

Newsletter December 2018

As we draw near to the end of a very busy term, it is time to celebrate all the wonderful activities that have been going on in school since we started back in September. All the pupils have been very busy both in and out of school.

It was great to see so many of you at Parents Evening, the next one is on Wednesday 6th March.

Thank you for the donations for the chocolate tombola and Bingo – I will be able to give an update on funds raised in my January newsletter. A special thank you must go to Brian one of the members of the transport team for standing in as the caller at Bingo – what a fantastic job he did!

We have started a few lunchtime clubs while the weather is cold outside. In addition to choir and dance club, pupils can choose from sport, horticulture, art and film clubs. As you can imagine, the pupils are keen to participate.

Staffing News

At the end of term, we say farewell to two of our Teaching Assistants; Katie Belassie McCourt is moving to Reading and Tess Lonergan is leaving us to embark on a Masters course. I would like to thank them both for the work that they have done at Fitzwaryn and wish them both the very best of luck for the future!

As some of you may know, Ann Gregory will be retiring at the end of term. Ann has worked at Fitzwaryn as an Occupational Therapist for many years and has helped many children and families along the way. We will miss Ann but we wish her all the very best for the future.

Here is a roundup of news of from class teachers.

Maple Class

We have had a wonderful first term in Maple class. Our four new children have all settled in really well and made friends quickly. We have been exploring Family and Home since September and the Children have learnt about the different rooms in the house. Some of our favourite activities have been in Science exploring materials and choosing the best materials to make a bed for Goldilocks! In English we have explored stories such as the Three Little Pigs and Stick Man and a few children can retell the story so just ask us! We are also becoming Super Chefs by exploring lots of different foods in cookery.

All children have made a really great start to the year; communication for all children has really taken off. We are also all getting better at playing games with our friends and we are all improving our sharing skills. A fantastic start to the year!



Beech Class

This term in Beech class has been a particularly busy one! We have worked hard on settling into our new class and making new friends. We have been focussing on “Family and Home” as our topic and we have really enjoyed it. We particularly enjoyed “Stick Man” and did lots of work based around this story. We even made Cheese Straws in the shape of a stick man in Cookery! In Science, we have been learning about Materials and have enjoyed many successful material hunts around the school. We have enjoyed playing in our new Early Year’s Garden and particularly enjoy climbing in and over the tunnel.

We are so proud of the children this term as it’s been a particularly busy one and they have settled into the routine well and started make some fantastic progress! We look forward to next term where our topic will be “Deep Blue Sea”.



Cedar Class

As one of the pupils said ‘It’s always busy in Cedar Class!’ And it really has been a very busy term with lots of activities linked to our topic of ‘Castles and Knights’. We have made big and small castles including a really big castle that we could play in outside. Mrs Noakes has been running a ‘Nearly New Knight’ shop in Maths so we could practise using coins to buy knights to play with in the castles. We have enjoyed listening to stories with castles in particularly enjoying ‘Rapunzel’ and ‘The Princess and the Pea’. It has been a really fun term and we are now starting to think about what we would like to learn about next term so watch this space....



Hazel Class

Hazel class have had a busy Autumn term enjoying lots of topic-based activities. Pupils have used their role play skills and taken part in a jousting tournament, made castles out of clay, been on a bear hunt in PE, learned about the role of a Knight, used their cooking skills to make some tasty treats for a medieval banquet and finished the term with a Christmas trip to the cinema!



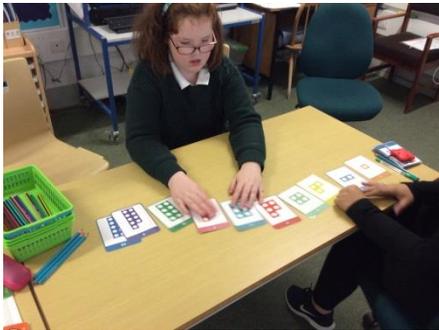
Ash Class

In Ash Class this term we have really enjoyed our topic - Castles, Knights and Dragons. Within this we explored what Knights had to do to become Knights and then the 'Code' by which they lived. We also learnt about the different parts of a castle and even created our very own castles in various forms. During Art lessons we made junk model dragons and also created dragon's eggs.



Willow Class

Wow, what a busy term we have had in Willow Class! Our favourite part of the week has been Monday afternoons when we got to spend time in the cookery room. We have learnt to cook so many new dishes including: pizzas, stuffed potato skins, scrambled egg on toast and biscuits, which we served up to Cedar, Ash and Hazel Classes as part of a Knight's banquet. We've also been learning about being a good friend and made a special soup with each ingredient representing a quality we'd want in a friend. We've learnt some great vocabulary related to this such as respect, trust and honesty. Board games have also featured in our learning. They've helped us to develop our Maths and communication skills and encouraged us to play with others and take turns. We can't wait to see what board games appear for us to play next term! Well done to everyone in Willow Class, have a fantastic Christmas break and see you in January for another exciting term!



Pine Class

We have had a brilliant and exciting term in Pine Class. Our first term was spent learning about William Shakespeare and preparing for our performance of 'A Comedy of Errors'. All the students involved were fantastic and the months of hard work really shone through.

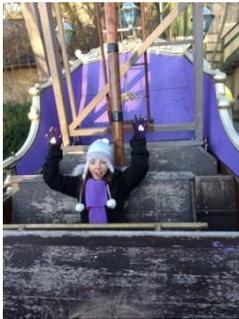


This is our class collage of William Shakespeare. We cut out our own eyes from photos and used them to make William's eyes!

In History and Science we learnt about teeth and how personal hygiene had changed throughout the years. Did you know that black teeth were fashionable and showed a sign of wealth back in Shakespeare's time? The more money you had the more sugar you could afford, which in turn would rot your teeth. We had great fun experimenting with different mouthwashes that were used back in the day. Would you like to wash your teeth in vinegar and honey, salt and honey or sugar and honey!?



In our cooking lessons we learnt how to make bread. Every week we made a different type of bread. By the end of the term we were able to make it independently. We learnt many new skills such as kneading the dough, proving the bread, and timing it just perfectly!



This term we have been learning about rainforests. We have learnt lots of interesting facts about the rainforests, the different layers and the animals that live there. We have also looked at deforestation and the impact that this has on the environment. We made clay rainforest monkeys, made rain sticks in music and rainforest animals out of playdough!



We enjoyed a class trip to the cinema as part of Film Week. We went to watch 'Flying the Nest'. All the adults were so proud of Pine Class as they represented the school brilliantly.

Rowan Class

Rowan Class have had a fantastic start to the year! In the first term, they did an incredible performance of 'The Comedy of Errors'. For many of them, it was their first time performing a Shakespeare play, and they should all be very proud of themselves. In the second term, they have been learning all about Rainforests, including what animals we can find in a Rainforest and how we can protect them. They even invented their own Rainforest animals! In Horticulture, they have been growing hyacinths ready to give to

their families for Christmas and in Cooking they have been making healthy snacks. A firm favourite has been pitta pizzas. We finished the term with a school trip to see 'The Grinch', which was a big hit!



Chestnut Class

We have had a busy term in Chestnut Class. Up until half term we have been learning all about Shakespeare's life and have been doing lots of work in preparation for our performance of 'A Comedy of Errors'. We also made lots of artwork and learnt lots of different techniques to make collages. After half term we focused on Rainforests. In geography, we learnt all about the Rainforests of the world and how to sustain them. We also started to look at persuasive writing. We made campaign speeches and filmed adverts for products we created.



Holly Class

Holly Class have had a very busy Autumn term! The students have all enjoyed settling in to the new school year and have been focussing on their ASDAN accreditation work. The students have been working on various projects including those for the Home Management and Communication modules which involved studying local history and a really informative trip to the Vale and Downland Museum in Wantage. As part of the Beliefs and Values module students have been learning about different charities generally and Children in Need specifically; everyone in the class was really pleased to organise our fundraising event this year. Our Personal Development (PSD) modules have included supporting pupils to consider how to keep themselves safe in the community and also how to plan and prepare a healthy meal. Alongside ASDAN and PSD the students have also been working extremely hard on their Maths and Literacy skills and have also really enjoyed participating in all other aspects of our varied curriculum including yoga, art workshops and physical education.



Student Centre

An exciting start to the new term when we moved in to the new Student Centre. The students worked hard to unpack and make the building feel their own! It is a lovely light building and now feels like we have always been here. Students commented ‘ I have unpacked lots of boxes but I know where to find everything now!’ ‘The kitchen is so big but we can all make lunches in our own space’

The post 16 curriculum has been redesigned so that all students are involved in a range of Enterprise projects – takeaway lunches for staff, upcycling (furniture and small items), horticulture, crafts, coffee morning, outside catering (for Friends events or when courses/training is held in school). All profits made will be put back into the project and we will be making donations to charities. Kingfisher sixth form students also work with us for horticulture and craft enterprise sessions.



The students are also taking up the challenge of the Duke of Edinburgh Award. They have been improving their physical skills and have the challenge of either swimming the equivalent of the English Channel (3 students swim an average of 20 lengths of the pool each week and are already almost a quarter of the way to France!!) walking a set distance each week or improving basketball skills. Students volunteer in the main school – listening to younger pupils read, setting up activities and maintaining outdoor areas.

The students continue to study for their NOCN accreditation, increase their independent skills and confidence being out in the community.

We remembered WW1 by making our own art installation which was displayed on the decking and we received many comments from passers-by. It was also featured in the Oxford Mail.

The successful intergenerational link with Stirlings Care Home continues with the students inviting and preparing lunch for a group of the residents. It is popular with both students and guests as they spend time together, chatting and sharing stories.

It is the time of year when we look forward to the Christmas celebrations. The tree is up, we are holding a festive coffee morning, have planned and invited guests to join us for Christmas Dinner and are going to the Chicken



Shed Theatre in London to see a production of 'A Christmas Carol'.

Fitzwaryn's Choir

The Choir have been busy practising this term for various performances. We took part in Disney's Fitzwaryn's got talent and sang our new favourite "I just can't wait to be King!". We have taken part in the Mayor's Christmas Carol concert where we performed "I saw three ships". We practise every week and it's a pleasure to see the joy that singing and performing brings to these children. We are busy preparing for a show stopping performance on March 22nd, so please put it in your diaries! In preparation for this we have been lucky enough to have 4 dates booked in with professional singing teachers who are coming to do workshops with the children. We have already had one workshop and it was a roaring success. The choir engaged well and the whole morning was full of joy. We can't wait for the next one!



PE News

It has been another busy term in PE. The year started off with a group Upper School and Student Centre going on a sports residential at Stoke Mandeville. We had a super few days trying out lots of different sports including, archery, weight lifting, wheel chair basketball, hand cycling, zone hockey and lots more. The week finished with a swimming gala where everyone swam at least 25m.



Upper School have been going to the Scouts Hut in Wantage to play badminton. As a school we continue to use the Real PE scheme which has helped to develop our skills.



Shakespeare for Schools Festival

The pupils of Rowan, Pine and Chestnut classes put on a fantastic performance of Shakespeare's 'A Comedy of Errors' at the beginning of November. All of the pupils involved worked incredibly hard learning the complicated play, making props, and especially learning all of their lines! Although there were lots of nerves on the night, they put on an enthusiastic performance at Headington Theatre and earned a lot of well-deserved laughs and applause. All of the pupils should be very proud of themselves for what they accomplished.

Sensory Theatre

The Sensory Theatre continues to be used by children throughout the school, allowing them to fully immerse their senses in the topics being studied without even leaving the building!

Maple and Beech classes have been learning all about homes and have been looking at some of the different rooms in houses and what they might be used for in their Sensory Theatre sessions

Cedar class are currently using the theatre for two pupils who enjoy the sensory aspects that we have to offer. They are able to use the hoist with a walking harness to enable a pupil to walk across the interactive floor, and they use the coloured buttons and roller ball to control the lighting effects and for tracking.

Willow class have been learning about Knights and Castles and have enjoyed dressing up and learning all about the features of castles and how they compare to modern day homes.



Throughout the year the whole of Upper School use the theatre space as a starter for their Big Write sessions. This term, two of the groups have been learning about rainforests and have enjoyed listening to and recognising some of the different sounds that they might hear.

A group from the Student Centre come into the theatre every Wednesday afternoon for their 'PE' session. They have been learning to follow some familiar dances that involve lots of movement! They especially enjoy doing 'the locomotion' and the 'hokey cokey'!

It just remains for me to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! I do hope that you enjoy the holidays with your families and friends.

Term 3 starts on Monday 7th January for staff and pupils.

With best wishes

Stephanie Coneboy
Headteacher