

The Diamond Times

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SHINES



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CONTENTS

Page No.

Mrs Henry	1-2
Ballymena Festival	2
Mrs Dundee	3-4
New Technology	4
Mrs Scott/Mrs Houston	5-6
Slippers Day	6
Friday Club Gallery	7
Eco-Schools Projects	8-9
Mrs McKibbin/Mrs Stewart	10-11
School Grounds work	12
Inter-Schools Showjumping	12
Mrs Gillespie	13-15
Sporting Success	15
World Book Day	16
P5/6 Egyptian Day	17
World Maths Day	18

A note from Mr Beattie



It's very hard to believe that we're now in the final term of what has been a very busy year!

Term 2 was jam-packed with activity, from Ballymena Festival rehearsals and success to sporting achievements in netball and football. It was full of novelty and excitement - Slippers Day, World Book and World Maths Day all played their part in that!

The children have been heavily involved with Eco-Schools work, none more so than our dedicated Eco-Schools Committee, who have been working with Mrs Gillespie to make sure everyone in school helps to make The Diamond an environmentally friendly place.

But around all this, the daily work goes on in each classroom - and this magazine will fill you in on all the details, hopefully providing you with a snapshot of 'Diamond Life!'

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of The Diamond Times.

M Beattie

Diary Dates

Monday 4th May - May Day Holiday
Tuesday 5th May - Exceptional Closure

Greenhill Trip for P6 and P7
6th - 8th May

Take Note

P1 - P2 forecast a great day 'down the town'

by Mrs Henry

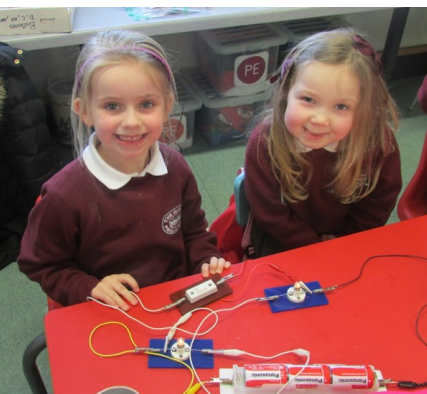


What an exciting second term we have had in Primary 1 and 2. It's hard to believe that it is nearly Easter already!

We started off the term being Weather Watchers and finding out all about different types of weather. Then we moved to reaching for the stars in our **'Twinkle Twinkle'** topic. A highlight of this was learning all about nocturnal animals – we all learned lots of interesting facts. Did you know that hedgehogs are good

swimmers and have around 5000 prickles? We even make our own prickly clay hedgehogs.

We are now learning all about our local town of Ballymena in our topic called **'Down the town'**. We have been talking about lots of different buildings and shops in our local town and even created our own 'Diamond town' by making a shop each out of a cardboard box. We have them on display in our classroom – they look great!





In our Numeracy lessons Primary 1 have been learning to recognise and write the numbers 6 to 10, while Primary 2 have been working on their double sums and revising their addition facts. We are all really good at recognising coins and enjoyed playing shopkeeper in our class shop during our Money work. We have recently started the new topic of Time.

During Literacy time Primary 1 have been developing their book handling skills and are

becoming good readers. They are working hard to put sounds together to read and make words. Primary 2 have been revising their double sounds and are now really good story writers.



The highlight of this term was our visit to Tesco, Ballymena. We got to find out where all our food comes from and were treated to a 'behind the scenes' tour.



Ballymena Festival Success

The choir has been very busy practising for the Ballymena Festival and their excellent performance placed them third in their category.



We also attained some great results in the solo classes and warmly congratulate Anna Aitcheson, Jake Gamble, Jenna Gamble, Ellie Getty, Rachael Hayburn, Rebecca Kerr, Ella Kyle, Stephen McCallion, Callum McKibbin, Joel McKibbin, Emma Milligan, Sarah Shaw, Bethany Turtle, Naomi Turtle and Matthew Wright on their achievements. Well done to you all!

P2 - P3 taste and see and learn what's good!

by Mrs Dundee



This has been busy term in our classroom.

In Numeracy Primary 3 have continues to work on their understanding of number bonds using a range of materials, while Primary 2 have practised adding and taking away using materials and the number line.

The children have also enjoyed working with money - recognising and counting coins, and spending them in role play activities.



In Literacy the children have been learning about 'bossy' words to use in instructional writing. They have written various instructions - how to build a snowman, how to make pancakes, how to make play dough and how to make a sandwich.

They were able to put several of these sets of instructions into practice - and, in several cases, to taste the results!



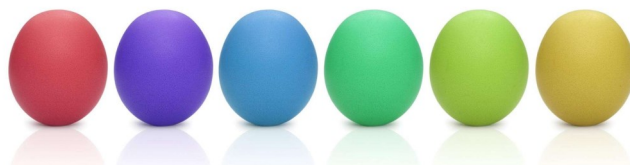


Our theme this term has been **'Yummy Yucky'** and the children have been thinking about the types of food we eat and where our food comes from as well as how to eat sensibly and keep ourselves healthy.

They have painted and modelled fruit and vegetables, constructed fruit bowls and produced posters to emphasise the benefits of '5 a day'.

One of the highlights of the term was World Book Day when everyone [including Mrs Dundee] had the opportunity to dress up as a favourite book character and enjoy a day of book-related activities.

Now we are looking forward to the end of term and we hope to remember the story of the first Easter as well as enjoying some Easter activities.



New Audio Visual Equipment

We are delighted to report that our new ceiling mounted projector and speakers have been installed in the Assembly Hall. The accompanying appliance trolley will allow us to make use of multimedia resources on a more frequent basis without the inconvenience of potentially dangerous cabling lying around.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the parents of The Diamond pupils for your continued support of all our fundraising efforts, allowing us to make these improvements for our children.



Congratulations to Lucy Gillespie [Primary 7] who won first prize at the recent open night at Cullybackey College. She was thrilled to receive a Kindle Fire HDX.

Meet Mrs Logan

This term we have been pleased to welcome Mrs Donna Logan, a Stranmillis student, into the Primary 1 and 2 classroom.



The children have really enjoyed her lessons and we are all going to miss her when she leaves. We wish her well with her final exams and hope to welcome her back to The Diamond soon.



P4 - 5 are so cool, they're Frozen!!!

by Mrs Scott and Mrs Houston

We have continued our theme of Polar regions this term and the children had to complete a project on the theme. The children completed a variety of projects. There were excellent Powerpoint presentations, impressive scrap books and awesome artistic models and Polar scenes. The children were all awarded a special certificate as the standard was exceptional.



In class we painted polar scenes with polar bears. First we mixed sand with white paint to make a textured ice for the polar bears. Then we mixed paint for a pale blue background. We used stencils to draw a mother bear with her two cubs. Finally we mixed shaving foam with white paint to make a different texture for the polar bears fur.



We have also started to make an igloo out of recycled milk cartons. So far we have the base and we look forward to adding more layers.



We had a wonderful treat eating ice-cream and watching 'Frozen' - this really got us in the mood for our '**Polar Regions**' theme. We all had a great time singing along to the songs in the movie.



In Numeracy we have been learning all about money and have created a money display and we are now learning about subtraction by decomposition. Primary 5 are busy learning all about multiples and factors.

In Literacy we were studying the book 'Fantastic Mr Fox' and we really enjoyed looking at all the different characters.

PE continues to be very enjoyable. We have been learning new skills every Tuesday with Mo and we have been learning how to put together a dance in a sequence of moves.



In RE we have been looking at the life of Jesus and learning how he chose his disciples teaching them to follow him and the importance of fishing for men. This is our lovely RE display.

Putting our **BEST** forward **FOOT** for NSPCC



NSPCC Slipper Day

On Friday 6th February we held a fundraising event for the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children [NSPCC]. All pupils and staff wore their slippers to school!

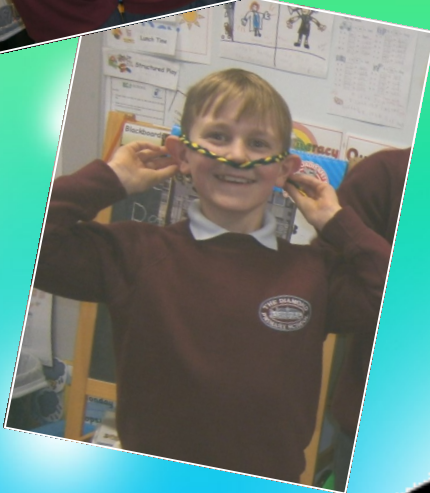


We had a visit from Amy Gregg who works for NSPCC and she told us of the great work the charity does to help millions of children in need. We thought it would be a great idea to raise some money for this worthwhile cause and enjoy wearing our slippers in school too! A huge thank you to all our school families as we were able to present a cheque for £1000 to NSPCC!!

Textile Club



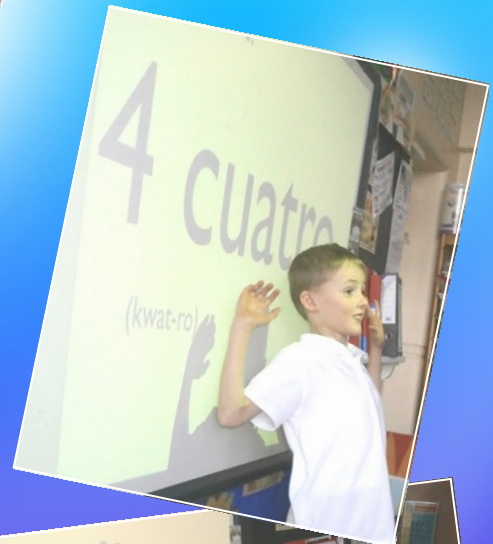
Cookery Club



Friday Club

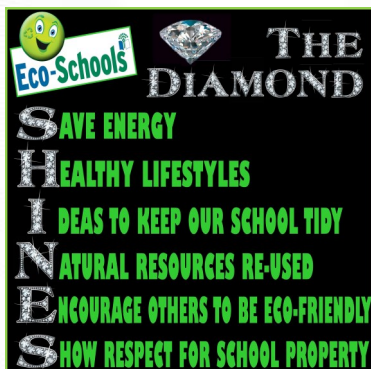


Scripture Union



Spanish Club

The Diamond Eco-Committee have been working hard with Mrs Gillespie in getting the school ready to participate in the Eco-Schools programme. We hope to join the 42,000 participating Eco-Schools worldwide, taking the challenge and working towards improving the local and global environment through education and practical action. The programme has been in operation since 1994 and the Eco-Schools Green Flag, awarded to schools with high achievement in their programme, is a recognised and respected eco-label for environmental performance.



There are currently nine pupils in The Diamond Eco-Committee and is headed up by Peter Cahoon [Chairman] and Emma Greer [Secretary]. Along with the other eco-representatives, Sarah Gilmore, Tyler Kernohan, Rhoda Laverty, Stephen McCallion, Joel McKibbin, Joshua Stewart and Charlotte Todd, the committee have produced an Eco-Code and Action Plan specifying steps to be carried out by both pupils and staff. Our slogan is 'THE DIAMOND SHINES' and you can see below the acrostic detailing how this should be achieved within school.

Each of the five classrooms has been given a different area of responsibility with set targets for monitoring and evaluating progress. The committee has chosen to focus on collectively promoting **healthy living and reducing litter and waste management**. Evidence of the changes implemented in all these areas can be viewed in our newly decorated and dedicated Eco-corridor leading down to the Assembly Hall.

Primary 1-2	Heathy Eating
Primary 2-3	Litter
Primary 4-5	Recycling
Primary 5-6	Energy
Primary 6-7	Biodiversity

The Eco-Committee decided that there should be more regular litter picking sessions and this led to the purchase of litter picking equipment and hi-vis vests. One of the Eco-Committee's ideas involved colour-

Eco Health Check...



For the last year we have been collecting food for the **Ballymena Foodbank**. We love to bring in tins of food and packets from home and put them in the collection box in the corridor. Mandy from Foodbank came to assembly to tell us how our contributions are helping local people in need. She brought the Foodbank van and we helped her pack the food. Last year we donated a total of 155kg of food and we aim to beat that this year!



Thanks to all the Diamond families who support this charity.

coding school bins to match the bins collected by the council. Each classroom was given a black bin for general waste, a blue bin for paper waste and a brown bio bin for food waste. They also decided to bring one of our big blue bins inside to make it easier for recycling monitors to empty paper bins. Emptying the paper bins is much easier when you don't have to fight the wind and rain!



There have been developments outside in the school grounds too. We have been feeding the birds over the winter and will be planting herbs, strawberries and wild flowers in the raised beds very soon. On the advice of the Recycling Officer at our local council, the eco-committee gathered some twigs and leaves to help redress the balance of the mixture in the bio-bin. The compost is coming along nicely and hopefully will be for planting our beds. A water butt is also in place to collect excess rainwater which will come in useful for watering these plants.



Hello - my name is Peter Cahoon and I am the Chairman of the Eco-Committee.

Our eco-committee meets once a week to discuss what's happening in school and in each classroom regarding eco issues and also what else we could be doing in school to make the Diamond shine.

Hi my name is Emma and I enjoy being the secretary of the Eco-Committee. We meet regularly to discuss ideas about healthy breaks, litter and recycling. My role is to write down the minutes of each meeting, recording what is discussed and agreed. I enjoy helping to make decisions to make improvements in our school. Some new and exciting things are happening in school and I am looking forward to helping out with these projects.

In every classroom our eco-representatives make sure each class is doing the best they can to help our school become as eco-friendly as possible. Each class even has their own eco slogan and topic to work on to make sure everybody knows how important eco issues are in school.

Book Recycling

We are happy to receive old children's books [in good condition] that may be incorporated into our Accelerated Reading Library or class reading resources.

Battery Recycling

Old batteries **should not** be put in general waste. Please send old batteries to school where they will be disposed of safely.



CASH FOR CLOBBER

The **Cash for Clobber** programme run by Cookstown Textile Recyclers is a simple and effective way of recycling unwanted clothes and also raising money for the school.

Collection bags are available from the School Office all year round. Remember us when you're doing your spring clean!

P5-6 could teach 'Mummy' a thing or two!!!

by Mrs McKibbin and Mrs Stewart



We have had another great term in P5/6! This term we have been learning all about the **Ancient Egyptians**. The pupils have enjoyed finding out about daily life and farming in Ancient Egypt as well as pyramids, pharaohs and mummification!!!

One of the highlights of the term was our Skype session with Egyptian archaeologist, Alistair Dickey. He discovered the KV-63 tomb in the Valley of the Kings in 2005. This was the first tomb to have been discovered there since the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb in 1992. He told us all about what he uncovered as well as what was inside the coffins in the tomb. The class all had the opportunity to ask Alistair some questions - it was very exciting to talk to someone who was the first person to see the inside of a tomb for 3800 years!





The class also enjoyed learning more about the pyramids at Giza. They decided to recreate these in groups using sugar cubes. We think their creations look fantastic - they even included a shaduf [irrigation method], boats and mummies.

In maths we have been learning about time. P6 can tell the time using the 24-hour clock and P5 are converting between analogue and digital time. We were even able to link our Egyptian theme with time as we made an Egyptian Water Clock - that was how the Ancient Egyptians measured time!



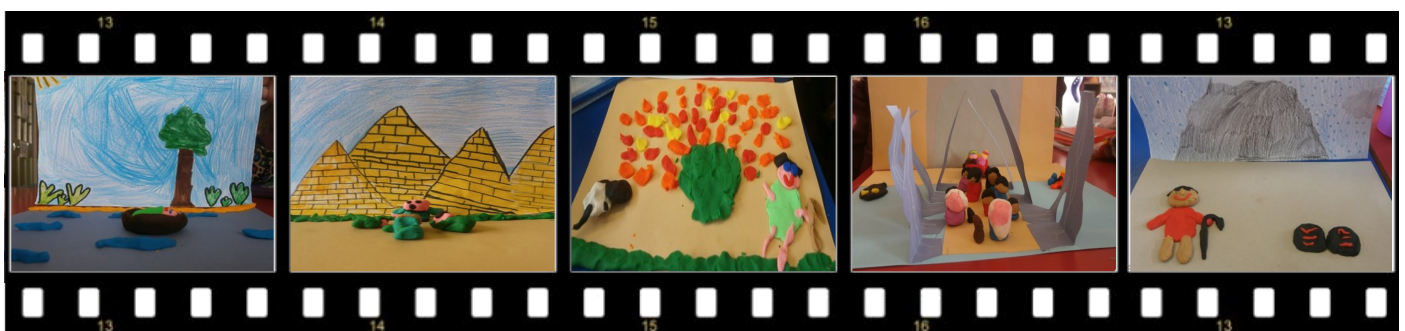
We have also been learning about shape and the properties of quadrilaterals. Just before Easter

we started the topic of length. P6 are converting between different units of length such as mm - cm - m - km!!! P5 are learning how to find the area and perimeter of composite shapes.



Both classes have been learning about the properties of numbers. We played a game where we had to ask our partner questions in order to work out our mystery number - we found it quite hard. We have also been learning how to multiply and divided and all about multiples of different numbers. We have played games on our interactive whiteboard to help us remember the multiples. Our favourite was 'Bubble Multiples!'

In RE we enjoyed learning all about the life of Moses as he also lived during the time of the Ancient Egyptians. In groups, we used playdough to create scenes from his life and then took photographs to upload into the Photostory programme. We had great fun showing our cartoons to the rest of school in assembly. Below is a selection of images from their photostories. Can you guess from which part of Moses' story the pictures below are from?





Taylor and Lucy are Riding High!

Congratulations to our two P7 pupils who recently competed in the Inter-Schools Showjumping competition run by Cullybackey College. We are very proud of your achievements and look forward to watching your progress over the next few years! Next stop - Balmoral Show!!

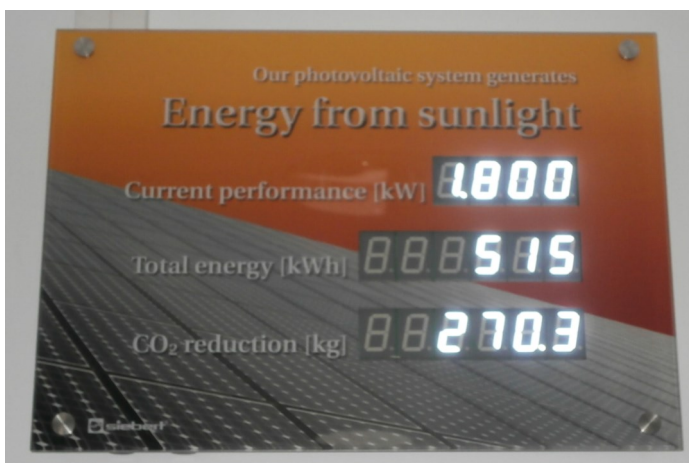


**KEEP CALM
AND
FOCUS ON
SCHOOL
IMPROVEMENT**

School Improvements

You will no doubt have been aware of the recent improvements made to the school grounds over recent weeks. In the first instance the workmen arrived to widen the pedestrian footpath in the parking lay-by. You will notice that the wooden railings have been removed and replaced with strong metal fencing and two new pedestrian gates installed. Although it seems finished there may be one more element to complete so please be patient with us if there is any further disruption.

We are also delighted to be the proud owners of twenty-four solar panels on the roof of Mrs Henry's classroom and the school library. We're now able to create our own energy to use within the school and save money in the process. A special panel in the computer suite shows how much energy we are creating. Next year saving energy will form a crucial part of our eco-schools work so these panels are a great start.



It's a matter of investigation for P6-7

by Mrs Gillespie



It has been another hectic but enjoyable term in P6 - P7. We have had lots of visitors to our classroom, including representatives from local post primary schools, who came to tell the children about all the exciting things secondary education has to offer!

Early on in Term 2 we were given the opportunity to participate in a workshop run by The Bank of Ireland which helped us learn more about money management. We filled out

lodgement slips and handled different currencies. Our favourite part of the workshop was when we were asked to check bank notes to see if they were real or not.

The Primary 7 pupils thoroughly enjoyed at a wonderful morning at the IN-O-V8 event held by Cullybackey College where we were provided with an insight into robotics, science and technology using lots of fun demonstrations and hands-on activities.



In February we were given the opportunity to take part in the 'Fun in Athletics' primary school team challenge. We had a great day out and were placed third overall.

Our theme has been **'Let's Investigate!'** We became budding scientists as we explored the states of matter. We learned about the properties of solids, liquids and gases and found out that they behave differently because of the way that their particles are arranged. We explored the energy that state changes require and the effect that extra energy has on molecules. We experimented with changing water from one form to another. This helped us to develop a better understanding of the water cycle.

In keeping with our theme, we explored the art of the French artist Georges Seurat who pioneered the Pointillist movement. Pointillism is a painting technique in which dots of pure colour are applied to create an image. The dots reminded us of the particles in solids, liquids and gases.



Our class has been thinking about how to improve the biodiversity in our school grounds. We explored 'the web of life' and took a closer look at food chains within our local environment.

We are looking forward to realising some of our plans within the school conservation area.

In numeracy P6 have been working very hard to develop their multiplication and division skills. They have also completed work on time and quadrilaterals. The boys really enjoyed looking at symmetry and can now identify the properties of a range of 3D shapes. Our most recently developed skill is converting between different units of length.



P7 have been learning about mixed numbers and improper fraction. They have also been exploring the relationship between fractions and decimals and have applied their understanding through problem solving activities. We all enjoyed learning how to use compasses and protractors to draw triangles and construct circle patterns. P7 came up with some awesome designs! We are currently learning about the relationship between the metric and imperial system through practical measuring opportunities.



In literacy we have been learning how to write explanations. We also have been developing our comprehension skills by learning more about book genres. We are currently engaged in a project which involved the design of a genre specific book cover, 'blurb', and a storyboard. We can't wait to write the first chapters of our books!

We are really looking forward to a fun-filled summer term!



Netball and Football Success



The Netball Club continues to meet on alternate Tuesdays and we have between 20 and 25 girls who attend.

This term we have played in the Ballymena School's league and in the tournament at the Seven Tower's Leisure Centre. This is the team that played in the tournament although many other girls in the netball club took part in the various matches in the league. They had great fun and represented our school really well.

We are very proud of all the Netball girls.



The Football Team continues to perform really well. They shone at the recent nine-a-side competition, almost qualifying for the finals stage but losing out on goal difference.

The five-a-side team performed brilliantly at the tournament at Antrim Forum. Winning seven out of nine games, they reached the semi-finals and were a credit to the school.



We are very much looking forward to competing in the Junior Cup Tournament at the end of April and hopefully the team will finish the year with a few more victories under their belt. A big thanks to Gary McLaughlin for all his help with coaching this year and of course, to Mrs Stewart and Mrs Houston who have braved the weather on many a Thursday afternoon!

WORLD BOOK DAY

Once again **World Book Day** created great excitement among the children. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed dressing up as a character from a novel and preparing a line or two from their favourite book. We also watched a special big-screen showing of *The Gruffalo's Child* in the Assembly Hall.

The fun continued as each classroom made storytelling puppets out of old socks. The P6-7 pupils also paid a visit to the P1-2 classroom to help out with storytime.



EGYPTIAN DAY

The classroom was transformed into an Egyptian marketplace with many different stalls for the people to visit.



World Maths Day

This year all our activities were 'breakfast themed' and the children even had a special break time treat from local restaurant, Toast. Many thanks to them for this kind gesture - the children loved it.

