

## MEADOWPARK – NEWSLETTER – WEEK 9 – 12.10.18

‘The best laid schemes o’ mice an’ men gang aft a-gley’ – Robert Burns from To a Mouse (The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry) ... this was certainly the case for me this week, when suddenly faced with an absent staff member through sickness. Knowing that there is a minimum 48 hour recovery period at least allowed me to plan for two days, and the fact that this ended up being three gave me an opportunity to get to know Forth class a little better.

To the credit of all Forth class pupils my style of teaching is very different to their usual class teacher but they adapted extremely well and accepted my slightly authoritative approach, especially when reinforcing Knox values including Knox 90, Respect, Community and Ambition.

As a school we have been looking at the UNCRC since January of this year and most pupils have got a good understanding of what respect means to them, being mindful of the impact when words fail them and pressure starts to rise and coping mechanisms cease to come into force. We have talked about the Rights of the Child and I am beginning to see evidence of working with these rights across Meadowpark and in the wider community. Furthermore I reminded Forth class that as the only secondary school in Haddington any signs of mis-behaviour would be quickly attributed to Knox Academy and that we uphold the same morals, ethos and values as mainstream Knox Academy, therefore the morning walk would be just that and not an excuse for a run around, chasing each other and playing tag thundering along the Tyne walkway while members of the public walk their dogs. Instead the morning walk is to be contemplative, inclusive and preparation for the day ahead. Today we had a dress down day to raise funds for UNICEF which will go towards us achieving rights Respecting Schools silver award and I am delighted to say that we raised £30.

We had a visit from a most unusual creature today – a giant African albino land snail called Flash! I have to admit he was rather beautiful and I remain impressed by the dedication of the young person who brought him in to ensure that he handles him only with clean hands, prepared others to do the same. This same pupil also gave us a demonstration on how to effectively use spray paint to create wall art in one of our shelters. I will publish images of the finished product when they are completed after the holiday but the Wow factor certainly comes into play

Tyne class invited us all to their end of term party today and have to say I am a sucker for ‘Top Hat’ – marshmallow on chocolate with a Smartie on top so I had to have 2! It was a fantastic opportunity to have all the doors open and a free-flow of young people through the rooms.

I am exhausted but also a teeny bit sad that I won’t be continuing in Forth class. I think I will offer my services to reading The Boy in The Striped Pyjamas though because one of the things I miss about being in class is reading aloud. I guess my primary school training comes through and there is nothing sweeter than pace and intonation for settling a class. I know the story well and so was able to increase and decrease tone and emotion and at one point became aware that everyone was listening intently.

Huge thanks to Esk class Mrs Davis for pulling together the Masterclass information sheet detailing what will be on offer in the new term. This will be an exciting opportunity for pupils to work in a different class with a different teacher and different classmates. Mrs Davis is offering community Art and Craft with the long term goal of creating a mosaic through collaboration and which will become

part of our identity.. Mr Gilmour is going to introduce German culture and language, including food, art, films and book. Mr Morrison is going to be heading outdoors to discover more about the history, geography and environs of the River Tyne.

It has been an incredibly busy half term and we are all tired but I am delighted to report how well all our young people have settled into Meadowpark and I am confident that with a renewed energy and focus for our masterclasses next term we will continue to go from strength to strength.

Have a lovely holiday.

C. Prime 12.10.18