

28th January 2022

## HEADTEACHER INTRODUCTION

Hello,

It's important to us at The Fusion Academy that we are continually updating our understanding of autism so that we can support our students as effectively as possible. We have regular sessions throughout the year where we focus on different aspects of autism and most recently we have been thinking about anxiety and stress. The National Autistic Society (NAS) is an excellent resource for learning about autism and we love that they focus on the perspective of people with autism and what they are saying about different issues. This week I'd like to share with you a few quotes about anxiety and stress from the NAS that have made us reflect on the experiences of our students.

*"Always lurking at the back of my mind is an anxiety about whether or not I'm perceiving things in the same way that people without autism do."*

Naoki Higashida

*"Everything new I encounter – even if it is simply the beginning of another week – is seen through the prism of fear."*

Laura James

*"Just imagine how you felt when you did something really anxiety provoking, such as your first public speaking engagement.... Now just imagine if you felt that way most of the time for no reason."*

Temple Grandin

*"The constant change of most things never seemed to give me a chance to prepare myself for them. Because of this I found pleasure and comfort in doing the same things over and over again."*

Donna Williams

If you would like to access further information from the NAS, their website is <https://www.autism.org.uk/>

Have a great weekend, Sarah

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## PHOENIX

Another week without Grant, but the students have been absolutely fantastic with the changes. The class was able to meet up via a video call and play Kahoot quizzes together which was a lot of fun and a good chance to practice conversation skills online! It was lovely to see the team together again and we're really looking forward to all getting back together as soon as possible.

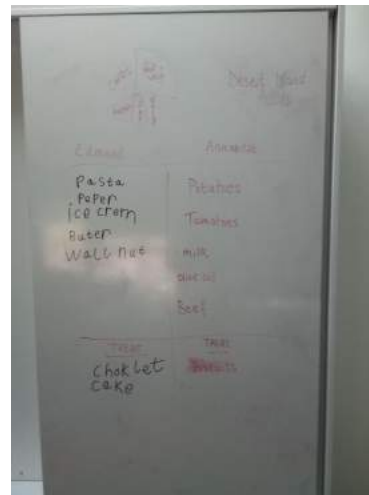


A popular activity was using pegboards to create artistic designs using symmetry and consecutive patterns. It requires a lot of dexterity, concentration and patience to create an intricate pattern as good as Phoenix students have!



## DRAGONFLY

This week during our Food technology lessons, Edmund has used the food plate as a guide to create a healthy and balanced list of desert island foods! Edmund also came up with some jokes- "What is the most fattening type of fly? The Butterfly!"  
"What is the most sturdy type of nut? The Walnut!"



We have found that we are a class of Maths Superstars this week! Lukas has been smashing Algebra; James is flying at Addition and Subtraction; and Maverick, Freddie, Axel and Joe have been steaming ahead with Multiplication and Division. Axel and Joe are shown here exchanging using Base 10:



Edmund has also been showing him how great he is at Column Multiplication!

In History, we have been finding out about Food Rationing during the Second World War. Did you know that people had to use dried eggs, because there weren't enough fresh ones to go round? Next week, in Cooking, we are going to try out a World War II recipe using potatoes and cheese - we look forward to sharing the results with you!



## POLAR

Last Friday, Polar class had their first go at archery during PE. Everyone really enjoyed it and showed some great skills! We practiced taking it in turns to hit the targets at different points.

We also won our class bingo for great class behaviour last Friday! On Monday, we chose our reward of making pizzas with lots of tasty fresh ingredients. Xander was particularly creative making his pizza using mozzarella, goats cheese, pepperoni, sweetcorn, peppers and an egg! He was very impressed with the picture he took of his pizza too. We enjoyed our pizzas in the afternoon to Ruby's choice of film - Spongebob Squarepants the movie. Instead of Pizza, Liam chose to make his favourite food - chocolate cake! With the help of Mairi-Anne, his cake turned out delicious!



In Science, we have been looking at the benefits of a healthy diet and exercise. We found out information on all of the main food groups and how they help our body to function properly, such as how fibre makes us poop! We then looked into the importance of exercise in keeping our body healthy, in that it helps us to sleep better and makes our blood more oxygenated. Everyone then made posters outlining the key information they had found.



On Tuesday afternoon, we were all treated to Tommy offering to teach us all about 'size of the problem' during life skills. Tommy read through the slides brilliantly and shared his own experiences of a small problem to the class - when he lost a game of monopoly to his brother! We all shared different experiences of small, medium and large problems and how we can react to them appropriately.

On Wednesday, we enjoyed celebrating Laura's birthday with a glow stick party! Emilia made some amazing glow stick glasses whilst Daniel made a glow stick lightsaber! We all enjoyed playing some Just Dance and pass the parcel.





## EUROPA



This week we have been learning about adding and subtracting decimals up to 3 decimal places in maths, about newspaper reports with a focus on fronted adverbials and subordinating conjunctions in English, and continued with our learning about the universe.

We are working towards writing a news article about an alien crash landing - inspired by our class book, *Perijee and Me*. The students are enjoying this story about a little girl with no friends who happens upon a little alien.



We created a crash landing in the forest, where the students had to work together to find clues and use their inference skills to work out what happened. They came across crime scene tape and alien blood! The alien created a complete mess, destroyed a watermelon and tried to camouflage in the bushes, but our students are way too good to be outsmarted by an alien!



The students are then going to work on collecting witness reports and using inverted commas to punctuate speech in their newspaper reports.





## ODYSSEY

Students in Odyssey class have continued to work on flexible thinking again this week and we've seen lots of "good choices in tricky situations." Everyone has been really engaged in learning and also making relationships and learning from each other in their social time.

Cooking on Monday was chicken and vegetable kebabs. They looked and smelled delicious and some students tried vegetables that they hadn't eaten before.

Maths has been a challenge this week as we've introduced algebra. We were very impressed at how quickly everyone picked up what is a really tricky concept. We looked at pictures to make equations balance and used algebra tiles to make simple expressions. We tried archery for the first time in PE which everybody enjoyed and it was good to see

students making progress and growing in confidence throughout the lesson.

We have been thinking about aspirations in PSHE and students took turns pretending to be in a job interview. They had to impress the boss by talking about how their skills and attributes might be useful in a work environment.

To help with our flexible thinking, we thought about things we can and can't change. We

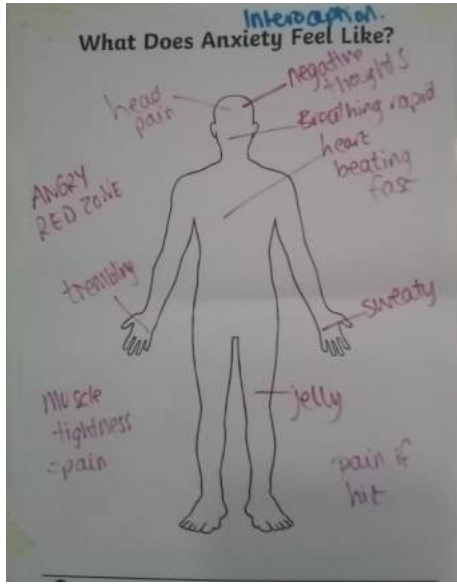
even started to move things we can't change into the things we can by thinking about what we say and what we do and how this impacts on how people interact with us: lots of interesting conversation.

As it was Burn's Night on Tuesday, Jan presented the class with a haggis. After it had been piped into the classroom, everyone was encouraged to try some. It's fair to say that not everyone was keen but well done everyone for trying!

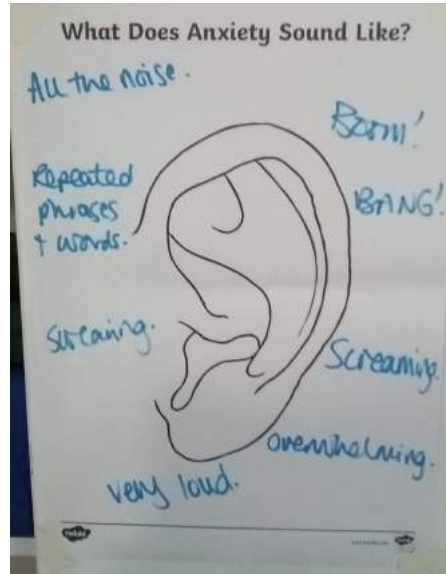
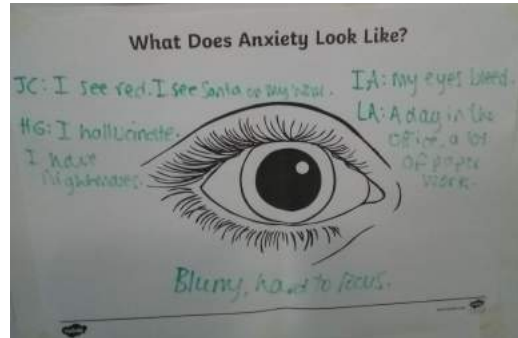
We all wished Ethan a happy birthday on Thursday and shared a cake and some party games.



# VOYAGER



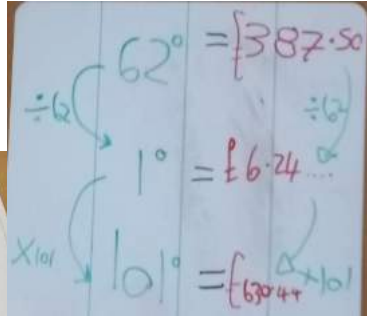
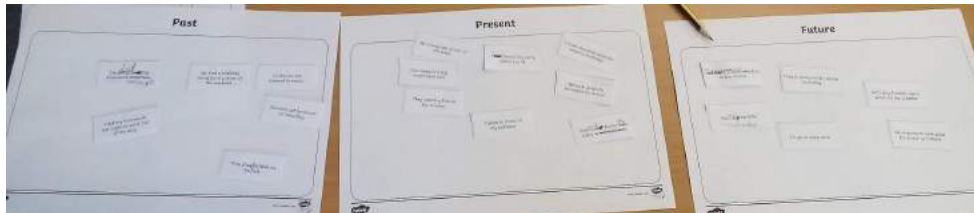
We have started looking at Anxiety this week linked to interoception, Zones of Regulation and social thinking. Over time we will look at triggers, coping strategies and regulations. On Monday, we worked together to discuss what anxiety feels like, sounds like and looks like.



In Music, we made instruments - Henry made water jug xylophones and used his Chromebook and an online programme to record the notes he was playing, Jacob used a piece of wood, staple gun, bobby pins and a hammer (with the help of premises man Keith - thanks Keith!) to make a mini keyboard, Luke made tin can drums and Ade made paper plate tambourines. So much fun!



We've worked on tense in English to ensure our articles for Journalism are written well. We have continued to look at representing data in maths; Henry and Luke worked on some really difficult Pie Chart questions - the one below had us looking back at a previous skill of unit amounts.





# APOLLO



In English, we have analysed our mood boards for keywords, use of language and target audience which generated a lot of discussion and positive progress in understanding the need. Later in the week, we then worked on figurative language; similes, metaphors, hyperbole and personification. We looked at sorting examples and coming up with some of our own so that we can use them when starting to write articles next week.



We thought Sol's artwork was excellent this week in the forest area using charcoal, especially considering he initially said he would draw "1 tree" and nothing else. He really enjoyed the time in the forest. He made the artwork using charcoal from a previous campfire and talked about the Bear Grylls books that he has been reading in our English lessons. Well done Sol!

In Science, we made planets. The students had great fun using shaving foam and food colouring / paint to make the different planets. Can you guess which planets they are?





## E-Safety

### Unsafe communication

We have been looking at what unsafe communication is, where it might occur and how we can make sure that our own communication is safe and acceptable.

### Cyberbullying

We talked about unkind words sent between people, what bullying is and how to report any issues around cyberbullying.

### Grooming

Following on from last week's lesson, we discussed the issues and recapped the initial warning signs.

### Phishing

We made the students aware of attempts of people or groups of people attempting to gather personal information to be able to gain access to bank accounts, social media accounts and personal information

### Messages from strangers

We had discussions about how some messages from strangers needed to be dealt with differently, and the dangers around people pretending to be someone else online.

### Posting private information

We looked at some humorous, but real examples of people being proud of their new credit cards and how anyone could then use that information. We also discussed the dangers of sharing where you may be or where you might be going, for example saying "Can't wait for my 3 week holiday to Cornwall" and letting people know that you are leaving your house unattended.

### Posts that may cause problems in the future

We found some examples of people in the news regretting posts that they had made in the past. It is more common now for employers to do social media screening before hiring people, and we discussed the impact of having historical posts that don't reflect the real you.

### Talking about the issues

As you may pick up from the way we have looked at these in school, the key is communication and discussing these real examples and learning from them. We have answered some difficult questions in eSafety lessons again this week, but this has allowed students to open up and raise any concerns that they may have.

## ★ PARENT SUPPORT WORKSHOP

We have our second Parent Support Group of the year taking place on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> February. The theme for this session is eSafety, where we will cover the following topics; Age restrictions, Communication, Sleep, Grooming, Useful websites plus opportunity for Q&A.

The session will be on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> February from 3:45 - 5pm, held at school in our Main hall, we will also provide refreshments. If you would like to attend please contact the office on 01455 243 689 or email myself on [elyssa.castleford@thefusionacademy.co.uk](mailto:elyssa.castleford@thefusionacademy.co.uk)

Please don't hesitate to contact us for further details.

We hope you can join us.



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- ★ **Useful Website** - CONTACT have lots of useful information and advice to support families and they are also running some workshops on a range of topics. Visit their website for more information; [CONTACT | Support for Families](#)



## Diary Dates

- ★ Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> February - 3:45 - 5:00 Parent Training on e-safety
- ★ 14 February - 18 February - Half Term
- ★ Wednesday 23 February - 3:45 - 5:00 Parent Training on Emotion Coaching
- ★ 28 March - 01 April - Autism Acceptance Week
- ★ Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April - School closes for Easter
- ★ Monday 25 April - School Opens



<https://openthinkingpartnership.co.uk/fusion-academy/>

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