



Oaklands Junior School

Learning to think - Thinking to learn

Autumn Term NEWSLETTER 2018

Message from Mrs West

Firstly, I would like to thank you for all your good wishes for my speedy recovery. I am very much on the mend, following several hospital visits for an unexpectedly large tear in my retina which resulted in laser surgery at Royal Berks and Moorfields.

My senior leadership team have been brilliant in prioritising what has been needed in my absence, for which I am truly grateful. In fact I am very proud of ALL my staff, for their continuing hard work and support in what has been the busiest term ever!

Congratulations to our Y3 children and their staff team for a truly spectacular nativity play which I enjoyed immensely. Amazing to think these children have only been with us for one term – such confidence and stage presence!

St John's Christmas Carol Service I feel was the best ever. Congratulations are in order for beautiful singing from all, including our choir (led by Miss Noad, Mrs Alexander & Miss Bland), violinists (Miss Sherlock), recorders (Miss Tull), belle plates (Miss Davidson) and THANK YOU to Mr Bratton for stepping in to play the piano so beautifully! It was lovely to see so many families present too. May I wish you all a joyful Christmas and the very best for the New Year.

GB Athlete Visit

On Tuesday 6th November, the GB basketball player Stef Collins, visited our school. She inspired us in an assembly, telling us about her time in Rio Olympics and more recently her team's silver medal in the Commonwealth Games earlier this year. Stef then took each year group outside for a 30 minute brilliant basketball skills session.

I would like to thank all those who sponsored our children for this event. We raised a staggering £3176.76 of which 50% will come back to our school to buy PE equipment.

Alice's Band

Congratulations to Alice in Year 4, who won the Wokingham Borough Council competition to design a snapband promoting road safety. Every child in Wokingham was given the chance to enter the competition and we are very proud Alice.

Helping Your Child at Home

A quick reminder that the links for the materials shared at the information sessions on 21st November can be found on the front page of the school website, or by clicking [here](#).

Thinking Schools

Latest News

We have received the formal certification of our Thinking Schools Award. This splendid glass award is now in the school trophy cabinet.

Our first Family Feast of the year took place last week; the first Thinking Families Day this year was based on re-writing a well-known song with a winter or Christmas theme and included a performance of the final piece!

Important Dates

School ends at 2.15pm on Wednesday 19th December

January

Thursday 3rd – Start of Term

February

18th – 22nd – Half Term
Monday 25th – INSET Day

March

25th – 27th – 4M at Ufton Court
27th – 29th – 4L at Ufton Court

What has been happening in Years 3 & 4?

Year 3

In Year 3, we have had an extremely busy term.

In English and History, we have been completely absorbed with learning all about Howard Carter's discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb. We have used drama techniques and thinking maps to get into character, before writing a series of diary entries. The children have thoroughly enjoyed this topic and we have been amazed at the quality of their writing.

On 20th November we held our Ancient Egyptian Day where the children learnt that the Pharaoh had died. They spent the day celebrating his life and preparing for his burial. The activities included: making Tutankhamun masks, modelling Canopic Jars out of clay, making papyrus paper and sarcophaguses out of paper. Thank you to all the parents who joined us for the day.

The children have started working in their Year 3 garden with Mr Hopley and always come back with some interesting produce, such as beans or seeds! Our science topic this term has been plants and we wonder whether any of the beans that were taken home have survived.

Of course the highlight for us this half term has been the Year 3 nativity play. We're sure you will all agree that the children were amazing and really did themselves proud. The effort that they put in to learn their lines and song words really paid off in the performances. Thank you to all the parents for helping with costumes, props and helping the children learn their scripts. We are so proud of the children and definitely have some stars in the making.

Our Christmas Carol service at St. John's this year was particularly lovely and we were pleased to see so many children in the choir and playing violins and recorders. All that play practice really paid off with the beautiful singing and reading.

We would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you all in 2019.

The Year 3 team

Year 4

As always, there's been a lot going on in Year 4!

During the autumn term, we have been learning about the Roman invasion and occupation of Britain. As part of this topic, we had a very enjoyable Roman Day. This involved the children making Roman Army shields, cooking pizzas, learning Roman Numerals and playing games that Roman citizens would have done. As well as this, the children took part in a re-enactment of a Celtic attack, which involved them learning how to march and get into the tortoise formation (whilst objects were being thrown at them by some VERY enthusiastic parents!).

Both 4M & 4L did brilliantly when they had their class assemblies – we were all really impressed with how confident and clear they were when they read out their work and spoke to the audience.

The biggest amount of excitement though this half-term has definitely been reserved for sessions when the children have used the iPads, which were generously funded by the PTA.

We have tried to use them in a variety of lessons and channel the children's enthusiasm into producing quality outcomes in a range of subjects including maths, science, English and computing.

Amongst other things, the children have used the iPads to create posters about the signs of autumn around the school and made stop-motion films about the Iron Man falling off the cliff and putting himself back together (this included making the backdrops and figure for them). Next term, we are aiming to use them as part of Art and inspire the children's writing in English.

During the half-term, the children have been enthusiastically telling us about the work that they have been producing for their homework grids and we look forward to sharing those during the first two days back.

Wishing you all a very merry and restful Christmas!

The Year 4 team

What has been happening in Years 5 & 6?

Year 5

Year 5 have had a very busy first term and have been rising to the extra responsibilities of being part of the Upper School, including becoming recycling monitors and playground friends.

Our English topics have involved reading two fantastic books; 'There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom' and 'Street Child'. We have been exploring different genres using various drama techniques to write a series of letters and drama entries. We have been very impressed with the standard of writing produced by the children. Another English topic involved looking at a video called 'The Piano', where the children created play scripts and an emotional memory recount.

In RE, we have been studying Hinduism and in particular, the festival of Diwali. We had a brilliant day enjoying the festival where we prepared a feast, created stick dances and made Diwali lamps using clay. It was fabulous to have so many parents helping us to celebrate the occasion.

Our science topic of Space has been really popular with the children. On our Space day, we recreated an astronaut's training programme where the children found out if they had what it takes to become an astronaut. They learnt how to communicate in Russian, undertook a memory test and an arduous physical test. After their graduation, they made helmets and had a visit from an astronomer and his planetarium, which was both educational and fun. In DT, we designed and made Space cookies and packaging for them. We enjoyed the creativity of the activity.

During this term, some of the children have benefited from extra activities including real tennis and a low ropes course at Wellington College. We all enjoyed a Sausage workshop where we found out about the history of sausages and even had a go at making them. Finally, we ended the term with a trip to Reading Museum where we learnt more about the Victorians.

On behalf of the Year 5 team, we would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Year 6

Year 6 have had a brilliant first term. They have settled in well and have risen to all the responsibilities that go along with being the oldest in the school.

It has been 'Greek Fever' in Year 6 this term and the children have greatly enjoyed the unit. Our English work has been centred around the Ancient Greeks and the famous myths that have come from that time period. The children have listened to a number of Greek myths and have written their own versions based around their own narrative ideas.

To continue our Greek theme, we also held a Greek Day where the children dressed up in authentic role-play costume, ate food from Greece and made masks that were often used in the theatres.

In addition to this, we have also linked our History topic with the Greeks and have studied an enquiry titled, 'The Trojan Horse – truth, myth or legend?' The children studied the narrative and looked at sources to back up their arguments. The final piece of work was a balanced argument where the children gave their own conclusions to the question and decided if the Trojan Horse was indeed fact, myth or legend.

Our science topics have also been well received by the children. We have finished our topic on Living Things and Their Habitats and have now moved on to the topic based around evolution. We have discussed characteristics that have been inherited from our parents and those which have been learnt. We displayed our ideas on inheritance through breeding Mr Men and Little Miss characters to create their children, discussing features which would have been passed down the genetic line.

Finally, we have finished our PE topic of tag rugby where the children have been working on the skills needed to participate in a game and the teamwork elements of play.

We would like to wish all Year 6 and their families a Merry Christmas and a joyful New Year. We look forward to seeing you in the Spring Term.

Further News



Children in Need

We raised money for this very worthwhile charity on Friday 16th November with a non-uniform day and the theme of 'wear something spotty'. Donations of £1 were greatly appreciated. We had our usual giant plastic Pudsey Bear sheet on the ground, under the sail at the start of school, for you to cover with your loose change and you did! The total amount raised was £280.00. THANK YOU to all who contributed - we couldn't do this without you!

Peanut Allergies

Please could we respectfully remind you that we are a nut-free school. We have children and staff who have epipens because they can have a severe allergic reaction if subjected to any nut products. Please **do not** include anything with nuts in packed lunches e.g. peanut butter, hummus, chocolate spread, sweets containing nuts or pesto. Thank you.

Bus update

You may have noticed that in recent weeks we have had, thanks to L&G Housing, several people working on the interior of the bus. They have been building and painting bookcases and a bench for the upstairs. The electrics have also now been connected.

Class Assemblies

Please may we politely remind you that access to assemblies you are invited to, is around the school and through the playground to the hall door. 9.00am is a very busy time for the office dealing with telephone calls, medical needs, visitors to the school for other reasons etc. so your help would be very much appreciated in getting yourself independently to the hall via the playground. Thank you.

Enjoy the Christmas break and we look forward to welcoming
you back on
THURSDAY 3rd January 2019