



Oaklands Junior School

Learning to think - Thinking to learn

Autumn NEWSLETTER

2019

Y3 Play Ebenezer

What a wonderful end to the autumn term, to see our new Y3s in such an amazing performance of a Dickens' classic. Even more amazing that they performed so professionally for two performances on the same day, an afternoon & an evening, due to our original dates being compromised due to the elections. The children showed such energy, enthusiasm & enjoyment throughout. Everyone was involved in the many jobs, whether this was sound, making props, scenery, scene changes, singing, dancing or performing. Thank you to the whole Y3 team.

May I also thank both audiences who clapped and laughed in all the right places, as well as giving generously towards the Y3s charity collection for a worthy cause 'Shelter' which raised a massive £230.66. The children who volunteered to receive donations were very enthusiastic, singing the charity song from their performance – thank you!

Finally, I was overwhelmed by the amount of help we had that evening to stack chairs and dismantle the stage, as we needed to do this following the final performance, so that the polling station could be set up in the early hours of Thursday morning. THANK YOU to all who helped.

May I and my staff wish you all a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Mrs. West

PTA Christmas Fayre

As always, our thanks to our very hard-working PTA for all the events they run throughout the year to raise funds for our schools. Friday's Christmas Fayre was very well attended and it was lovely to see so many parents, grandparents and former pupils returning after school to this event. Elfridges proved very popular and the gifts that the children bought (secretly) for their families, have been wrapped and will be coming home with them before the end of the week.

Belle Plates performed brilliantly, not only at this event but also previously that afternoon outside Tesco's in Greenwood Road, which made us all feel very festive. Thank you to Tesco's who always make us feel very welcome and provide the children and audience with mince pies, drinks and sweets.

One sad note on Friday was that a long queue into school took a little while to clear before everyone could enter the main entrance. Our PTA have asked us to share with you that during this time, some damage was caused to Mr Munson's garden, which is such a shame. He and his wife have been working very hard to plant bulbs and keep flower beds and the lawn attractive for our school. Unfortunately as children ran across kicking a football, unsupervised by parents, a bird bath was knocked over and broken.

Thinking Schools Latest News

It has been a busy term for our Thinking Schools programme. Not only have we had a visit from a group of Lithuanian teachers looking at what we do, but we have been invited to become a Hub School for Thinking. More details of this are expected in the New Year.

There was also time for new children to meet their Thinking Family and play some indoor games – Jenga, Uno, Yahtzee and Pig. Ask your child to teach them to you, or perhaps you can ask Santa if you don't have them already.

Important Dates

January

6th INSET

7th Back to School

13th Y3 Trip to Butser Farm

13th Y5 Trip to the Living Rainforest

31st PTA Disco

February

17th – 21st Half Term

24th Back to School

March

5th World Book Day

11th-13th Y4 Ufton Court Trip

13th Red Nose Day

3rd End of Term 1.30pm

What has been happening in Years 3 & 4?

Year 3

Since welcoming our Year 3s to the Juniors, we have had an extremely busy term.

In English, our topic of *The Lorax* allowed the children to think about important environmental questions. We thought about the characters of the Once-ler and the Lorax using drama, role play and debate. We then took to writing our own letters to the council to try and encourage them to cut down fewer trees.

In Geography, we have been exploring our local area and looking at how it has been changing. On our recent walk, we took surveys to consider the quality of our environment.

In Science, we were investigating rocks and soils. We carried out a variety of experiments to find how different rocks responded in different circumstances. We ended the topic by making some really effective fossils!

A real highlight of this half term has been our ambitious play, *Ebenezer*. Every child has put in an amazing effort to put the show together, from learning lines to painting scenery. Their hard work has really paid off and we're incredibly proud of their achievements. Putting on a school play is an important part of a child's education and incorporates so many of our Oaklands' Mindset, whether they have a speaking, non-speaking or technician's role. We choose an ambitious play so that they could challenge themselves and see what they could achieve together. Watching them collaborate and support each other has been fantastic. They have shown independence in learning their individual parts and it is clear when they sing their songs how much they have enjoyed putting on the production.

Our play gave us the opportunity to explore the classic Dickens' story, *A Christmas Carol*. The children put on their own shadow puppet performances based on the story.

We'd like to extend our sincere thanks to all the parents who have helped us in many ways this term.

We hope you have a wonderful Christmas break. See you all in 2020!

The Year 3 Team

Year 4

It hardly seems possible that we are already at the end of the Autumn term!

The term was kicked off with a fantastic Roman Day, in which the children dressed up and fully embraced a day as a Roman citizen, including learning Roman numerals, making shields, playing Roman era games and a session as a Roman soldier (which included some VERY enthusiastic adults throwing objects at them!). The end of day feast was particularly lovely as it was great for the children to be able to share what they had been learning (and their pizzas!) with some of their adults.

One of the other highlights of the term was our visit to Camberley to watch 'Horrible Histories: Rotten Romans'. The children (and teachers!) thoroughly enjoyed watching this hilarious film which cemented some of their learning about the impact that the Romans had on Britain. As part of the history topic, the children got to make their very own Roman road, using a range of materials. The children have also been writing in role as a Roman soldier in battle against the Celts.

Recently, in English, the children have been reading *The Iron Man* by Ted Hughes and writing diary entries as if they were the main character. They have also been making up 'Iron Man' dances in true robotic style in PE.

In October, we had a lovely sunny day out at Wellington, where the children had the opportunity to learn more about harvest.

In science, the children have really enjoyed using the electrical circuits and we will be continuing this topic after the Christmas break, which will enable the children to build more complex circuits and test insulators & conductors.

In addition, we have been looking at lots of maps and atlases in geography and, more recently, started to learn about how we can be more sustainable. Next term, we are going to be studying how we can have a positive impact on the environment as individuals and as a school.

Thank you to all the volunteers that have helped on a weekly basis as well as those that have helped out a special events.

Merry Christmas!

The Year 4 team

What has been happening in Years 5 & 6?

Year 5

Year 5 have had a busy and exciting term with the added responsibilities of being part of the Upper School including being playground friends and recycling monitors.

The term started off with reading 'There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom' as part of our English topic, which proved to be very popular amongst the children. They wrote fantastic formal letters in the role of different characters and finished off with a letter to the author of the book, Louis Sachar. We were particularly impressed with the high quality of their writing.

Our History topic involved learning about Mayan civilisation in Central America. The children used their investigation skills to gather information about the Mayan's occupations, ancient artefacts and ruins and to discover the reasons that they left their jungle cities. A highlight of the topic was designing, making and painting Mayan masks using Modroc. The finished masks looked extremely eye catching and creative- they were complimented by many members of staff and parents.

At the end of the half term, we concluded our Hinduism topic by celebrating Diwali Day. The children enjoyed preparing food for the feast, creating stick dances and painting Diva Lamps. The celebration at the end of the day was a wonderful opportunity for the children to share their work (and food!) with their parents. Thank you to everyone who helped and joined us for the occasion.

Our Science topic this half term has been Earth and Space. The children have shown a keen interest in learning about the Solar System including the history of Space travel. They have demonstrated their knowledge of the topic by producing detailed information texts about the planets, the Earth and the Moon. We finished the topic off with an action packed Space Day where the children graduated as astronauts and enjoyed participating in the Astronomy Roadshow.

On behalf of the Year 5 team, we would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas. We look forward to seeing you in 2020.

Year 6

Year 6 have had an excellent first term and have settled in well to being top of the school. They have taken on all the responsibilities we have asked of them with great maturity and diligence.

The highlight of our first term was undoubtedly the trip to Osmington Bay, where the children undertook several different challenges and activities.

We started off the term in English with descriptive writing influenced by the book 'Kensuke's Kingdom'. The children really enjoyed the novel and used imaginative and creative language in their work.

We linked the Geography topic of coastlines with our visit to Osmington Bay. To apply what we had learned in the classroom we took the children down to the beach and discussed erosion, rock formations and deposition with a geologist. In Computing, we used the programme 'Scratch' to create our own eroded coastline scenes.

In History we have been studying the famous story of the Trojan Horse. The children looked at several sources to decide whether the tale was fact or fiction. They finished off the unit by writing a balanced argument where they could express their final views.

To culminate our work on the Greeks we held a Greek Day where children made clay theatre masks, cooked Greek food and performed popular myths that they had learned about in English. The children have also written their own Greek Myths inspired by the many myths we read as a class.

Our Science topics this term have been based around the Biology units of Evolution and Inheritance & Animals and their Habitats. Among other lessons, the children enjoyed creating their own species of animal and designing their own human of the future.

We would like to extend our thanks to all the parents who helped this term. We 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

AUTUMN TERM SPORTS REPORT

Sport is a big part of Oaklands Junior School and we have had a busy term attending matches and competitions.

Cross Country

Cross country proves to be ever popular with over 70 children taking part in the last two cross country events at Bluecoats and Lightwater. We are currently positioned 6th in the Thames Valley league after coming 4th and 8th in each race. We had some great runs but also good sportsmanship when a child stopped to help someone who had fallen over.

Events in the Spring Term

January 16th at Black Park – further information will be sent out the first week we return.

February 27th Braywick, Maidenhead

March 19th Bulmershe school Relays

Sportshall Athletics

A team of Years 3/4 and 5/6 went to Maiden Early School to take part in an indoor athletics competition. All the children did well and the Year 5/6 girls came first. Overall, Oaklands came 11th in Years 3/4 and 6th in Years 5/6. Both events involved interesting games like vertical jumps and Paarlauf!

Netball

This term has been busy for the Netball team, playing in four matches altogether. Oaklands won three matches and lost one. All the boys and girls taking part tried their best and were excellent in their sportsmanship and enthusiasm.

Football

Oaklands took part in six football matches this term, four of which had mixed teams where we won one match. We also played two girls only football matches which were both won by us.

We would like to thank all the children who took part in any sporting event this term and to the parents for getting them to the matches and supporting them.

French Breakfast

Merci to those of you that were able to join us for our 'French breakfast'. We served over a 100 croissants and there was, as usual, a lovely atmosphere in the hall with parents, children and staff enjoying a very different start to the day. We are aiming to run another one in the summer term should you wish to join us!

Reading

As a school, we are trying to raise the profile of reading and the work that we have been undertaking in the library is almost complete. Thank you to everyone who contributed towards these efforts by buying books from the book fair and/or taking part in our recent sponsored read. As a result of these fundraising efforts, you have helped us to raise more than £1000 towards new books for the library.

Parents

THANK YOU to all those parents that have helped us in so many ways this term. We always value your support in school and at home with your children. It is lovely to see so many of you in school for special events such as Decoration Day, themed year group days, school trips and walks etc. It was wonderful to see so many parents and grandparents join us this morning at St. Johns. The choir, musicians, (Belle Plates, Recorders and Violins) were awesome!

*Best wishes to ALL our families
Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year*