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Welcome from Jenny Nimmo, Principal



Dear Parents and Carers,

I would firstly like to wish you and your families a peaceful, healthy and happy time with friends and family over the Christmas period. In what is another challenging year due to COVID, I am aware that some families will not be together for Christmas this year nor be able to travel. If you have unfortunately not been able to spend time with family and friends over the next few weeks, I hope that you are able to meet in the new year.

I would like again to thank all our students, parents/carers, and staff for their resilience, understanding, and support when we recently experienced cases of COVID in the school and the residential setting. The support was overwhelming and your help and input assisted the leaderships teams in keeping both the residential and education settings open while ensuring that all stakeholder's health and wellbeing were prioritised at all times.

We have had a key number of visitors this half term to witness first hand our curriculum in situ, view our clinical offer, and see our residential setting. The visits have also involved individuals speaking to staff and students to gain valuable feedback of the Potterspurvy Lodge experience. I am pleased to report that our feedback has been overwhelmingly positive with student voice always being held in high esteem by visitors. Many thanks to Mr Jeremy Wiles (Caretech Group Executive Director – Children's Services), Ms Amanda Sherlock (Caretech Group Executive Director – Compliance), and Mr John Lawson (EMAT Trust Head of Education and former HMI Ofsted Inspector) for giving their time generously to visit us this term.

Another exciting development this term is the installation of the outdoor gym which you can read about later on in the newsletter. This has evolved from student voice through the student council for a need for new outdoor facilities, the students were keen that it should be multi purpose and to support health and wellbeing. Through Mr Sutherland's visit (Mangaing Director – Education) and the work of the student council supported by Mr Kemp and Mr Richards the project was able to move forward at a fast pace which resulted with the installation beginning in December ahead of the initial 2022 schedule. Many thanks to all involved alongside Mr Wall (Site Manager) and Mr Harfield (Maintainance) for supporting the project installation programme, but the biggest thank you is to the student council who had the vision, energy, and drive to oversee the project from start to finish. I'm delighted that their legacy is that present and future students will enjoy this facility for years to come.

Please can I ask that any positive cases that arise over the holiday period are emailed directly to me (jenny.nimmo@cambiangroup.com) so that I can keep breast of all COVID matters. Can I also advocate for the government guidance for all students to take a lateral flow test before returning to the school and residential provision to prevent further outbreaks and to keep individuals and their families safe. Staff will be undertaking the same guidance and will also be testing before coming back onto site.

The new half term starts on Wednesday, 5th January 2022 we look forward to seeing our students in the new year, until then my very best wishes to you all.

Jenny Nimmo
Principal

Primary Update:



In the KS2 department we have had another busy term and continued to develop our skills in a wide range of curriculum areas.

In English we have studied James and The Giant Peach as part of our Roald Dahl focus and really enjoyed seeing how different it is compared to Charlie and The Chocolate Factory but also how very similar it is too!

Through looking at this book we have been able to complete instructional writing, diaries, and fictional writing. Unfortunately our much anticipated trip to the Roald Dahl Museum has had to be postponed until the new year.

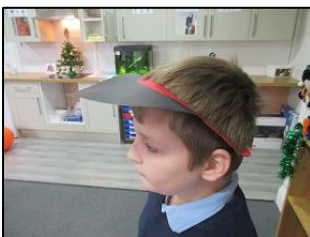
In Mathematics we have been looking at Measurements (Money), Multiplication and Division. All of these topic areas have been taught in context and in 'real-life' situations. We have also been consolidating our learning from previous topics so as to cement our understanding.

As part of our Topic curriculum we have been looking at 'The Rainforest'. Through this topic we have discovered how important all of the rainforests around the world are for our climate, food production and medicines. It has been amazing to find out about the weird and wonderful animals and plants found only in the rainforest!

Scientifically we have focused on 'States of Matter'. We have developed our understanding of the differences between solids, liquids and gases, classified objects and identified their properties. We have worked scientifically and collaboratively to investigate the weight of a gas. We will continue this topic after Christmas and explore the ideal temperature to melt chocolate; How water changes state; Explore melting, freezing, condensing and evaporation. Finally, we will learn about the stages of the water cycle and even create a mini water world!

Finally for Technology and Art we have been designers. We have designed and made our own hats as well as designing the most outrageous moustache. (We even tried to be more bizarre than Salvador Dali!)

Next term we look forward to studying Crime and Punishment, History of Music, Dodgeball, Christianity, Light, and to learning about food and Spanish! **Mr Kemp**





Subject Updates:

Maths:

Our Year 11's are working towards their GCSE's in the summer term having demonstrated large amounts of determination to work towards individual target grades. All students have completed their end of term and unit assessments, and have done very well, showing large amounts of progress and development from starting points. George (Year 10) is to be commended for memorising the sine and cosine rules; alongside Maxwell and Josh, who are congratulated for creating their own data to analyse by visiting other staff and students to measure their heights. In GCSE Statistics Alex (Year 10) is to be commended for worked incredibly hard all term and achieving a set of good levels in his assessments. All that's left to say is we hope you have a Merry Christmas and we look forward to starting some new topics in the new year with our students. **Mr Mackay and Miss Gresty**

English:

It has been such a challenging half term, but once again, our students have shown great resilience and flexibility. Our Year 11s have been completing their Speaking and Listening Assessments for their Language GCSE, and so far we have passes, merits and distinctions all round! We've heard some lovely speeches on a range of topics, from what subjects should be on the curriculum to the importance of generosity in the current climate. Our Year 11s and 12s have also been studying Dickens' A Christmas Carol - apt for this time of year and a true classic. Our Year 10s have been tackling 'Power and Conflict' poetry; it has certainly been a challenge, and I think most English teachers would agree if I were to unilaterally state it's one of the hardest parts of the curriculum, however our students have risen to the challenge! As for KS3, they have been focusing on Canon Literature - either The Odyssey or Beowulf - texts that have literally shaped the way we write and consume literature today. Our students have done exceptionally well at staying focused and relishing such exciting stories. Next term, they will be moving on to non-fiction texts. **Mrs Buchan**

Geography and Forest Schools

This autumn term has been incredibly busy for our GCSE students and forest school. Topics covered this term include volcanoes, earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes and the El Nino effect have been studied in-depth as individuals have learnt about the impacts of natural hazards, and the impact climate change is having on our planet.

In-line with the festivities of Christmas, Year 8 students have foraged the school's grounds for holly, pine, acorns and berries to decorate their wreaths and Christmas decorations. In addition we don't forget the bugs either who get their own hotels for the winter! Students are to be congratulated on their creations and work this term. **Mr Handby**



ICT:

In ICT and Computing this Half Term the students in Year 10 and Year 11 have been learning about Computer System architecture and the use of embedded systems alongside looking at the use of binary, hexadecimal and ASCII language aspects as part of their schemes of work.

The Year 8 and Year 9 students have been learning about binary and how it is used to create images and algorithms and how they are used, while the Year 7 students have learned about binary conversion, an introduction to algorithmic thinking and revisited using formulae to undertake spreadsheet tasks. **Mr Fanning**

Food Technology:

In Food Technology, the Year 7 students have been looking at nutritional values and different sources of carbohydrates and proteins in food alongside their practical lessons. Year 10 and Year 11 students have been learning about how different factors affect individuals' food choices and evaluating nutritional values and information alongside their practical lessons where individuals have been exploring Italian cuisine. Students are to be congratulated on their contributions and high levels of progress this term. **Mr Fanning**

PSHE:

Over the past term students have been spending time creating board games. Individuals have been working towards the target "how to be enterprising, including skills of problem-solving, communication, teamwork, leadership, risk-management, and creativity". Each student has put a lot of time and thought into their own designs and on the last week of term they all had the opportunity to play each other's games. Our students all worked well together and engaged with strong communication skills; our students should all be very proud of the work they have achieved over this term. **Miss Harvey**



Psychology:

Our Year 12 students have studied Perception this term where they have discovered how the brain interprets visual cues both psychologically and biologically, whilst critically considering how visual illusion work. Students have also been introduced to Early Development, where they have learnt about Piaget's stages, and debated whether nature or nurture plays a bigger part in who we are today. Students researched how a foetus develops in the womb, and how a child's thinking qualitatively changes from birth to eleven years old. A fascinating, yet difficult topic! In the new year, this group will be sitting a mock GCSE and get a chance to show off their knowledge. Our Year 10 group have studied memory this term, looking at different types of memory, how we learn and what affects our recall. It's been a great topic, as it is one we can easily practically demonstrate with the help of some willing students! It is also transferrable with other studies, as our students are more cognizant of effective ways to revise. **Mrs Buchan**

Physical Education:

During the Year 10 PE lesson this week students were afforded the opportunity to utilise the new outdoor gym equipment. The students enjoyed learning about what muscles are being used at each station and a competition was put on for the students. It was great to see all our young people in participate and cheer each other on. **Miss Rock**



Science

It has continued to be busy in the Science lab in the second half of the term. Key Stage 3 students have learnt about the human body, Year 7 students focusing on breathing and movement and Year 8s on reproduction. Year 9 students have been studying heat transfer and looked at convection currents in water.



Classes in Year 10 have looked at transport in humans and plants. Individuals observed stomata and guard cells under the microscope and, when they looked at xylem cells, managing to see spirals of lignin.



A number of our Year 11 students studied the use of fractional distillation to make petrol and diesel.



Other Year 11s learnt about metal reactivity, so of course managed to burn some magnesium!

Mrs Goodgame

Head of Key Stage Updates:

Key Stage 3:

We would like to say a massive thank you to all of the students for taking part in Christmas Jumper Day! We have had a fun packed term with Children in Need, Anti-bullying week and Christmas Dinner Day. All of our students have come a long way from September and all settled in well. On behalf of the KS3 team, we hope you all have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. **Miss Harvey**

Key Stage 4:

The students in Key Stage 4 have worked incredibly hard this term, they have all made individual progress and it's lovely to see them all shine in their own way. Witnessing the hard work that's being put into lessons and the work the students are producing is ultimately rewarding and a privilege. Our students have managed exceptionally well with the changes in school this term, and I look forward to seeing each student back in the new year. On behalf of the Key Stage Four Team we hope you all have a lovely Christmas. **Miss Rock**

Key Stage 5:

Hello and Merry Christmas from the team and students in Key stage 5!

This term has seen our 6th form students settle into being senior students with a huge emphasis on being role models to the rest of the school. It delights me to say that all our students have made a fantastic start to life as a 6th Form Student and have settled into their studies admirably. From the move to a different 6th Form area (from upstairs in the lodge to downstairs in the chapel), adapting to staffing changes, with multiple new students joining the school family, our fabulous 6th form students continue to strive and support all staff and students at PLS! Although at first the independent study periods were somewhat challenging, I can say all the students are working hard and striving for their target grades to ensure individuals can be successful in their next steps on the pathway into adulthood.

Although the dreaded Covid has not permitted our students to explore the world outside of Potterspurty as much as we would like, our students have all been proactive in researching and engaging in college visits, meetings and planning for their future. It fills me with pride to see how far the students in the provision have come and I am so excited to see where this year will take each and every one of them. From all the team and students in Key stage 5, have a very merry safe Christmas and a happy New Year. I look forward to January 2022 where we will begin another exciting term. **Ms Mulvaney**

Clinical Update:

Occupational Therapist:

Crafty Kids

We've been very crafty this term in OT, making some fabulous creations including our own boardgame counters, keyrings, fidget toys and even a doll's house. Crafting is a brilliant activity to engage in. It is proven to lower blood pressure, reduce anxiety and promote a mindful experience. Crafting provides a sense of purpose and achievement, which in turn boosts self-esteem. Crafting is an evidence-based activity, which is used to improve fine motor skills, which helps handwriting in class, self-care skills such as dressing and feeding, improves problem solving skills and can even regulate the human senses when used as a multi-sensory activity. Crafting can even improve attention span, social skills and postural control!

I'd like to wish you all a very peaceful and happy Christmas! **Mrs Herriot**



Congratulations:

This is a model of a Porsche 934 which won the gold medal in the Junior Car class of the International Plastic Modellers' Society competition – well done George (Year 10)!!



Residential:

Photos from Halloween



Anti Bullying Week:

Photos of the students who were awarded certificates during anti bullying week for kind acts/words and having an overall positive attitude in school. Congratulations to Max and Josh (Year 8), Jack (Primary) and Mathew (Year 7). Ms Taylor



Tree Decorating:

We had a few helpers to decorate our Christmas tree in Reception, I think you will agree they did a wonderful job! **Mrs Eastabrook**



Christmas Treat:

Students and staff enjoyed a hot drink and a cake when the drinks van came to school on Wednesday 15th December, a treat for everyone's hard work, it was enjoyed by students and staff – many thanks to Miss Nimmo for organising it. **Mrs Eastabrook**

