

Lighthouse News



December 2022



A Message from the Principal:

Dear Parents and Carers,

I can't believe we are almost at the end of the first term in the 2022-23 academic year and what a great, fun filled first term it has been!

Everyone has been so focused this first term and worked extremely hard, especially the new students in Year 7 who have transitioned from Primary school and adapted well to their new school routines. We have also welcomed some new students into school who have been out of school for some time and it has been great to see them become more confident in the school environment.

On 3 September 2022, we celebrated our 10th birthday. We were the first Special Free School in the country to open our doors to an initial 7 students and we now have 84! A working party is being formed to roll out various events next year to celebrate our 10 years.

Our students have been on a range of life skills excursions as part of their Community curriculum. In Science, students have been enhancing their engineering skills by designing parachutes and hovercrafts and dissecting chicken to understand the structure and composition of different tissue types. School saw some amazingly striking art produced during Black History week, exploring the importance of understanding Black History and designed creative Rangoli patterns to celebrate Diwali, and why light is an important symbol in celebrations.

Student council have been busy with a range of initiatives including leading on Children in Need fundraising. Key Stage 4 and 5 student council representatives attended the SENate event at Leeds Civic hall to share their views and opinions on service delivery and developments. Students in Key Stage 4 and 5 have been taking full advantage of their work experience and career opportunities to help them understand future employment opportunities.

Well done to those students who sat exams in November and those who took their first mocks. Your positive approach and determined attitude did not go unnoticed in school.

We held our first Christmas Fayre since Covid, welcoming students, parents and local businesses and raised an amazing £2,000. Thank you to all the PTA parents who helped staff organise the day and also to the families who attended the event. The money raised will benefit the students and ensure we continue to 'Inspire Bright Futures'.

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A Message from the Principal Continued :

It has been great to see parents and families in school again on a much more regular basis for coffee mornings, events and meetings. The next planned Beacon event for parents is on 31st January 2023.

Our Key Stage 5 students had an amazing 4 days at the Compass House 'pop up' shop in Kirkgate Market selling hand-made crafts including the Lighthouse School calendar for 2023 that they designed, and practised their customer service, money handling and maths skills. Some students also created a mini 'pop up' shop at Ida Lodge, the retirement living building behind school. Music students took part in a Leeds school sing-a-long at Pudsey Civic Hall and we welcomed Same Difference Art company on site to perform their version of the pantomime, Cinderella. Oh yes we did!

To celebrate the end of their first term, Key Stage 3 students enjoyed a festive SHINE disco and made festive crafts, as well as enjoying the Christmas music and refreshments. Students were also proud to show their work in the Lighthouse Christmas sing-a-long show during the last week of term.

During December, we were pleased to welcome back our Summer 2022 Graduates, as well as some of our older students for our annual Alumni Event. It was wonderful to celebrate the successes of our students and hear all about their journeys after Lighthouse School.

We have officially opened our little library outside in the playground as part of our focus on reading in school. This was designed by a student in her art lessons to combine the horticultural seasons with Lighthouse. It is such a creative addition to our outdoor space and gives students access to books during both break and lunch times.

Following the increase in Scarlet Fever and Strep A cases in the UK and locally, a letter was sent home with the Department of Education advice to Parents and Carers outlining what symptoms to look out for. Please take time to read this information and if in doubt, seek medical advice.

Apologies for the short notice closure due to the boiler springing a leak on the Friday 9th December. School is having a new boiler installed, so hopefully this won't happen again any time soon.

School has been delighted to welcome new staff members to the Lighthouse team this term, including a specialist English teacher, SEN teacher, Speech and Language therapist and classroom tutors. These staff have brought to the Lighthouse staff team a wide breadth of experience and have been inducted with an extensive training programme.

On behalf of the Trustees and all the Lighthouse Team, I wish you a Happy Christmas with your families and look forward to welcoming the students back to school in January 2023. Tuesday 3 January 2023 is our Progress Review Day and students return to school on Wednesday 4 January 2023.

Happy Christmas!

Emma Sullivan

Principal

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Exams

We are so pleased with this summer's exam and qualifications results. The students have done so well, and we are incredibly proud of every single one. The dedication, determination, and maturity they demonstrated is an inspiration to us all.

We delivered two new GCSEs – in Computing and Citizenship, plus BTECs in Food, Sport and Drama. School entered our largest number of students for their GCSEs in English Literature, English Language and Maths. We had some amazing results in the Level 2 qualification in Science and in our Entry Level qualifications in English, Maths, and Science.

All of our student leavers were able to go onto their chosen next step. We are so proud of the young adults they have become and we will miss them dearly. These are achievements that will open doors for our students for the rest of their lives. We hope the students are as pleased as we are. The Future is Bright!

“By holding the highest of ambitions for our children (even if they cannot see it for themselves), we shine a light on their potential to lead the brightest of futures.”

Lighthouse Vision Statement

Lighthouse Schools 10th Birthday

We are 10!

On Saturday 3rd September 2022, we celebrated our 10th birthday.

We were fortunate to be the first Special Free School in the country to open its doors to an initial cohort of 7 students. The school continues to grow and flourish and in 2022 we now have 84 students.

Watch this space for celebrations that are planned to mark our 10th year!



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Community Skills

Some of our Key Stage 4 students visited Roundhay Park as part of their Community curriculum. They learnt about the surrounding area and explored other interesting places to visit nearby. Students really enjoyed being outdoors, surrounded by nature - which is a great way to enhance our students' wellbeing.



Dry Rigg Quarry

Some of our Key Stage 4 students visited Dry Rigg Quarry just outside Settle. The students were given a guided tour of the quarry and saw the restoration work which occurs to return the site back to nature. They watched a film of 'blasting' taking place at the quarry (which both students and staff enjoyed!) as well as watching videos of the wildlife found in the quarry such as otters and badgers. The visit was arranged by the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, which is the second trip to the Dales that they have provided for the school in the last 6 months.



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Pantomime

This term, students and staff were thrilled to welcome the Same Difference Arts company into school to watch their pantomime of Cinderella. Everyone enjoyed the performance and joined in clapping and singing during the show, including students who had never seen a pantomime before. Thank you to Same Difference Arts company and to all the staff involved in organising such a wonderful, successful event.



Food Technology

One of our Key Stage 3 groups have been getting into the Christmas spirit baking yummy Christmas cakes! Students have used their weighing skills and developed their decorating techniques, working with royal icing to create some beautiful Christmas designs.



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Year 7 Future Skills lessons

Our Year 7s are settling well in to Lighthouse and have made and eaten beans on toast as part of their Future Skills lesson.



Community Skills

As part of their Life skills in the Community curriculum, some of our Key Stage 4 students visited Meanwood Park. Students walked by the river, learnt about the different trees in the surrounding area, crossed the bridge and discussed how to stay safe in a public place. Students finished the visit by playing in the playground and pushing each other on the roundabout. It was great to see the students developing their public safety skills, socialising independently and having fun!



Community Skills

As part of the Community skills curriculum, students visited Moor Allerton Library and learnt the process of how to borrow and return library books using the library's electronic logging system. Students also had time to choose a book from a large selection, relax and have fun reading in tranquil surroundings and lose themselves in a good book!

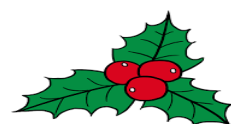
Students developing a love of reading and accessing activities to support their own wellbeing is a focus at school. It was great to see students taking this a step further in the Community.



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Speech and Language

Communication Cornerstone

We are delighted to announce that Joshua Smith, Speech and Language Therapist joined us in December 2022.

We all **communicate** differently. This term we have been increasing awareness on **situational mutism**.

We have created a bespoke **communication preferences questionnaire** for our students who present with situational mutism, in order to understand how best to support them. Information about **situational mutism** can be found below.

What is **Situational Mutism (SM)**?

People with **Situational Mutism** find it difficult to use mouth words (speech).

Situational mutism is often caused by **anxiety**.

They do **not** 'select' or 'choose' to be mute.

It can **change** depending on the person, situation or environment.

People with situational mutism may label themselves as non-speaking, minimally-speaking or unreliably-speaking

Supporting Situational Mutism

- Remember that people with SM may lose access to mouth words **but they still have a voice**
- Make sure they have **access** to other forms of communication e.g. text / tech
- Do **not** tell them to "speak up"
- Please **reduce pressure** to use spoken words
- Try to **remove pressure** of "group discussion"
- **Calm** the environment and **reduce** sensory overwhelm

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Speech and Language

Situational Mutism: Always voiceful!

The absence of verbal speech does not equal no voice.

We all have a voice, always.

We are never voiceless.

Non-verbalism does mean 'without a voice'.

Pre-verbal does not mean 'before developing a voice.'

Our voices are multi-faceted, vibrant and complex.

An individual's voice is always present.

Whether that be verbal expressions, facial expression, preference expressions, the written word, gestures, sign, body posture, eye gaze or appearance.

During the most intense freeze response of SM –

When we cannot verbalise, write, use gestures
or move from our frozen position –

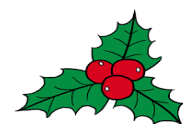
We have a 'loud' voice.

Our voice is telling you we are struggling,
anxious and overwhelmed.

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SENate Event



On Wednesday the 2nd November, six of our Key Stage 4 and 5 Student Council representatives went to Leeds Civic Hall to share their views at the SENate event.

The event was held by the [Leeds City Council Voice Influence and Change Team](#) and was held for all SEND Schools in Leeds to share their voice about what matters to them.

Our students heard from:

Councillor Fiona Venner (Executive Member for Adults and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships)
 Kayleigh Thurlow (Local Offer and Voice and Influence Coordinator)
 Emily Alderson (Universal Voice and Influence Coordinator) and
 Kim Frangos (from the Communities Team)

They also had the chance to look around different stalls that offered the following services:

[Leeds Local Offer / SEND Youth Forum](#)

[MindMate](#)

[SENDIASS](#)

[Through the Maze](#)

[ICAN](#)

[Future Horizons](#)

[DEX](#)

[HealthWatch Leeds / Youth Watch](#)

[The Youth Board](#)

The SENate event enabled our young people and other secondary students with SEND to come together and contribute to the Health and Wellbeing Young People's Campaign.

Brandon and William were even brave enough to get up on the stage and share their ideas with everyone in the room! We are so proud of how they represented themselves and the school and it was such a positive and valuable experience for all involved. This was a great opportunity to meet others, hear about services available, visit the Leeds Civic Hall and make a difference!



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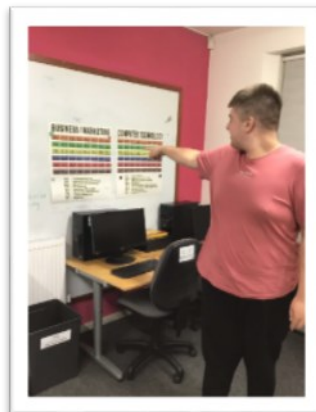
Work Experience

Every week, groups of Sixth Form students, have been attending various work experience activities.

Eight students have been attending a 'Branching Out' placement at Lotherton Hall every Friday, led by staff from Lighthouse Futures Trust and Leeds City Council Parks and Countryside Service. Students have worked tirelessly doing various gardening, grounds and maintenance jobs including apple picking which is a firm favourite task amongst the group!



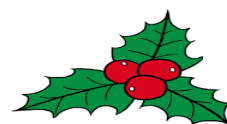
Meanwhile also taking place on a Friday is the World of Work ['WoW'] Programme which ten students are attending. The programme includes project work guided by a job coach as well as work/life skills tasks in the 'PAES' lab. The programme was originally created in the United States and is based on the concept of sector-based learning, in which our students work as employees in the PAES lab to complete short sequenced tasks. Key sectors represented in the lab include processing and production, construction, consumer service, business/marketing, and computer/technology. As each student finishes a task, they gain a better understanding of their own strengths, weaknesses, and preferences, and they are asked to rate their level of interest in their work folder. This term, our WoW students also worked on a project to redesign Lighthouse Futures Trust's 'Learning Lab,' giving students ownership of the space in which they work. The students have also been familiarising themselves with the processes in the PAES lab and working independently in there, they have made great progress!



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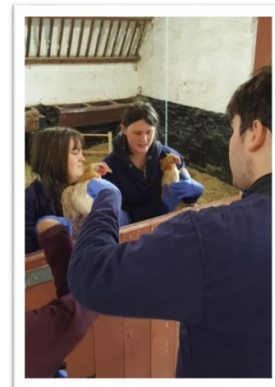
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Work Experience

Every Tuesday morning this term, twelve students worked hard with the Leeds City College team at Temple Newsam Farm, performing a variety of farm tasks such as feeding the animals, providing health checks, cleaning animal pens, and training goats! They've learned a variety of interesting facts as well as how to care for the animals, which include goats, guinea pigs, rabbits, lizards, snakes, chickens, and more... we even saw a piglet in the process of being born!



Careers

What is the Careers provision at Lighthouse School

Lighthouse School is dedicated to being a destination-led school, and we work hard to make this a part of every student's experience with us. Interactions with employers, our curriculum content, work-related learning, career events, activities, and placements all help students make informed decisions about their future education and work. All students in Years 9 - 14 attend an annual careers meeting and receive bespoke information and guidance in accordance with the SEND code of practice (2015), which states that it is important for young people to think about their career aspirations as early as possible. So far, 100% of students scheduled to attend a careers meeting this term have done so, and adjustments have been made as needed to ensure that all career meetings are accessible, informative, and meaningful.

Next Gen Careers Fair

A group of our Key Stage 5 students had the opportunity to attend the 'Next Gen' Careers Fair at Elland Road in October. The students had a great time meeting with college tutors, picking up prospectuses, and learning about specific opportunities related to their interests, such as course and career progression routes. A number of Further Education colleges, apprenticeship providers, and training companies from the region were present at the fair.



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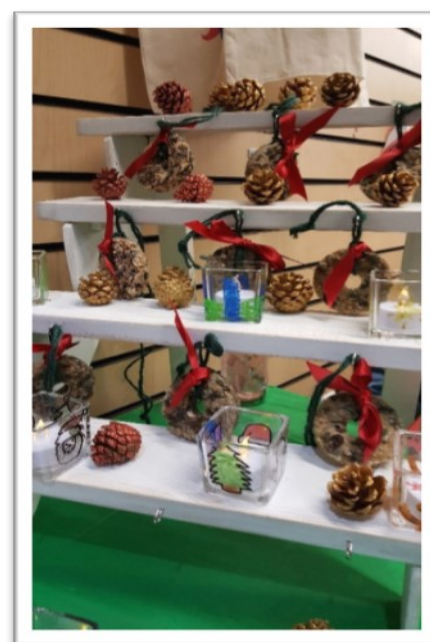
Compass House Pop-up Shop

Compass House Pop-up Shop – Leeds Kirkgate Market

It's that time of year again, when we participated in a fantastic collaboration initiative with other Specialist schools and Leeds City Council to plan and run our own shop in Leeds Kirkgate Market, which the students named **Compass House**.

Throughout the term, a group of Key Stage 5 students attended project meetings at other Specialist schools to plan and prepare for running the shop, including promoting their ideas for what to create and sell, as well as how to advertise the shop. Students from across the school worked hard in their classes to create a variety of handmade products to sell, including plants that were planted and potted up by our Horticulture students, chocolate treats created by our Food Technology chefs, Lighthouse School Calendars designed by students, Christmas tree decorations, and Hot Chocolate reindeer treats!

Every year, running the shop is a great way to kick off December and get everyone in the holiday spirit. We had a fantastic week, and it was wonderful to see our young people working together to demonstrate their customer service and functional maths skills while serving customers. Bring on 2023!



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Black History Week

As part of different learning opportunities for Black History week, students produced some outstanding pieces of art work.

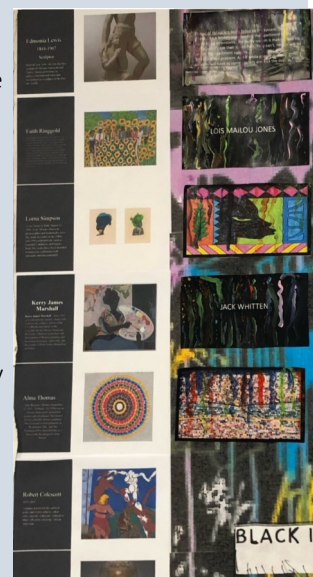
Here is a one student's amazing work, together with their own description of the artwork produced:

"I made some posters with pictures made by black artists and their names then decorated them with street art style paint drip patterns. I also made a paint drip border for the display. I liked doing this display because I like painting and I think it's good to congratulate successful artists of other ethnicities. I also included Banksy in my display because he made art to support the Black Lives Matter movement in America. I added his famous quote on to the picture."

A 6th form Lighthouse school student

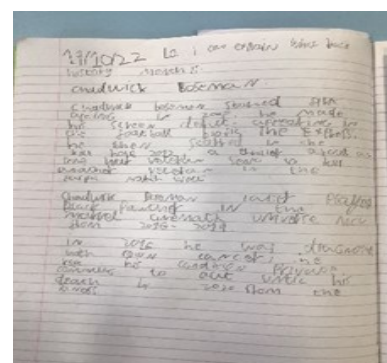
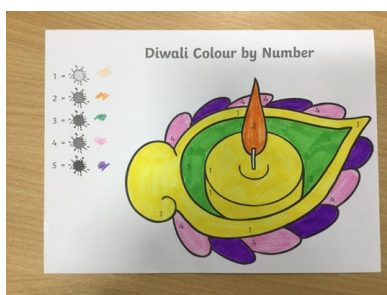
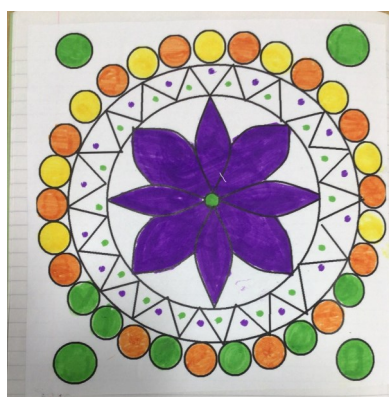


As Part of Black History month, Key Stage 3 students learnt about influential black people throughout history and the modern day; exploring the importance of understanding black history. Some students looked at inspirational people throughout history and chose to research someone they hadn't heard of before or someone they were inspired by and other students look at some inspirational quotes and learnt about the people who said them.



Culture Awareness Week

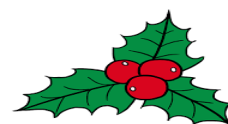
During cultural awareness week, all Key Stage 3 students learnt about Diwali, which began this year on Monday 24th October. We have learnt about the story of Rama and Sita and why light is an important symbol in Diwali celebrations. Students had the opportunity to make Rangoli patterns and share some Indian snacks.



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West Yorkshire Autism & ADHD Drive



West Yorkshire
Health and Care Partnership



As part of the All age **West Yorkshire Autism & ADHD Deep Dive** we are seeking children & young people with lived experience of neurodivergence to be involved in shaping and influencing changes for Autistic and ADHD people across the area.

The aim of the deep dive is to:

- understand the current experience of users and families of Autism and ADHD services.
- map existing Autism and ADHD provision, capture data and information.

assess initiatives to understand what's working and what's not working, what could improve how the system works and the impact on individuals and families. Identify projected future gaps and issues to address and explore options to proactively address future projected need/areas of work.

To find out more please go to: [Autism \(wypartnership.co.uk\)](https://www.autism.wypartnership.co.uk)

We want this review to be collaborative and inclusive with an ambition to make the best use of our collective expertise to improve services and shape the wider determinants of health; particularly addressing social inequalities faced by neurodivergent people.

We have an existing adult coproduction group made up of people with lived experience who are either neurodivergent themselves or care for someone who is. We would also like to have a children and young people's coproduction group. This group will be supported by All Star ENTs young apprentice scheme and our two Children & Young people ambassadors, Amber and Jodie.

We are able to host coproduction groups online, in person, in different locations and in large or small groups, according to people's communication needs. We are also able to offer shopping vouchers to Children and young people who contribute to the project to say thank you for supporting to make important changes in our systems!

For more information and to find out ways to get involved, please visit:

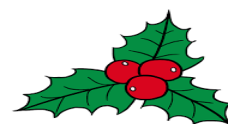
[West Yorkshire Autism and ADHD Deep Dive Coproduction - Touchstone \(touchstonesupport.org.uk\)](https://www.touchstonesupport.org.uk)

Or email rhannonno@touchstonesupport.org.uk

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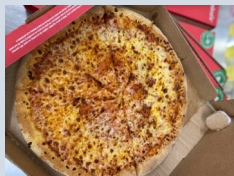
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SHINE KS3

This term, our Key Stage 3 students enjoyed their first SHINE event of the year. With a fabulous games event after school and tucked in to yummy slices of pizza!



SHINE KS4/5

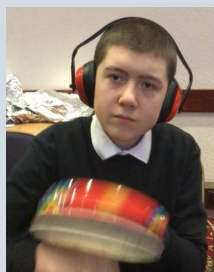
We held our first SHINE event of the new academic year for Key Stage 4/5 students.

A great time was had by all with movies, games, popcorn, hotdogs and slushies.



Singalong

Our Key Stage 4 and 5 music students took part in a Christmas Singalong event for SEND schools in Leeds at Pudsey Civic Hall. Such wonderful Christmas fun was had by everyone and the visit will contribute to each students' Arts Award qualification.



Alumni Event

It was a huge pleasure and privilege to welcome back our Summer 2022 Graduates - as well as some of our older students, when they came into school last week for our annual Alumni Event.

These events are the most wonderful opportunity to celebrate the successes of our graduates and hear all about their journeys post Lighthouse School.

It's a time to share, learn and be truly inspired! Current students and their families gain so much confidence from being able to meet with ex-students and discuss their education pathways.

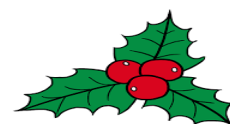
Many thanks to everyone that attended - stay in touch and see you again soon!



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Staff Notices

Alex Kelly—SEN Teacher

I am a Lancastrian in Yorkshire... crazy! I have been in Leeds for over 9 years now and absolutely love it. I love anything outdoors related: running, golf, walking, climbing, cycling. I have always wanted to work with students with SEND and this is my first full time role in the SEND sector. Prior to this, I worked in a local high school teaching science. I am really excited to get going and I am eager to learn and grow with the Lighthouse organisation.



James Oddy—English Teacher

Hello, my name is James and I've been teaching English for 4 years. I am a big rugby league fan and prior to becoming a teacher I wrote two books on the sport. I also enjoy playing sport and long-distance running



Joshua Smith—Speech and Language Therapist

Hello, my name is Josh. I am the new Speech and Language therapist at Lighthouse School. I have a strong educational background in language and communication having completed degrees in both Linguistics and Speech and Language therapy.

I have always aspired to support young people with Autism given my personal links. I feel passionately about using my skills and knowledge to continue to facilitate a positive communication environment here at Lighthouse School. I have been made to feel extremely welcome by both staff and students, and I am excited to get started in such a positive workplace.



I was born and raised in Leeds and have lived here my entire life, other than during my undergraduate studies in Newcastle. My interests include a range of sports, and I represent North Yorkshire at pool (a smaller and easier version of snooker) in my spare time. "

Leavers

We say good bye to the following staff members this term and wish them every success in their future careers.

Carole Morris
Sam Cryer
Emily Atkinson
Louise Hines
Gemma Fraser
Shaira Deen
Phil Kilbride
Priya Mistry



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Thanks to the PTA

A huge thank you to our school PTA for organising a super Christmas Fayre - our first one since Covid.

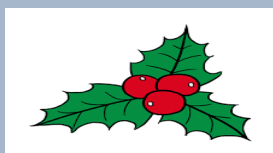
Students, Parents/Carers and staff all got into the Christmas spirit with festive crafts and gifts, two tombola's, a raffle and enjoyed tasty, festive food. There was even a donkey and array of other animals to add to the family fun.

Thank you to the local businesses who gave their support and everyone who came along to support our school and help raise an amazing £2,000!.



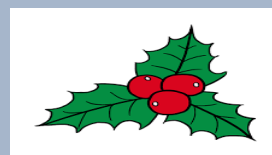
Money Raised this Term

We raised £59.77 for children in need



We raised £164.08 at McMillan coffee morning

MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT



We raised £30 for breast cancer awareness



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