

PROPELLER ACADEMY TRUST
Fitzwaryn

'Through learning to learn, pupils will access society'

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Here we are at the end of a very busy term for everyone at Fitzwaryn! It was lovely to see so many parents at the recent Parents' Evening and Transition Fair.

This term we have welcomed some new staff. I am delighted to say that Sarah Gniadek-Pitt has joined us as Enrichment Coordinator – here is a message from her:

I'm excited to introduce myself as the new Enrichment Coordinator at Fitzwaryn. My goal is to create more opportunities for our students to engage in enriching activities beyond the school day.

Last week, I sent out a parent/career and student survey to gather your thoughts on potentially offering afterschool clubs or a summer programme. Your feedback is invaluable in helping us shape new ideas for the future.

If you haven't had a chance to complete the survey yet, I encourage you to do so. Your input will play a crucial role in guiding our plans and ensuring we meet the interests and needs of our school community.

Thank you for your continued support!

*Sarah Gniadek-Pitt
Mobile: 07909 113059*

It was great to see so many of you at the recent Bingo event. Initial indicators tell us that we raised an amazing £440. I would like to thank Leanne O'Donnell and her amazing team of volunteers who work very hard for Friends of Fitzwaryn. Putting events on takes hard work, commitment and a great deal of enthusiasm! If you are interested in joining Friends of Fitzwaryn then do let us know via the school office.

A very BIG THANK YOU from Mrs Little for the very kind donations of gardening equipment – we had parents and friends of the school donating 2 wheelbarrows, 4 sets of hand tools and a propagator. Friends of Fitzwaryn are also looking into a scheme at Wickes that we can benefit from.

Please see over the page reports from teachers about what has been happening in the classes this term!

Happy reading!

Maple

Maple class have had a brilliant term exploring our topic of Space. We have made junk model rockets, alien pictures, astronaut helmets and engaged in lots of role play about being space engineers. However, Maple class have blown Miss Allen away this term being super mathematicians. We have been exploring numbers to 5 which everyone has enjoyed through songs. We have also been learning about length, height, weight and capacity and Maple have engaged in these activities with amazing curiosity and enthusiasm.



Beech

Beech Class blasted off into space this term, exploring stars, astronauts and becoming space engineers. We've had lots of fun engaging in role play, making our own rockets and designing new space outfits. Beech Class have also been working hard developing handwriting skills through lots of creative and fine motor activities, learning how to make a range of marks using different tools and mediums. We also looked at measurement, observing the tilt of scales and looking at length.

For lots of our learners it was the first time swimming with school. We had lots of fun on the bus and working on our independence skills, as well as having lots of fun trying to catch ducks! We're looking forward to doing more activities outside as the weather hopefully becomes warmer.



Cedar

Cedar Class have also been very busy soaring into space this term!

In English, we've loved exploring two wonderful space-themed stories. We began with 'How to Catch a Star' and more recently enjoyed the classic tale 'Whatever Next'. Both stories inspired lots of imaginative discussion and writing.

In Maths, the children explored the many ways we measure length, weight and volume. Through plenty of hands-on activities, the children really engaged with the topic — one of the highlights being our Monster Milkshake creations! Measuring capacity and volume has never been so fun (or tasty!).

Our Science focus this term was light and dark. The children investigated natural and man-made light sources and were fascinated by our shadow experiments using torches and animal silhouettes. They also became detectives around school, hunting for reflective materials.

In D&T, Cedar Class explored book mechanisms, learning all about pop-up features, hide-and-seek flaps, and sliders. The children had a brilliant time creating their very own rocket sliders — complete with flying aliens zooming through space!

Cookery has been another big hit this term. The children practised their spreading, chopping, and cutting skills while making a variety of sandwiches. It was fantastic to see them trying new fillings and proudly enjoying their creations at snack time.

A particular highlight of the term was World Book Day. Cedar Class spent the morning creating a scene from *Stickman* before exploring the other story-themed displays around the school. We finished the day listening to pupils from the Senior School read one of our favourites — *Chickens Can't See in the Dark!*



Hazel

Hazel Class started January with a bang as we created art in the theme of Spring by pounding flowers onto fabric, for an art exhibition at the Beacon in Wantage.

This term, we're thrilled to have a new friend join our class! The children have been welcoming and supportive, showing great kindness and curiosity in helping their new friend feel at home. It's heartwarming to see how they embrace inclusivity and teamwork as they build new relationships in the classroom.

One of the most exciting parts of the term has been the topic "The Land of Magic." The children have delved into the enchanting world of *Winnie the Witch*, a delightful story that sparked their imagination and creativity. As part of our exploration of this magical theme, the children had the chance to design and create their own broomsticks after exploring different materials, and characters using clay, bringing their imaginative ideas to life in three-dimensional form. They were fantastic hands-on experiences that allowed them to develop problem solving and fine motor skills and artistic expression.

Additionally, technology played a key role in our storytelling adventures. The children used interactive tools to craft their own stories, combining their new characters with digital platforms to create unique narratives. This fusion of creativity and technology encouraged collaboration and sparked their passion for storytelling in new, exciting ways.



Ash

Ash Class has had an incredibly busy and exciting term, fully immersing themselves in their Land of Magic topic.

In English, pupils have enthusiastically engaged with sensory stories, exploring 'Winnie the Witch' and 'Zagazoo' with great curiosity. In Term 3, they followed and created their own sets of instructions, while in Term 4, they sequenced 'Zagazoo'—with some pupils even adding their own creative twists to the story!

Beyond English, pupils have been developing their cooking skills - practising chopping techniques and bravely trying new foods. In PE, they have focused on circuit-based activities, strengthening their ability to follow a sequence independently. Meanwhile, in Geography, they have been learning map skills to search for Winnie's missing items around the school.

A particular highlight this term has been swimming, where every pupil has made fantastic progress—not only in their water skills but also in their confidence transitioning to and from the pool.



Willow

During Terms 3 and 4, Willow Class embarked on an exciting adventure to Egypt, exploring the sensory-rich stories of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat and journeying down the River Nile through props and stage directions! Pupils have been captivated by the history of King Tut and thoroughly enjoyed transforming into mummies during their History lessons and Attention Autism sessions. The Attention Autism programme has been particularly beneficial, with pupils showing significant improvements in their ability to engage with activities and interact with adults.

Each morning begins with a Sensology workout, and this term pupils have explored seasonal changes by smelling fresh flowers, tasting spring fruits, and listening to the sounds of lawnmowers, baby chicks, and birdsong. They have also been developing their independence skills, working on tidying up and getting ready to leave the classroom with only verbal prompting.

In Maths, Willow Class have been building their understanding of matching and sorting, learning to recognise 'same and different'. Meanwhile, in PE, pupils have had the fantastic opportunity to receive tennis coaching and thoroughly enjoyed their dance sessions in Term 3. They have developed their movement skills, including balances, kicks, turns and jumps. In Science and DT Systems lessons, they have been exploring lights and circuits, observing how electrical systems function. In handwriting and mark making sessions, pupils have worked on fine motor skills and have loved exploring music mark making and composing their own music! Pupils also enjoyed World Book Day and creating a story scene in the classroom based on their pre phonics book, The Kitchen Disco!

This term's topic, Egypt, has been explored through the creative lens of Lights, Camera, Action! with a focus on biblical and historical and fiction storytelling, as well as multisensory experiences with colour and light. A particular highlight was contributing to the Art Installation at The Beacon in Wantage, where pupils created Monet-inspired artwork using oil pastels alongside sponge painting techniques.

It has been a fantastic term of discovery and creativity in Willow Class, and we look forward to even more exciting learning experiences ahead!



Pine

In Pine this term our topic has been 'Light, Camera, Action!' based around the musical of 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat'. Pupils have enjoyed making pyramid based dioramas and designing lighting systems to show off key features of their pyramids. They have learnt about playscripts and during English lessons have created some amazing adaptations of our main playscript. We have discovered we have some excellent actors in the class and have enjoyed using costumes from the costume cupboard to turn ourselves into different characters. Other highlights have been swimming, learning to make omelettes and weekly Tuesday teamwork challenges. Everyone has worked very hard this term.



Rowan

This term, we have had an exciting time exploring our topic, *Lights, Camera, Action!* Through our shadow investigations, we experimented with different light sources and examined their effects. A highlight was building our own circuits, where pupils enthusiastically tested how many batteries, wires, and bulbs they could connect to complete a full circuit.

In History and Geography, we delved into Ancient Egypt, learning about Tutankhamun and Cleopatra. We even became archaeologists, searching for artefacts discovered in Tutankhamun's tomb! Additionally, we compared different types of settlements in Egypt and England, considering their growth and impact on the environment.

One of the most memorable moments of the term was seeing the incredible teamwork as pupils designed and constructed their dioramas. The creativity and collaboration on display were truly inspiring, and the final results were fantastic!



Chestnut and Holly (Senior School)



It has been a fantastic term in Senior School and pupils have thrived and embraced all the opportunities available. We started the year with swimming. It was amazing to see the pupils make excellent progress during the lessons. It was a joy to watch them grow in confidence in the water, learn new strokes and change independently. Some pupils have also started swimming lessons at the Leisure Centre and it is great to hear how they continue to progress.

Enrichment sessions have also engaged all the pupils, as they get to choose from a variety of clubs to complete after lunch break. It is mindful and a brilliant transition into the afternoon of learning. Holly Class have been

out and about in the local community, as part of their careers – visiting various amenities including Wantage Fire Station and Wantage Museum. There was extra excitement when the same fire fighters came to school during a fire alarm the following week – talk about seeing what they learnt in action!



Both classes enjoyed a trip to the Beacon to see the wonderful artwork that is on display. There was a great sense of pride and achievement seeing their work in a public space.

PE has been another highlight. Our sports coach Martin has been teaching handball and we are looking forward to challenging the staff handball team to a tournament on the last day of term. We have also been learning 'Dances through the ages' and have stepped back in time to the 1950s, 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s. It was refreshing to see all pupils joining in, whatever their ability. We have learnt some fun moves, and we celebrated with a disco, where dressing up from our favourite era was encouraged!

Student Centre (Oak and Elder)

Wow, what a busy term it's been at the Student Centre since we returned after Christmas! We've hardly had a moment to stop, and so much has happened already.

Our journey toward accreditation has been progressing steadily, as we continue working through units in *Participating in an Enterprise Project* and *Making a Product*. One group got involved in a fudge-making enterprise, while another explored an Easter theme, creating Easter baskets and personalised Easter buckets using the Cricut machine. Some of our students have also been focusing on recognising numbers, both in and out of sequence, while others have been preparing for their Functional Skills exams.

As always, communication remains a key focus. Students have enjoyed the opportunity to interact with both familiar faces and new people, and we've continued to celebrate 18th birthdays in style by enjoying lunch outings at local restaurants, where we've worked on using our communication and maths skills while out and about. Additionally, a group of us took part in the Consumer Challenge, learning all about our consumer rights.

Independence skills continue to be a major priority, with students taking on the responsibility of preparing daily lunches for their peers. We've also been out in the community each week, shopping at places like the market, Sainsbury's, Tesco and even Home Bargains. These outings are an excellent opportunity to practise functional English and Maths skills in real-world settings.

Two of our students are still attending work experience at County Print Finishers in Oxford, and they're absolutely loving the experience. Another student has recently started work at the RDA, helping ensure that younger pupils have a great time with the horses and getting involved in side-walking. Students are still working hard towards their Duke of Edinburgh awards, with physical activity weekly, and using skills in other areas across the curriculum.

Our Coffee Mornings continue to be a hit, and we'd like to thank everyone who's come along to support them. We'll be announcing the dates for after Easter very soon!



Horticulture

The students have been working hard in the horticultural area all winter. They have planted seeds, cut back overgrown plants and cleared leaves. We are now enjoying the warmer weather and are planting vegetables, mowing the grass and preparing for the summer.





A Magical Celebration for World Book Day

Pupils had a fantastic time celebrating World Book Day as a whole-school event! Each class transformed their classroom into a scene from a chosen book, creating a fun and engaging storytelling adventure.

In the afternoon, pupils toured the school, guessing which stories were brought to life. The creativity on display was incredible! One classroom became the grand dining hall from *Harry Potter*, where pupils wore the Sorting Hat to be placed into houses. In another, a delightful tea party was set up for *The Tiger Who Came to Tea*, complete with homemade cakes. It was a day filled with imagination, adventure and fun for all!



So it just leaves me to send you all very best wishes and hope the sun shines during (and after!) the break.

Pupils and staff return to school on **TUESDAY 22nd April 2025**

Best wishes
Stephanie Coneboy
Headteacher



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