

Formal Curriculum Report Spring Term 1 2018

We have all returned to school after a very busy, productive and fun packed Autumn Term. I know the pupils in my form have bounced back into the new year, with boundless energy, which we are channelling appropriately.

Within the science department it sounds like the students really got the opportunity for hands on learning to stimulate and provoke how things work! Mr Hayman informs how “the key stage 4 students have now completed their electricity coursework units. They worked hard on different types of circuit, names and functions of components in circuits, electrical safety, energy changes in circuits and switches. We also enjoyed building working batteries using lemons and vinegar.

The key stage 3 students loved the work on light. We learned about shadows (making shadow puppets), transparent, translucent and opaque materials, 'hi-vis' safety clothing and about how light is refracted into different colours”.

It is fantastic to read how our students are really being provided with life skills to support them in the community as Mr Hayman explains “students in key stage 4 continue to work hard on their entry level coursework. This included Personal Progress work and WJEC entry level 2 and 3 work. The work on money included recognising coins (much harder now coins no longer have a value in numbers on them), making different amounts of money, adding up bills and calculating change. Students in key stage 3 worked on individual maths skills”.

Jan reports on the enterprising skills of some of our students, which will hugely benefit all the pupils at our school.

“Outstanding achievements in Life Skills was the restarting of staff lunches after October half term. In the six weeks up to Christmas, students made a profit of over £350. These monies were used to fund a meal out at the pub for them and the purchase of additional equipment for the Life Skills room”.

It is really heartwarming to read how the students are embracing their learning and really impressing their teacher Miss Kemp.

“Last term I was very proud of form HS who researched the world of illustration and illustrators before designing their own book characters. Pupils used storyboards to create short stories based on their characters. Each story was then place together in a class storybook. All of the pupils really engaged in the topic and really showed some fantastic skills both practically and conceptually. The work produced an outcome which was both of high standard and really reflected each individual pupil”.

What amazing opportunities our pupils are being provided with through the Beanstalk Charity. Well done to Mrs Ellis for forging this hugely beneficial relationship with the Charity. The benefits are really evident as Mrs Ellis explains.

“In the half term before Christmas the pupils continued to work hard in English lessons and as a result all the pupils made progress in at least one of the areas of English. In particular it is the progress made in the development of reading skills of specific pupils which needs to be celebrated. Chloe Wilks and Rebecca Allison made considerable progress with their reading skills and as a consequence their confidence in their own abilities has grown. This of course has had an impact on other subject areas and in the ease with which they are able to access written material. Chloe and Rebecca have always worked very hard in English lessons and have always read daily. However, since July both have been receiving twice weekly support from a volunteer from the 'Beanstalk' charity. This has undoubtedly had an impact upon their reading skills but has also helped to develop both their confidence and communication skills”.

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I am delighted to say that another volunteer from the charity joined us in December and we are already seeing improvement in the skills of those pupils receiving her support. In particular, Amber Atkins, who has always been very enthusiastic about reading but is now even more so. The support of the Beanstalk charity has not only raised reading, communication and confidence amongst the pupils it is supporting. It has raised the profile of reading itself and of the pleasure of being read to. It is an area on which I hope to focus even more in the coming year.

During the Autumn Term my form relished in the opportunities and experiences they were provided with. A trip to Thursford, a visit to Santa, a meal at a Chinese Restaurant, Christmas dinner a Christmas Party and Christingle at Christ Church. For myself and the staff involved in the pupils learning our proudest moments were when they performed in the School Nativity and the Special Schools Nativity at the Cathedral. Pupils were amazing with recalling their lines and really got into character. So much so that now I have recognised their hidden talents this term we are sharing a variety of 'Traditional Tales', which pupils will be re enacting! I must also mention the pupils reactions when they received their presents at the Christmas Party from Santa. We had supported pupils to write letters, saying what they would like Santa to bring them, so we had been privy to this information which enabled us to select presents we knew they would like. The excitement that afternoon really made our Christmas, they were all soon involved with navigating their remote controlled cars around the hall, dressing up as Harry Potter, playing with their furbys and trucks and sharing their book!

Knowing what interests and excites the pupils really contributes to supporting their learning and development. We can tailor activities to things we know that will motivate them to progress, promoting their learning through fun!

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