

Priory Woods Newsletter

Brief News

Upcoming Dates

Fri 9th February - PD Day

Safeguarding Information

If you have any safeguarding concerns, please contact: Vicky McDermott, Emma Fox or Paula Smith. Our safeguarding Governor is David Mudd.

Out of school hours you can contact:

Cleveland Police: 101

Early Help Team support and advice for families

To ask for Early Help support, you can: call 01642 726004

email:

MiddlesbroughMACH@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Website:

<https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/children-families-and-safeguarding/early-help/what-is-early-help>



Message from Emma

Dear Families

Well what another busy term it has been at Priory Woods!

The year started with welcoming our new Reception and Year 7 pupils, they all settled in so quickly that it is hard to believe that they have only been in school for one term.

As usual, this term has been jam packed, and I am sure you will enjoy reading about some of what your children have been getting up to in the rest of the newsletter. Highlights for me have included seeing how much the pupils that went on a residential to Bendrigg enjoyed their week and how much they were pushed outside of their comfort zones. From rock climbing to kayaking, the smiles never left their faces. Our musicians continue to go from strength to strength and the Open Orchestra still amazes me every time they perform. I was incredibly proud last week when some of our Post 16 students stood up in front of hundreds of professionals at a conference at the Riverside Stadium to talk about what life is like living with a learning disability in Middlesbrough. They have worked with senior staff at the council to identify what is good in Middlesbrough and what could be improved, they were so confident and received a thunderous round of applause.

Christmas has taken over the school in the last few weeks and there is glitter everywhere! Thank you to everyone who came to the Christmas Fair and those who have supported our Priory 16 enterprise, they have been working very hard to get all of your orders ready for Christmas.

The Lower School Christmas performance was another spectacular event. I could see how proud all of the families were of their amazing children, rightly so, they were all superstars!

We were also treated to an Upper School and Post 16 Christmas Showcase, including a performance of Elf. It was lovely so many families came along to support their children and see what they have been working so hard on over the last term in their Creative lessons.

None of the above can happen without the hard work and dedication of the staff we have in Priory Woods. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for everything that they do, every day, to ensure that your children continue to have amazing opportunities and experiences, as our Mission Statement says, they work hard to 'Be the best that we can be' for all of our children.

We are saying goodbye to three staff members this term, Rebecca and Helen are off to pastures new and we wish them all the best in their new careers. We are also saying a very sad goodbye to Maureen, one of our care assistants, as she is retiring. Maureen has worked at the school for nearly 20 years and will be greatly missed.

I hope that you all have a very merry Christmas with your families and loved ones and wish you all a very happy, healthy and peaceful New Year. We look forward to seeing all of the children on 8th January, ready to start another busy year in school.

All the Best
Emma Fox



Yellow Class

Yellow Class have had such a busy, but lovely Autumn term. Some of the highlights for us have included wearing our pyjamas to raise money for Children in Need, a visit to our cafe and of course, our fantastic Christmas performance. It was great to see so many family members in the audience, thank you for all of your support.

We have enjoyed our topic 'The Weather' and loved splashing in muddy puddles. We were even lucky enough to explore in the snow!

Wishing you all an amazing Christmas and New Year with your families. We are looking forward to seeing you all in 2024.



Silver Class

Silver Class have had a brilliant Autumn term. The children have settled really well in their new class, and we have all enjoyed getting to know each other. Our topics this term have been 'My Family' and 'Weather & Seasons'. We loved listening to the story of 'Owl Babies' and sharing photos of our own families. We have enjoyed participating in lots of topic related activities, including Attention Autism sessions, sensory stories and drama. Getting messy and creative in our sensory art sessions is definitely one of our most favourite things to do, though!

Recently, we performed in the Lower School Christmas show for the rest of school and our parents and families; everyone loved it! We're very proud of you all and how much you have achieved this term. Have a wonderful Christmas break, everyone!

Gold Class

Gold class have had another busy and fun packed term. We have enjoyed exploring our 'Weather' topic through lots of sensory explorations. We loved seeing the snow falling one day and explored it in a tray, it was very cold! Hydrotherapy and Rebound therapy continue to be our favourite sessions. We have recently had a fabulous sensory drama session on the trampoline which everybody loved. We have been busy practising for our Christmas show which was amazing.



Blue Class

We have had a wonderful term in Blue Class and have been very busy. We have taken part in re-bound therapy and hydrotherapy, the children have been working very hard at using signs, symbols or vocalisations to make requests. The children have been really motivated by music and songs, we've taken part in lots of singing and signing. We enjoyed our topic story; 'We're Going On a Weather Hunt' and got very messy exploring different weathers in a sensory way. We were lucky enough to explore real snow outside and have a snowball fight.



Pink & Red Class

Everyone in Pink Class has settled in to life at Priory Woods amazingly, with the help and support from their friends in Red Class who have been super role models. In Pink and Red Class this half term, we have been learning all about different weathers whilst exploring different temperatures and textures! We even had a surprise visit from the snow during our exploration of 'Cold Weather Week', and managed to get outside for a snowball fight! Children have engaged well in different sessions, including Communication, Music, Attention Autism and Sensory Stories. We even got messy during our art sessions making some amazing pictures linked to our topic and in preparation for Christmas.

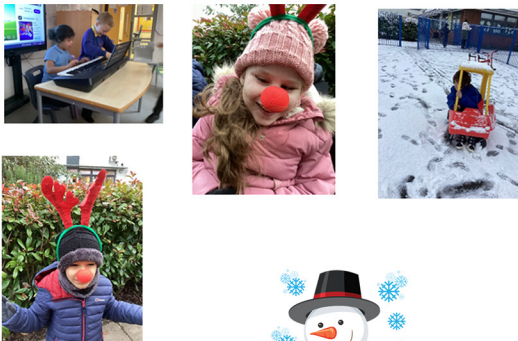
We wish you all a very Happy Christmas & lovely New Year, see you all in 2024!



Green Class have been busy as as usual. We've really enjoyed our topic on the weather. We loved our sensory weather drama where we all went on a weather hunt and experienced rain, sun, wind, storms and snow. We were even lucky enough to have some real snow fall in the playground. We had fun making snowmen and throwing snowballs.

Other things we've enjoyed are our music lessons where we got to play the keyboard and make some lovely tunes, the rainbow run and, of course, the Christmas show. We hope that you enjoyed it.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy 2024!



Orange Class have had a very busy autumn term. We have enjoyed exploring the topic of weather through, sensory stories and sensory dance. Luckily we even had snow to explore, brrr. We had a lovely Halloween Tuff Tray day, we had great fun exploring spiders, slime and pumpkins. Orange and Gold Classes have started playing Boccia on a Monday afternoon, we now have a league table and we have some superstar Boccia players emerging. Our beautiful angel dance has been the highlight of the term, we hope you enjoyed it.





This term in G2, everyone has been very hard working and we have had lots of fun along the way! Firstly, in Topic we have been looking at different cities and finding them on a globe! We used our geographic skills to locate them and discuss which places they are near.

For the Christmas Fair this year, G2 decided to make reindeer dust and snowmen on a stick. As a group, they made their shopping lists, bought their shopping and made their items to sell! With the profit made they got to go on a class trip to a local café and pick out some treats! This was a lovely reward for their hard work.



G3 have worked so hard during the Autumn term and have become great friends. Our topic has been 'Bright Lights, Big City'. We loved listening to the story of 'Madeline the Big City Pig' and learning about cities around the world including London, Hong Kong and Italy. We have enjoyed participating in lots of Cultural

Capital activities including Rosh Hashanah, Remembrance Day and Diwali.

One of our main focus this term has been communication. Emphasis has been placed on signing and the developing the use of communication aids.



G5 have had a very busy first term. We have learned all about London and New York for our 'Bright Lights Big City!' topic. We loved reading Naughty Bus together and working as a team to find out who stole our pumpkins in October.

More recently, we have spent some time learning about the history of Bonfire Night and the story of the Great Fire of London. As we get closer to Christmas, the students have worked hard to develop the Christmas Showcase, and we have done some work around the Polar Express story in class.

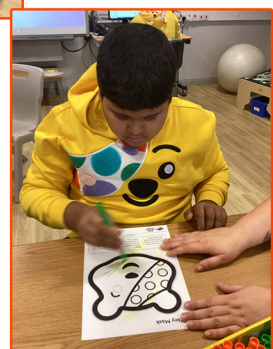
Merry Christmas from everyone in G5!



G6 have started the year extremely well and I am so proud of how well they have settled into their new classroom. This term we have enjoyed our topic 'Bright Lights, Big City' where we have enjoyed exploring a range of different stimulus linked to lights through sensory stories, music and movement and creative sessions. This half

term we have enjoyed our build up to Christmas and exploring a range of activities linked to Christmas through our senses, we have made some wonderful crafts and we are excited to take them home to share with our friends and families.

Well done G6 we are very proud of how hard you have all worked. We will look forward to seeing you in January.





What a busy term! We started off exploring 'Bright Lights, Big City' We did some tap dancing, and flew up to the sky on a paper aeroplane.

As always we have worked very hard with our physical therapies.

As it got colder we made a snowman and had a huge snowball fight, which we made into a short video.

Have a Happy festive season everyone – Love G7



G8 have started their half term extremely well and we are so proud of how well they have settled into their new classroom. This term we have enjoyed our topic 'Bright Lights, Big City' where we have enjoyed exploring a range of different stimulus linked to lights through sensory stories, Makaton sessions and music and

movement. This half term we have enjoyed our build up to Christmas and exploring all of the stimulus linked to Christmas through our senses, we have made some wonderful crafts and we are excited to take them home to share with our friends and families. Well done G8 we are very proud of how much you have achieved. Enjoy your well-deserved Christmas break and we will look forward to seeing you in January.



G9 have had a busy term, continuing our topic of 'Bright Lights, Big City' through dance and sensory stories. We have been having some Christmas fun too, baking cinnamon apple cakes, playing with snow (real and fake!), enjoying Christmas music and lights and creating sparkly works of art. We

have dressed up as snowflakes for our Christmas video and had fun with the wind machine blowing snowflakes all over our classroom.

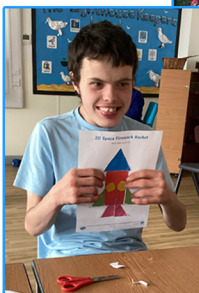
Hope you all have a good Christmas break and see you all again in the New Year!



G10 have had a wonderful Autumn term, we are very proud of how well all the students have settled into their new classroom and their new routines. This term we have enjoyed the 'Bright Lights, Big City' topic and exploring different stories. The students loved G10's version of the 'Light House Keeper's Lunch' and

'One Snowy Night'. We have worked hard developing our phonics and maths skills and have enjoyed being creative in art and drama. The students have been active on the bike track, in PE lessons and in our Hydrotherapy sessions.

Well done G10 we are very proud of how much you have achieved. Enjoy your Christmas break and we will look forward to seeing you in January.



Café 16

Café 16 were pleased to receive another 5 Star Food Hygiene rating. This is our student led café, which is open to the public on a Monday and Tuesday from 10am – 2.30pm, serving lots of homemade treats. We would love to see you in 2024, bring along the voucher that can be found in this newsletter for a free tea or coffee with any purchase.



Come and sample the delights in your local student led café

Bring this voucher to receive a **FREE**

Tea or coffee with any purchase!

Valid until end February 2024



Work Experience

Post 16 students are completing external library work experience placement at Discovery Academy, with one young man now peer tutoring another student. We are always looking to widen our work experience offer, so if you know of any shops, cafes or companies who could offer a placement please email, hatcher.k1@priorywoodsschool.com

Enterprise

Priory Products are excited to offer so many more new and more complicated products, including printed slates, which are proving very popular. We have a group of students who can now work independently to print these, as well as designing and printing personalised mugs. The Christmas fair was a huge success raising a massive £2050!

As part of PSD, students organised and ran a Macmillan coffee morning, they were very proud to raise over £600 which was all donated to the charity.



Christmas Party

Our Christmas party was yet another success! The students enjoyed party games, dancing and singing with their friends. We enjoyed delicious food from '4 The Weekend'. Towards the end of the party, we had a surprise visit from the big man himself- Santa.

Let's hope we are all on the good list!



Pupil Participation Project

This term, some of our Post 16 students attended a celebration event with Middlesbrough Council. These students helped with a meeting when the council had their Ofsted inspection. Huzayl also spoke to over 100 Middlesbrough Council employees about what life is like living with epilepsy. This group of students have been working really hard with this project. They have been discussing important issues regarding the support available for young people who have disabilities in the local area. Well done Post 16!



Shoe Box Appeal

This Christmas, Post 16 decided they wanted to support the charity 'Teesside at Christmas'. We sent 24 shoe boxes and 5 bags full of wonderful gifts for local people in need. The charity told us that this year they have had 600 applications for boxes, so ours will be a huge help. Thank you everyone who donated items, and a huge well done to Post 16 students for all their fabulous organising.

P1

In the run to Christmas, P1 have enjoyed making decorations for the Christmas Fair and as part of their enterprise raised a whopping £83, which we hope to spend on a lovely treat out and about soon. We have made Christmas cards, calendars and decorations for our families, as well as attended the Cherry Hill Christmas Walk with our friends. We've enjoyed watching Christmas shows and making the props for the Polar Express. We've had fun decorating our Christmas tree together and wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.





Classes from G6,G8,G9 and G10 were blown away when Bamboozle Theatre Company performed Storm in school, the production is based on Shakespeare's 'The Tempest'.



Pupils in KS4 were wowed when Harpist, Ruth Lee, visited school on the 11th Oct. As well as learning about the harp students got to join in, record their own work to be part of this all singing and dancing performance.



Upper School pupils and Post 16 delighted audiences when they performed their Christmas Showcase. This is a variety of classwork from music, art, dance and drama.



KS3 Music group, Team Koko attended a concert called 'The Big Rockin Christmas' by Apollo Arts at Middlesbrough Town Hall. This energetic live performance really got everyone in the Christmas spirit.

A selection of Post 16 students visited Middlesbrough College for panto fun. "Oh yes they did!" and were so pleased Cinderella went to the ball and married her prince charming.



Santa Visit

We were lucky to have a very special visit from Santa with a selection box for every child kindly donated by **The Teesside Family Foundation**. Lower School loved meeting Santa during their assembly and they enjoyed singing and signing Christmas songs with him.



Christmas Show 2023

Our Christmas show was 'Strictly Come Dancing the Nativity' which included waltzing angels, twinkling stars, dancing kings and a fabulous signing choir. We are sure you will agree this was an amazing show which showcased what superstars all of the children are. We were so pleased to welcome so many of you to enjoy the performance with us and hope you all enjoyed it!



School Minibus Update

We have been working hard on raising the necessary funds to purchase our new minibus. Thank you to everyone who has contributed, including our suppliers, contractors, families and staff. A special thank you to the Teesside Family Charity who donated an amazing £30,000, the Teesside Charity who donated £5,000, Victoria Wishes who donated £5,000, Applebridge Construction who donated £1,500 and for Dan Hodgson who has taken on a number of fundraising sports events in aid of our new minibus. In addition, a special thank you to Martin, Raymond, Andy & Jimmy who raised £1,300 by completing a cycle ride. Lee Richardson, coach at Middlesbrough Rugby Club, along with some of his under 13 year old players for raising over £2,000 by walking up & down Roseberry Topping numerous times to reach the equivalent height of Mont Blanc in Italy.

Our total raised is at £53,190, so we smashed the £40,000 target set.

We have just ordered a brand new specialist minibus, due to be delivered by May 2024. The new bus will have a tail lift and will accommodate up to 4 wheelchairs, this will enable our children to participate in many more educational visits and events. The new bus is costing £54,000, if you would like to help raise the extra fund required please contact the main office and ask for Debbie Bliss.

