

Welcome to this special edition of our newsletter focussing on the Bee Week. In this exciting transition project, the Year 6 students in our primaries have been learning all about bees and this feeds into the curriculum in September at the High School. See some of the highlights here!

Don't forget that you can find a copy of this newsletter- and previous editions- on our school website:

<https://www.ponthigh.org.uk/parents-carers/y6-transition-information/>. For regular updates on transition and our Y7 achievements and successes, follow us on twitter @Y7PontHigh. Finally, if you have a specific Y6-7 query, please contact our dedicated e-mail address: Year6questions@ponthigh.org.uk

The Bee Week

As students transition from primary to secondary education in the PELE trust we want to ensure that our learners are able to build on their existing Key Stage 2 knowledge, understanding and skills of bees and beekeeping within a wider environmental and ecological agenda. This enables them to continue to make good progress into Key Stage 3, remaining motivated and engaged and ensuring that good relationships continue to contribute to their success in school. This is why we have developed the 'Bee Week'.



Buzzing about Bees!

During the first two days of Bee Week, students develop their knowledge and understanding of bees and beekeeping. Each school welcomes their own bee keeper who comes to visit armed with hives, bee suits, smokers, honeycomb and other equipment. At Richard Coates, the students met Ian and Julie who brought in an observation hive. Ponteland Primary and Belsay (who were joined by Whalton), met Dr Green, Rebecca and Noah and learnt all about how bees organise a hive. Jonathan and Dave visited Darras Hall where the students saw worker bees, the queen and were lucky enough to witness the birth of a baby bee!





Bee Zoom in the Bee-autiful Isles of Scilly

On Wednesday morning, Dr Yates hosted a zoom meeting with Jilly and Richard who are expert bee keepers on the Isles of Scilly. They showed us round their bee-autiful island and explained some of the issues that directly affect their own bee keeping. Jilly and Richard work closely with Dr Matthew Pound from Northumbria University due to their unique bio-environment: he recently analysed some Tresco Spring Honey to explore which species of plant bees were foraging on. Y6 students from all the schools joined the call and came up with some really perceptive questions for our bee experts including: How intelligent do you think your bees are? Do bees ever get sick? Do bees from one hive attack bees from another hive close by? Do you have any animals that cause your bees problems?





Fantastic Bees and Where to Find Them!



Throughout Year 5 and Year 6, students have been developing their skills of enquiry in Science and Geography to prepare for the Bee Week where they are required to think like a Geographer and investigate like a Scientist. Year 6 students generated questions and then explored how to find the answers. Some amazing investigations have taken place:

Sampling the environment using hula hoops allowed students to consider how to improve the school field to encourage more bees.



Exploring the colour spectrum to compare bee vision to human vision helped students to investigate which colour flowers are most attractive to bees.

Investigating which part of the school grounds is most popular with bees led to experiments to find out which species of plants and flowers bees like the most.

Exploring the tessellation of hexagons was followed by a delicious evaluation of the taste of five different types of honey.

Bee Books in Ponteland High School Library





A Hive of Creativity with Sunderland University



Following a preparatory session at the High School in early June, a number of Year 6 students joined the Ponteland High School 'Pont Print' team on Thursday afternoon to begin working on the 'Bee Special Edition' that will be published in the new academic year. Mrs Emmerson was joined by Paul (a journalist, designer and lecturer from Sunderland University) and William, Ella, Trixie, Isabella, Leah, Kia, Jack, Daniel, Sian, Esme, Isla, Sophie and Ruby. The Year 6 students worked brilliantly alongside the Ponteland High School students to write feature bee articles for the magazine. We had the 'Top Ten Facts about Bees'; 'Bees vs Wasps' and 'Interview with a Beekeeper' among many other creative contributions. Paul supported with his fantastic knowledge and expertise in design and helped everyone to bring their ideas together using a design app. Look out for the next copy of 'Pont Print' in the Autumn Term!

Bee-ing an Animator

Heddon-on-the-Wall have been collaborating with Dr Marc Mackiernan from the Haltwhistle Film Festival and have produced a short animation as part of the Bee Week. The film will premiere in Heddon on the last week of term and then will be shared at the Bee Showcase event in the Autumn Term.

The Bee Showcase



Last year, Ponteland High School hosted the first 'Bee Showcase' event to share the amazing bee curriculum. More than 150 visitors arrived to see Year 7 Science, Geography, Art, Technology and Maths: to explore what the students were learning and how they were using their knowledge acquired in Year 6. Year 7 students told visitors about the Fibonacci sequence, the problem of asian hornets, monoprinting techniques, concept design bug hotels and the viscosity of honey! Year 7 students articulated their primary experiences and shared what they had learned in preparation for the high school curriculum. The exhibition culminated in an installation of collage hexagons which showed how the feeder primary schools all came together to create a united honeycomb. We plan to host this amazing event again on **Tuesday 27th September** from 4-6pm and welcome students, parents, teachers and the bee experts who were involved in our fabulous transition work!



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