have been playing contact rugby for almost two years longer than them! The boys worked on their tackle technique, handling and scrummaging in a fun-filled afternoon which ended in a friendly fixture between the two schools. We won 3-2 with the help of two boys from Saint Nicholas. Well done to all!

U12 Football v St Nicholas School Our U12 football team visited Saint Nicholas for a friendly football fixture. This was the boys' first game since Christmas as we have been playing rugby fixtures and learning how to play rugby in Games lessons. Our boys fought valiantly against strong opposition but ended up on the losing side on this occasion. However, all the boys showed great courage to keep playing until the final whistle.





Oak-Tree Tag Rugby Tournament

Various pupils from Oak-Tree schools took part in the Oak-Tree tag-rugby tournament at Eton Manor RFC. It was a fantastic afternoon of sport played with competitiveness and sportsmanship. Plenty of the matches were very close and we saw some amazing tries scored by lots of children as well as great defensive work to remove the opponents tags.



The results were as follows:

1st – Normanhurst

2nd – Coopersale

3rd – Oaklands

4th – Braeside

We all had a great afternoon, well done everyone!

Normanhurst School Parents' Association

Dear Parents

Following the cancellation of the London Winter Run on 9 February (thanks to Storm Ciara) we were determined to enjoy a nice Easter Walk on Sunday 15 March.

Despite the rumblings of Covid-19, a good crowd of parents, teachers and children enjoyed a leisurely lap of the golf course and found plenty of treats and along the way. When we got back to school, Percy Ingle's hot cross buns washed down with mugs of creamy hot chocolate made for a really nice event.

The Normanhurst School Parents' Association wishes everyone at this time good health and happiness. Those of us with children still at school will now be adapting to a new normal of home studies and as parents we'll be doing our best to keep up to Normanhurst standards. Those just leaving the school are now in a state of limbo and our thoughts and best wishes are with all of you.

The Coronavirus will be consigned to history soon enough and when it is, the NSPA will be back stronger than ever.

Best wishes

The NSPA Committee



NSPA
Normanhurst Parents' Association

