

Wednesday Whistle



I was fortunate to be with the Ambition Institute in London at the start of the week and

listen to a keynote address from Sir David Carter. In his presentation he used the phrase 'collaboration is the oxygen of school improvement'. Unsurprisingly Sir David then continued with the theme of collaboration. I've tried to capture and share the thinking here and how it resonates with our work.

When does Collaboration work best?

When there is a clear set of agreed goals about the intended outcome of the collaboration – **PURPOSE**

When there is recognition that giving and receiving is expected of all partners - **MUTUALITY**

When there is an understanding that practice might need to change even if it is not a performance issue (yet) - **CHANGE**

When there is a clear timescale for the collaboration to deliver its objectives – **PACE**

That there is an opportunity cost in terms of finance, resources and time – **PRIORITISATION**

We are now busy in the season of recruitment. We are advertising for the position of IT Strategic Manager with a closing date of Monday 27th January 2020.

The role of DPSI is still in its window of advertisement but has certainly drawn attention from leaders across the country.

The closing date for the DPSI role is Friday 24th January and we intend to hold interviews somewhere over the period Friday 31st January, Monday 3rd and Tuesday 4th February.

Interviews for the positions of Executive Director of English and Executive Director of Maths are being held on Monday 27th & Tuesday 28th January and will be hosted at WeST HQ and Hele's School.

Our essential curriculum and assessment planning day (INSET) on Friday 14th February 2020 is fast approaching. We hope to share a booklet outlining the purpose and day's activities by the end of next week.

Turning to our schools finance operations. The web portal is being updated on Friday 24th January and therefore will not be available during the day. In addition, we are now in a position where we need to complete the 'Year-End' process for 2018-19 and to do so we need to run a full system audit. To do this we need all users to be logged out of the web portal and accounting. We therefore ask that all users please log out at 4pm on Friday 24th January.

I close by again extending congratulations to Sarah-Jane and the wonderful team at Plympton St Maurice Primary School on their Ofsted outcome and report. There is a warmth to the report that helps capture the spirit of the school.

Well done team PSMPS!



Best wishes,

Rob Haring

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'Roman Day' in Year 3 at Stowford School



Year 3 Children have recently enjoyed a fantastic curriculum day focusing on their current topic 'The Romans'. All the children came to school in Roman costume and took part in a variety of activities to enhance their topic learning. Steve Manning who is a professional story teller spoke to the children about life within the Roman army and also brought some well-known Roman legends to life.

Mrs Armley-Jones of Swallows class said "It was great to see the children so interested in the topic and have the opportunity to ask their questions and receive such detailed answers from Steve. It was also fantastic to see the children have a go at marching like Roman soldiers!"

Libby of Swallows Class in Year 3 gave an enthusiastic account of the day; "we had a visitor who told us lots of stories about Romulus and Remus. I really enjoyed all the Roman marching that we did in the playground as well, that was really fun!" Manus, also of Swallows Class added that "we learned about Roman numerals which I thought was interesting and I really liked dressing up".



Wembury Primary School – Celebrating and Supporting Skills & Talents



Finding those special talents and skills in individuals is so important, so we were delighted to be able to support Chloe (Year 5), who is an exceptional dancer and performance artist, in her recent role as a 'babe', in the Theatre Royal's Pantomime, Cinderella. Apparently she had the time of her life! It was so lovely to hear of the importance this has had to Chloe as well as to her family.

'I do hope that Education continues to support Performing Arts. When you see what magic is created, the feeling of being alive, a passion and hunger to perform, at the age of 8, 9 and any age, it is so important. The skills that Chloe has learnt, the achievement, the hard work and the pure enjoyment.'

Creativity is a passion at Wembury Primary, as is ensuring children's individuality, so the Arts, in all its forms, will certainly continue to be a major feature in our curriculum. We have no doubt that you will continue to follow your dreams Chloe, into KS3. Well done Chloe!



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Former Ivybridge Students star in Champions Cup Victory for Exeter Chiefs

On Saturday, 18 January, former Ivybridge Community College students Dave Ewers, Sam Simmonds, Stu Townsend, Sam Hill and Joe Simmonds all played a big role in Exeter's 33 -14 victory over French side, La Rochelle, sealing a home quarter final in the Champions Cup, with four out of the five scoring points in the game.



Flanker, Dave Ewers was able to pick from the base of the ruck before driving under the posts for the score giving Joe Simmonds an easy conversion. Number 8, Sam Simmonds, scored his first of two tries just after the break off of Exeter's renowned pick and go attack, he was able to crash his way over which again was expertly converted. The second score came from a dominant scrum which was controlled perfectly by Simmonds who was able to dive on the ball once it had crossed the line for his second try of the game, earning Exeter the bonus point for four tries. The final score of the game was by Townsend who was able to finish off a 70 metre break in the 61st minute to take the game away from the visitors before Joe was able to convert, taking the score to 33 -14.

As a College our Rugby programme continues to flourish. Currently our Year 10 Team is in the last eight in the country. As role models, our former players make teachers and students alike so proud. All of the players involved visit the College regularly to speak to students, most recently at our Sports Awards evening.

Space Day at Woodlands Park



At the start of our space day, we went into the hall and prepared it for Space Ambassador Mr Grocott's lecture on Space – the future of space travel and the growing UK space industry. During the lecture we learnt loads of facts and heard how in our lifetime, people will go to Mars which got us thinking about our aspirations for the future.

After the space lecture, each class in Year 5 & 6 took it in turns to make rockets and also learn about them. We made 3 different types of rockets, the first one being a pop rocket. These are small rockets made out of an air tight container, a vitamin C tablet and water. The second rocket couldn't be made by the children as it involved rocket fuel and matches, so the class teacher dropped the match into the bottle to make the gas react. Finally the last rocket we made was made out of card. Once we made the rockets, Mr Grocott launched them to see whose would go the furthest.

We were privileged and thankful to have Mr Grocott in Year 5 & 6 and we really had a great day!

Written by Eva
from Year 6



Coombe Dean Ten Tors Training: from Sunrise to Sunset



Coombe Dean's three Ten Tors teams enjoyed the beautiful weather this past Saturday, training on a frosty north Dartmoor.

Walking out from Postbridge with rising sun behind them, the teams walked north, passing through the Grey Wethers stone circle before crossing the River Teign on the 'Manga Rails' (not for the faint of heart).

As the moor grew wilder and the paths less distinct, the 45 and 55 teams had to ascend to the top of Cosdon Beacon. After this they headed back south towards the Gartaven Ford, where they joined the 35 mile route back to Fernworthy Reservoir. As the teams walked around the reservoir they were bathed in the purple glow of a setting sun, leaving fantastic reflections in the still water.

Whilst all of us out on the moor were glad of the fine weather, we were also reminded that even in such perfect conditions, navigation can be tricky – and that is why we train!



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Mental Health and Well-Being Staff Professional Development Session at Plymstock School



As part of our Continuing Professional Development programme at Plymstock School, staff on Monday had the opportunity to receive training from Sam Garner, a qualified Cognitive Behaviour Therapist and child adolescent practitioner.

With both teachers and students increasingly experiencing mental health concerns, Sam identified a need for schools to provide proactive support for those suffering from anxiety. In our training session, Sam focused on how our brains work and develop, along with risk protection factors for mental health and she explained how we can support our students' well-being, along with our own! Sam is straight talking, motivational, empathetic and so much fun. Her humour put the whole staff at ease and created an atmosphere of warmth and enjoyment on a cold, bleak January afternoon. Sam's core purpose is to help both teachers and students alike. She emphasised the importance of building positive relationships highlighting that they are the foundation of everything in life. As a Cognitive Behaviour Therapist, Sam asserts that if we change our thoughts to more positive ones and manage negative ones we will have better mental health: it's about being proactive and not reactive.

Mental health and well-being affects every area of our lives. Therefore, as teachers we have a responsibility to do all we can to be supportive of students, and our colleagues, to ensure that we promote mental health and don't inflict mental harm.

We left Sam Garner's session refreshed and inspired. But, most importantly, we left armed with some key strategies to help develop our capacity to empathise with our students and to aid us in our own lives and ability to manage our own stress.

Danny Burgess
Assistant Headteacher

Link to Sam Garner's book:
<https://www.amazon.com/Mental-Health-Education-Building-Foundations/dp/1138386324>

Share a cup of tea to support wellbeing



PG Tips have launched a new campaign with the aim of bringing people together.

With "9 million of us in the UK feeling lonely", the company are aiming to encourage people to share "a cuppa" with somebody—whether it's a friend, relative, neighbour or someone new.

Sign up to the pledge to "share a cuppa" and show commitment to support bringing people together.



Partner Charities

PG Tips have teamed up with partner charities to help with the mission of encouraging people all over the UK to reach out to others.

The partner charities include the Samaritans, Time to Change and The Big Lunch.

For more information on the campaign and partner charities please visit: <https://www.pgtips.co.uk/cuppastogether.html>



Stronger Together...every child in a great school

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NOTICE BOARD

Vacancies

The following vacancies are currently being advertised within our organisation:

Heles School

- Exam Invigilator

<https://www.heles.plymouth.sch.uk/category/vacancies>

Plymstock School

- Secondary Intervention Teacher
- Teacher of Science 0.5 FTE
- Attendance Administrator

<https://plymstockschool.org.uk/vacancies/>

South Dartmoor Community College

- Data Manager

<https://www.southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk/page/?title=Vacancies&pid=44>

Westcountry Schools Trust

- Director of Primary School Improvement
- IT Strategic Manager

<https://www.westst.org.uk/news/?pid=7&nid=2&storyid=70>



discountsforteachers

Savings for Education Staff and New Year Offers!

Teachers & Education staff can sign up for FREE to Discounts For Teachers to get access to hundreds of exclusive discounts and save even more with our cash-back card.



For Staff – Win £1,000 in Holiday Spends!

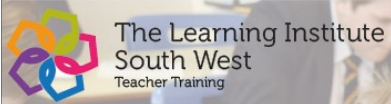
Whether you're planning your Summer getaway or wanting to experience somewhere completely new, check out some of the amazing travel deals just for Teachers & education staff and book to be within a chance chance of winning £1,000!



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HOT DATES

START YOUR TEACHING CAREER WITH



PRIMARY & SECONDARY SCHOOL BASED TEACHER TRAINING ACROSS DEVON & CORNWALL

Train to Teach - Information Evening

Tuesday 28th January 2020

4.00pm - 6.00pm

Ivybridge Community College, Devon PL21 0JA

Train to Teach - Information Morning

Saturday 1st February 2020

10.00am - 12.00pm

Beacon House, Roche, Cornwall PL26 8LG



Learninginstitute.co.uk

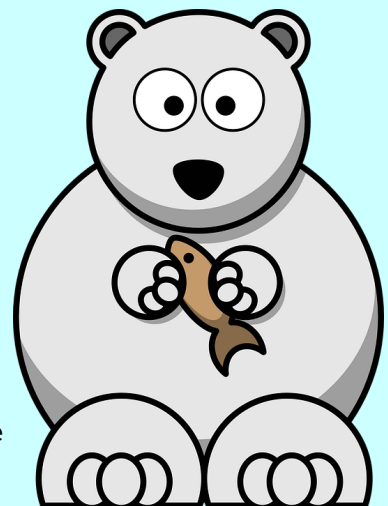
Polar Bear Explorer

Taking place until 1 March 2020

George, the Polar Bear cub wants you to follow the Polar Bear Explorer trail this winter.

Follow the trail for the chance to win some great prizes. Along the way, you'll learn about how climate change is affecting his environment – and what you can do to help!

There are 20 Polar Bear cubs, just like George, for you to find. They are hidden in a variety of shops, restaurants and other businesses, from Royal William Yard to Millbay, the Barbican to Sutton Harbour, Whimble Street to Bretonside and Mount Batten.



<https://www.visitplymouth.co.uk/polar-bear-explorer>