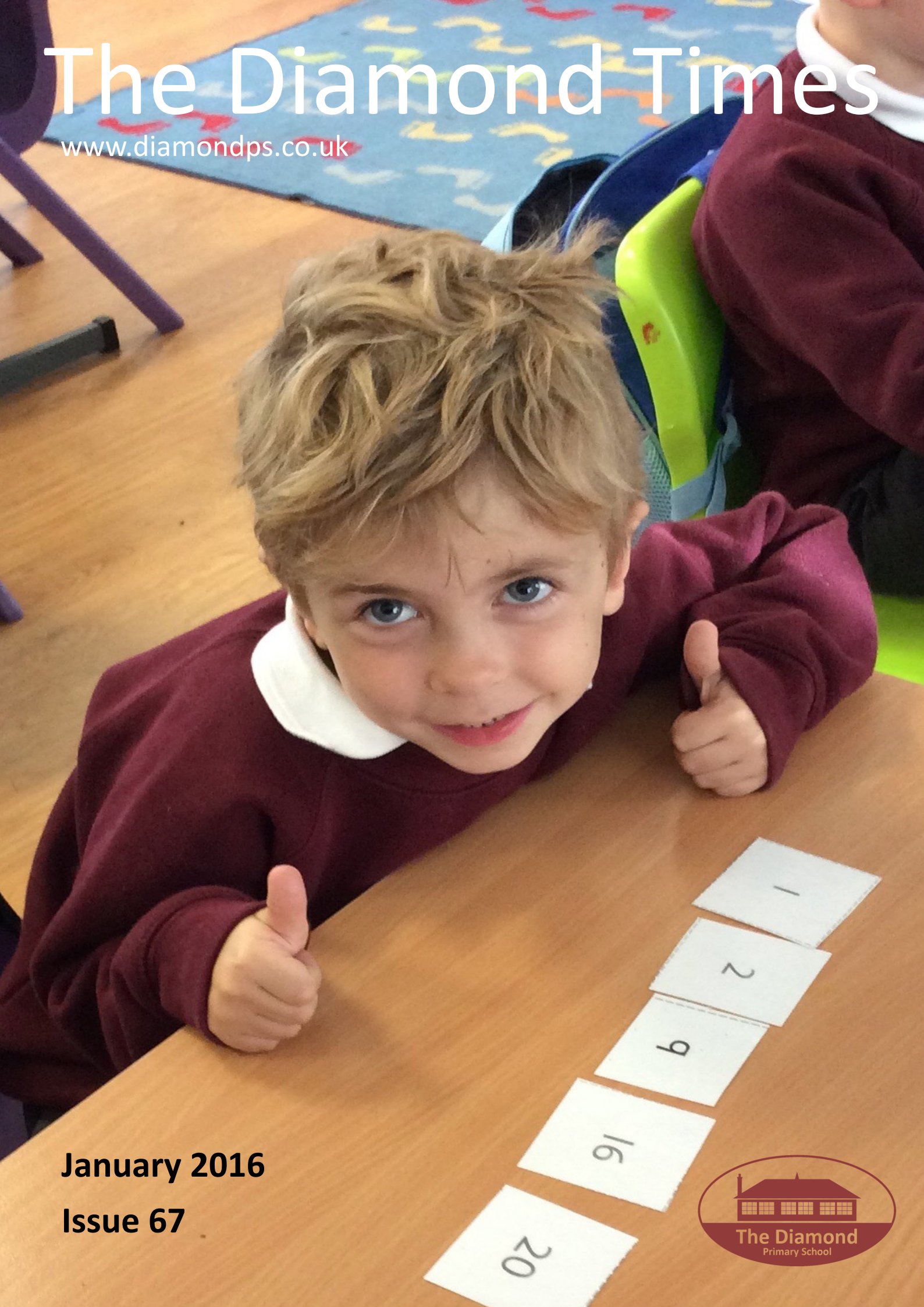


# The Diamond Times

[www.diamondps.co.uk](http://www.diamondps.co.uk)



**January 2016**

**Issue 67**



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## **Editor's Note**

*I hope you enjoy reading this new edition of The Diamond Times. This magazine provides you with a snapshot of school life during our first term.*

*I want to say a warm word of welcome to all our new Diamond families – I hope your children have enjoyed their first term here and have found friends in their classes.*

*The first term was really busy this year. We had many special events to prepare for and so many different activities for the children to be involved in. The children have been really enjoying the new opportunities to learn using the iPads, purchased at the end of last year – and this has been exciting for everyone.*

*In December, we underwent a school inspection – this was a stressful and busy time for everyone, but the inspection went very well and we've been given some wonderful feedback. I'm really proud of all our children, who were complimented for their hard work, their behaviour and their impeccable manners. I'm also really proud of all our staff who work so hard to ensure that children here achieve and enjoy learning. The inspection report is available to read on our school website.*

*So, roll on term two and lots more fun!*

*Mr Beattie*

*Take Note*

### WINTER HALF-TERM BREAK

Friday 12th February 2016  
Monday 15th February 2016  
Tuesday 16th Monday 2016  
inclusive



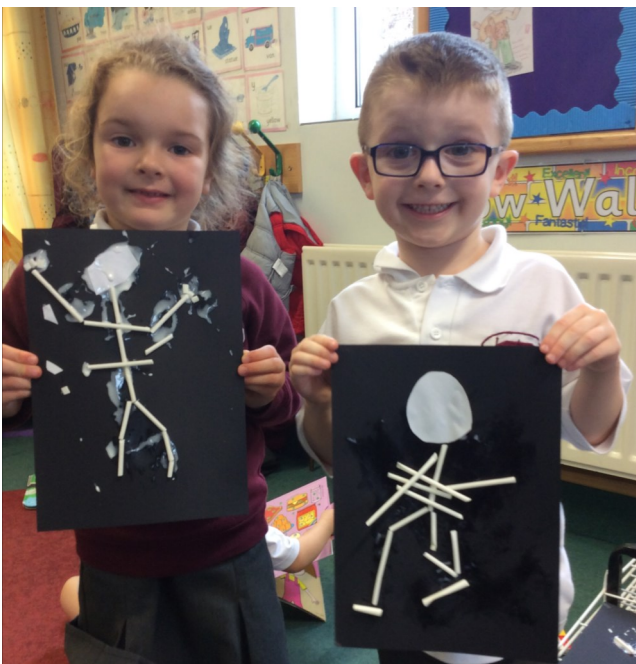
# No time 'to rest their bones' in P1 and P2

*by Mrs Henry*



What a busy first term we have had in Primary 1 and 2. We welcomed a lovely bunch of new Primary 1s this year - Emily Aitcheson, Olivia Arbuthnot, Rachell Brown-Kerr, Jonah Close, Leah Dean, Jason Fenton, Lilee-Grace Gourley, Rebecca Henry, Lea Jamison, Alfie Kernohan, Oliver Knowles, Matthew Kyle, Jamie-Leigh Law, Joshua Marques dos Santos, Maisie-Belle Murray, Rhys Rodgers, Abigail Scott and Harry Stewart. All have settled in well and are very much part of The Diamond family.

In our World Around Us work we have really enjoyed learning all about our bodies. We found out lots of interesting facts about them. We really liked learning about all our bones and loved listening to the story of Funnybones. We even made our own Mr X-Ray. We also liked stamping our fingerprints and we talked about how we are all different. We looked at our school motto - 'We are all different, we are all unique, we are all special!'



The highlight of our topic was a visit from an optician from Specsavers in Ballymena. She told us all about her job and gave each child in school a reflective vest to keep us safe in the dark winter mornings. We will be starting a new topic about Toys and Teddies very soon.





In Literacy work Primary 2 have been working hard to review all their sounds. They are getting really good at using them to read and make lots of words. They are also working hard at writing lots of stories. Primary 1 have been playing lots of games to help their attention and listening skills and are now learning some sounds. They are enjoying reading in a group.

In Numeracy work Primary 2 have been learning how to add and take away while Primary 1 have been learning the numbers to 5. We completed

lots of work on repeating patterns and everyone enjoyed making their own repeating patterns. We have also been learning all about shapes.

Other activities we have really enjoyed include using the iPads and computers during ICT, using the gym equipment during PE lessons and our coaching for Christ sessions.



Matthew

Emily

Olivia

Harry

Lilee-Grace

Oliver

Abigail

Maisie-Belle

Rhys

Jamie-Leigh

Alfie

Lea

Joshua

Jonah

Jason

Rachell

Rebecca

Lea

# NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK



# P2s and P3s are really 'motoring' these days!

*by Mrs Davidson*



This term our theme has been '**Zoom Zoom**' where we have been learning all about transport. We have thoroughly enjoyed all the activities completed throughout the term. We looked at how we travel to school and on holidays. We also learned about different kinds of cars, parts of cars and which cars are suitable for different people. During activity-based learning we were working in the car garage and also selling cars to members of staff! Some children carried out a survey counting the

colours and types of vehicles travelling past the school. We also learned about trains and how they have changed through the years. Most of the boys in our class were very excited about the bullet trains. Perhaps the highlight of our



term was our trip to Wrightbus. Here we got to learn about how buses are made and how the factory works. We loved riding around the factory in a London Bus. We had a fantastic day.

During activity-based learning we have been investigating floating and sinking, building vehicles, looking for missing cargo and learning about Road Safety. Primary 3 carried out their own investigative work on transport types and made brilliant little projects about it.







Another highlight of our term has been our new iPads and their integration into the curriculum. We have used them to make books, learn about shapes, practise our writing, learn about directions and even for reading comprehension. P2 have been learning to use the iPads to explore the school website while P3 have been learning how to make powerpoint presentations.

In numeracy we have been learning about data handling and different ways to show information. More recently our topic has been 2d and 3d shape. P2 have also been learning about subtraction while p3 have been focusing on the 100 square and patterns on it, such as odd and even, and adding 10.

In literacy we have been focusing on lots of sound work as well as understanding what we read. The P3s have been learning about persuasive writing and how we can use writing to persuade others to agree with us.

Another of our favourite activities has been gymnastics, where we have been growing in confidence on the gym time equipment.

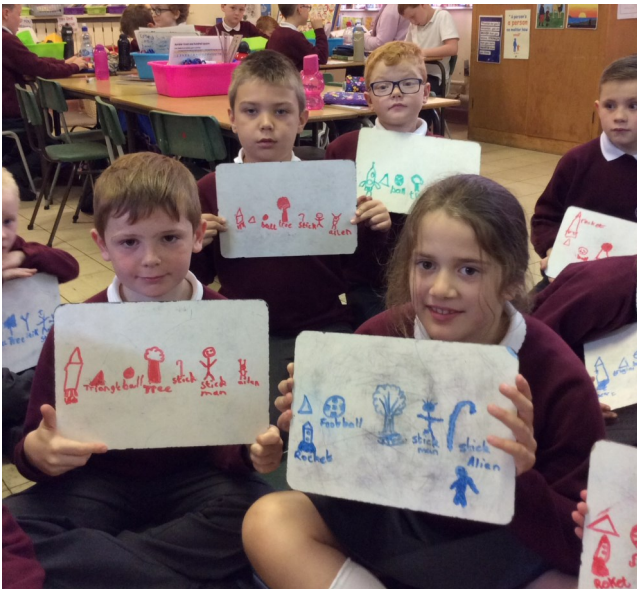


## Grandparents' Day September 2015

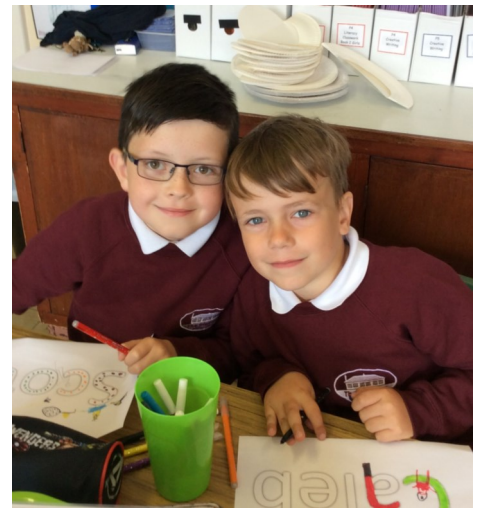




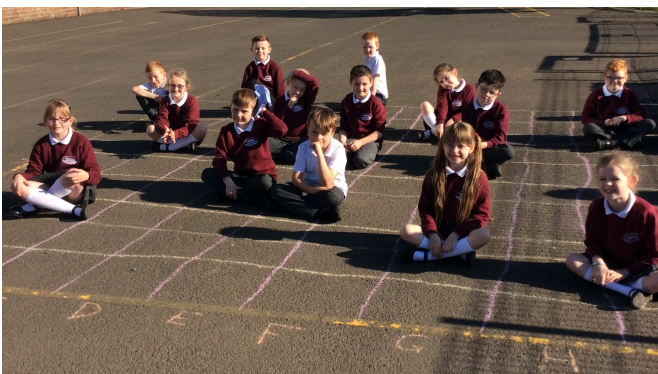
*by Mrs Scott and Mrs Houston*







using right angle finders to find angles around the school. We have also been learning about time and are getting really good at telling the time. We have played games to help learn how to find the co-ordinates of objects and enjoyed jumping in the co-ordinates grid in the playground.



In literacy we have been learning all about the features of narrative writing and have written a number of narratives about our theme. The class

are enjoying the accelerated reading programme and are very enthusiastic to take quizzes and choose new books. In class we continue to read in groups and have been getting to grips with our Reciprocal Reading roles.

One highlight in the classroom this term has been getting to use the iPads in our work. We have been using them in all areas of the curriculum and the children are growing in confidence and skill in using them. In narrative writing for instance the children used an app called Puppet Pal to help them plan a narrative in groups. The class have used them to aid with research and to complete many tasks set in the classroom. Next term we will look forward to using more of the applications to further enhance our learning.

## HARVEST

Our Harvest Celebrations were held on 22nd and 23rd October 2015. Each class took part and our school choir and handbell group also featured. Mr Beattie gave a talk at the end and using a pumpkin demonstrated how we should let the love of Jesus 'shine from the inside out' in our own lives.







On Friday 18th September we had a visit from the Godmodex Bus. Mike brought it out to school to let us see inside and try out some of the cool games. He reminded us that God loves everyone - even people that play computer games!





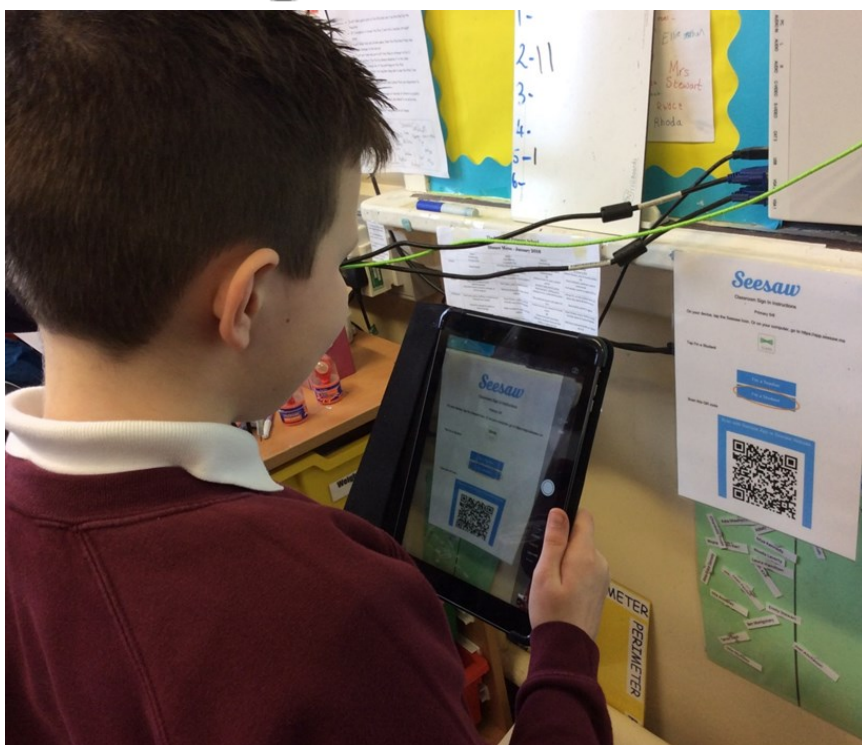
# Seesaw

## The Learning Journal

Recently at The Diamond, we've been getting very technical!

The iPads we have been able to purchase for school have opened up all sorts of learning opportunities and the children have been enjoying and benefiting from using these in class.

One fantastic programme we have begun using recently is Seesaw. Our P5/6 class trialled this programme during the first term and it proved so successful that we're now rolling it out for every child.



***'Seesaw' allows children to share their work with their parents at home – immediately!***



Our children have been enjoying uploading photos or videos of their class work into the seesaw app so that parents can see how they're getting on and achieving in school. Parents receive notifications on their smartphone or computer and can 'like' or comment on the post that's been uploaded by their child. It's a great encouragement for the children to receive this praise during the day!

As we progress with this programme, we hope to use it in a supportive way too. The teacher may find it useful to communicate with parents as to how you can support your child's learning at home – with examples from classwork books or other sources.





### **Hannah and Amy Robinson**

*We really enjoy using Seesaw because when we've done really good work, our mummy comments and tells us she's really proud. She also encourages us to keep working really hard! This week we did a group activity about Vikings and trading and we were able to post our photo onto Seesaw, which was really cool!*



### **Amy McAllister**

*What I like about See Saw is that I can send some of my good or bad work to my Mum and Dad! They can like or comment on it and if there is something bad they can help us to improve it and if it is something good they can reward us! My Mum and Dad didn't know what IZAK9 was so the next time we did IZAK9 I asked my teacher could I take a picture of it to send to my Mum and Dad on Seesaw and when I got home*



### **Joel Aitcheson**

*I like Seesaw because you get to show your mum and dad what your doing at school and they comment on it! When we did IZAK9 I was able to show it to my mum and dad. I also liked doing the Viking longship because I was also able to show it to my parents. Seesaw is brilliant!*



### **Mrs Anna Kennedy (Scott and Mya's mummy)**

*As a parent, I absolutely love Seesaw. It's not only a great way for us to communicate with teachers but a fantastic way for our kids to showcase their work. The fact that it's instant means I can see what they are doing in school while I'm at home and it gives me an opportunity to leave a message of encouragement which they can read straight away. I can't recommend it enough!*

***We would encourage all our parents to sign up to Seesaw using the information provided by the school – it is a wonderful communication tool, a window into the classroom and a valuable means of supporting the children as they work. And best of all, it's free!***



# 'The only way is up' for P5 and 6

*by Mrs McKibbin and Mrs Stewart*



We have had a wonderful first term in P5/6! Our theme has been 'Up, up and away' and we have been busy learning all about flight. We started our theme looking at the legend of Icarus and even thought of alternative materials for his wings! We then looked at kites, hot air balloons and then the amazing Wright Flyer. Did you know that Shorts in Belfast were one of the first factories in the world to be asked to build Wright Flyers! The children loved learning all about famous pilots such as Amy Johnson and Amelia Earhart. They even had a special visit from Amelia in her time machine!

One of the highlights of our theme was to learn more about the work of MAF [Mission Aviation Fellowship]. This missionary organisation fly all over the world bringing help to some of the



poorest countries. We even had the opportunity to skype Bryan Pill who is one of their pilots. His job is to fly supplies and doctors into remote areas of Chad in Africa. The Skype session was an amazing opportunity for our pupils to get answers to their many questions and was the stimulus for their fundraising donut sale! They raised £176 towards the vital work of MAF.







In Numeracy this term we have been using our new resource Izack 9 to help us understand number processes and problems. It has been wonderful to hear the children discussing how to solve mathematical tasks and create questions for their friends to solve using the resource. Our primary five children are also starting to tell the time in digital and P6 have been studying the train timetable to Belfast as they learn all about 24 hour time!

Our pupils have enjoyed the introduction of Seesaw into our classroom this term. It has given them, and us as teachers, the opportunity to share all their amazing work with families at home. It has also been a great encouragement for them to receive comments from home.



We look forward to another exciting term in January 2016 when the Vikings descend upon our classroom!



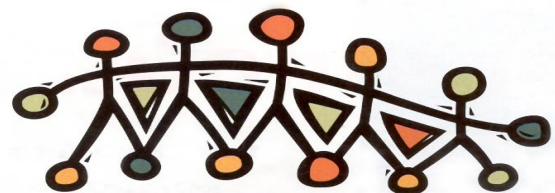
Our Class MAF Donut Sale on Thursday 8th October raised an amazing £176.







This year Open Day was held on Friday 13th November 2015 and we had a great turn out of visitors to the school. After a visit to the Primary 1 classroom and a presentation by Mr Beattie they were given a tour of the other classrooms. As it was Friday afternoon the Friday Clubs were in full swing and therefore our young visitors were able to participate in different activities.



**AFRICANCHILDREN'SCHOIR™**

On Friday 11th December our school choir had the amazing opportunity to sing with the African Children's Choir at a concert held in Cullybackey College. This was a night to remember for our pupils and the performance was amazing! Many thanks to all the parents and friends who came to show their support on the night .



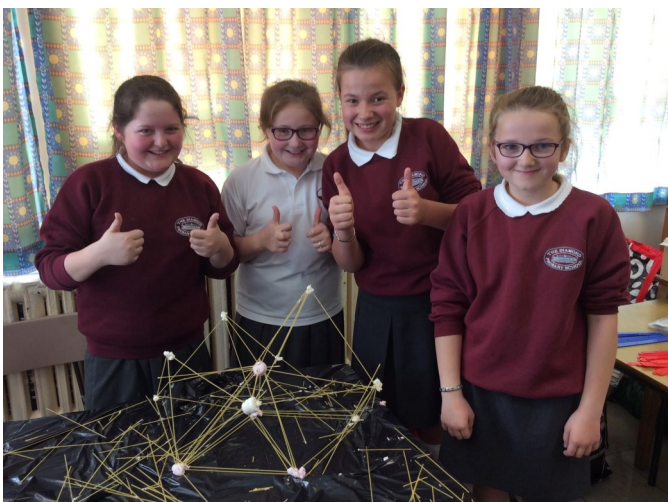
# It's been plain sailing for P6 and P7

*by Mrs Gillespie*



We have been very busy in P6/7 this term learning lots of new and exciting things. Our theme '**A Titanic Tale**' sparked a lot of curiosity and proved to be an extremely interesting topic. We learned how to build stable structures and make weak materials stronger during our exploration of the Arrol Gantry which was erected to construct the Titanic's hull. Our spaghetti engineering challenge gave us insight into the importance of triangulation!

Another highlight involved preparing our own news reports using green screen technology to announce the launch of the hull. We definitely have some budding actors and actresses in P6/7! The class enjoyed learning about some of the characters responsible for the building of the Titanic and showed empathy when the focus shifted to the passengers on board. Our floating and sinking investigations were also enjoyed by all! Seascapes were the focus of both art and music activities.



In numeracy we have covered a range of topics and have particularly enjoyed applying our understanding of the four operations in 'real life' problem solving contexts. Factors and multiples







was a popular topic amongst the P6 boys who have now turned their attention to long multiplication. We have also started working on telling the time in analogue, digital and 24hour format. P7 have been learning to shop within a budget. They have also been learning all about mirror lines. One highlight involved using the iPads to record the findings of a 'symmetry challenge'. The children submitted their work in the form of a poster using the 'Pic Kids' app.



We have made great progress through our reciprocal reading activities this term and are continuing to enjoy group sessions. Nevertheless, 'Big Boss' remains the favoured role! Our shared, group and independent comprehension activities have focused on the conventions of both play scripts and advertisements. The boys and girls enjoyed learning about the role of the copywriter and had a go at creating their own adverts. More recently, the class has shown great flair through their exploration of different forms of poetry. We have been thinking about how to paint strong images with words. We have also been learning about narrative. After writing a 'whole class' adventure about a roller coaster ride, the boys and girls created their own Christmas themed narratives.



On 18th November we held a 'Duvet Day' to reward P6/7 for all of their hard work in Term 1. It gave them the opportunity to unwind and encouraged a positive mindset for those P7 children who were sitting their first entrance examination the following day. The children were invited to bring in their duvets and enjoyed a morning of games, hot chocolate and a special pancake bar. After break, they had a visit from the Godmodex bus, in which they had the chance to play some computer games, dance and just have fun! The afternoon was spent decorating stones which reminded them that 'they rock' in God's eyes. The day culminated in a Shloer reception with Mr Beattie. A great big 'well done' to all of the P7 pupils who recently completed examinations in our local grammar schools. We are all looking forward to a 'test free' Term 2 which the children will no doubt tackle with the same energy and enthusiasm!





# KEEP CALM AND HAVE A DUVET DAY

Friday 6th November







### Church of Ireland Christmas Tree Festival

Our school was asked to sing at the Christmas Tree Festival at St Colmanell's in Ahoghill. We joined pupils from Fourtowns, Longstone and St Paul's Primary Schools to celebrate the opening of the event.



The pupils in our Friday Green Fingers Club also made lovely angels out of pine cones to decorate The Diamond Primary School 'Gabriel Tree' at the festival. One of our pupils was even asked to take part in the official ribbon cutting ceremony!



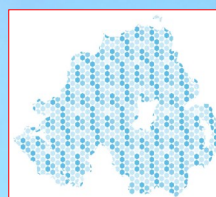
### Radio Cracker

The choir made their annual visit to Montgomerys to appear live on Radio Cracker. Daniel and Kate were even interviewed live on air!



### School Inspection

In the midst of all the madness we also had a school inspection!



The Education and Training Inspectorate visited us at the start of December. The school underwent an inspection focusing particularly on numeracy. We were thrilled with the outcome of this, as the inspectors acknowledged the high levels of achievement, the positive and secure school environment and the quality teaching and learning taking place on a daily basis. The Inspection Report is available to read on our school website.

**Cinema Trip** - As a special treat it was organised for the children to go to the Ballymena IMC for a special showing of 'The Good Dinosaur'. There was **great excitement** as I'm sure you can imagine.





**School Fair - Our Annual Christmas Fair** was held on Friday 4th December and raised £1726.

A huge thank you to everyone who attended or made donations. A really enjoyable evening!





# Christmas Concerts

