

8<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Dear Parents

As I think everyone is aware, the biggest event this week has been our 'visitors'! We have been waiting for this Ofsted inspection for what seems like forever. Due to take place two years after the previous inspection, we thought we would be inspected around April 2020 – but Covid had other ideas! This week the call finally came – on Monday breaktime and the team of inspectors spent two days with us on Tuesday and Wednesday this week. We had four inspectors with us on Tuesday and three inspectors on Wednesday. They were very thorough and visited all areas of school – even experiencing a fire drill in the pouring rain on Tuesday lunchtime!

We are not able to share the judgement with anyone until the report is finalised, which takes around 30 days from the end of the inspection. However I think I can share how amazing our pupils were – from Reception to Year 11. They were polite, courteous and spoke so confidently to the inspectors about their experiences of school. My favourite moment was when one of our Reception children offered the inspector a chair because he was crouching at the low tables typing up his notes. A very Polam moment!

It hasn't just been a week of Ofsted though – there has been a lot going on this week so I'm not sure if it is inspection which has tired me out or everything else! Thursday was National Poetry Day and both Mrs Brown and Mrs Squires were determined to celebrate their love of poetry. In Senior School we began with a Reading for the whole school where all the teachers in the Languages and Literature Faculty (including me) read poetry to the students. Mrs Roberts read two – one in German and one in Russian. Mrs Joyce read in French. I read Philip Larkin's An Arundel Tomb, which is one of my favourite poems. Mr Robson read Kipling's 'If' – a good choice for a Careers Leader!

As one of Mrs Squire's favourite poems is Michael Rosen's Chocolate Cake, she had arranged for there to be chocolate cake for desert in the canteen on Thursday! In both Seniors and Juniors pupils wrote Haiku poems during the day – and I might be able to share some of them with you next week!

On Wednesday Mr Wilkinson's footballers had a defeat at St Aiden's, followed on Thursday by a great victory at Wyvern – his account here:

*Despite Wednesdays defeat to St Aiden's the lads looked forward to their return home match against Wyvern academy. With a number of important injuries we were missing key players Roman F & Lewis P following a head collision last night and Adam L with a leg injury.*

*Some Year 9 boys were called up to play and were outstanding. Ben M scored a long range effort from near the halfway line, Blake and Answorth played well in attack but the pick of the bunch was Alex W (Y9) who looked competent & strong every time he had the ball.*

*Alex W (Y10) scored a whopping 4 goals also!*

*Ben M 1 & Harry K 1 Alex W 1*

*MOTM - Alex (year 9)*

*End score - 7-3 v Wyvern*

*Huge thanks for the support from Mr Collings, Mr Buchanan & Mr Robson for coming to watch part of the game!*



*On Thursday afternoon we hosted the Darlington Netball tournament on the courts for Year 10. Although our team was not placed, they played hard fought games against six strong other schools, playing with determination and etiquette.*

*Player of the team for Polam 1 = Ella Gibbon*

*Player of the team for Polam 2 = Grace Caygill.*



In Junior School there has been a lot of writing going on this week! Mrs Johnson has sent me this report:

*Children in 4J have been independently writing their diary as Ug this week, they have used emotional language to describe what it would be like in the Stone Age and how uncomfortable stone trousers would be. The children enjoyed editing their work wearing our editing glasses that magically spot any mistakes!*



Today has been the deadline for the House Art Challenge, which you may remember is on the theme of 'Recycle'. Lots of pupils right across the school arrived this morning carrying a variety of different artworks – well done to them all for taking part! I look forward to hearing the results from Mr Buchanan.

Mrs Dixon has asked me to put a reminder that bookings are now open for October's Holiday Club. She tells me that they have many exciting activities planned and a Halloween party on the last day! Places are filling up fast so please book now to avoid disappointment. Email [dixon.s@phs.woodard.co.uk](mailto:dixon.s@phs.woodard.co.uk) for further details and bookings.

It seems hard to believe that next week is the final week before half term. We have Junior School parents evenings next week so I hope to see some of you in school for those.

Have a lovely weekend

Best wishes



Kate Reid