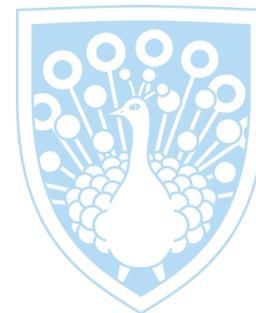


Great Tew School Newsletter

Issue 177

Friday 14th March 2014



Dear parents,

Back in print after a week off last week, due to me being in Kilvrough with the Year Six children. We all had a wonderful week away and were blessed with pretty good weather and a glorious sunny day on Friday to finish our week. The children were amazing – so much fun to be away with and really great company. They got on very well with the other children there, who came from St Swithun's near Abingdon. New friendships were formed and we were all sad to say goodbye to them on Friday evening. It is a privilege to be able to take the children away from school for a week and to see them shine and blossom away from the classroom. Though it is undoubtedly tiring (!) it is always something I look forward to. The children grew so much in confidence and independence, and I know that lots of their parents have noticed that already. They tackled all sorts of challenging activities, digging deep to overcome fears and worries and to succeed. Mr Butler and I were very impressed by the way the children supported each other during the week; they certainly appreciated the importance of working in a team. Well done to all of them – and thank you children for making me so proud of you.

News from the Classrooms....

Reception

This week we were lucky to have Sarah joining us for her work experience. She joined the children in their work and play all week and was a happy and helpful member of the team. Thank you Sarah!

We have been busy exploring information books this week and identifying features in them such as headings, page numbers, contents and index pages, captions and labels. Our sounds this week were /ar/ (as in car, far, card, marker) and /or/ (as in for, corn and form). In maths, the children have been using and developing their number recognition and order knowledge by playing dice games such as 'spotty faces', 'butterfly race' and 'comets and rockets'! Over the next few weeks the children will be learning about "people who help us" and this week they have been learning about fire-fighters and the very important job that they do. The children have enjoyed creating and playing in their fire-station role-play area, complete with their very own, very long hand-made ladder! Next week they will be learning about the police, and PC Chris Jones will be coming in to talk to them on Thursday. I think if they are very lucky he will show them inside his police car!

Interest table: my favourite book.

Please make sure that you all saw the 'Grandparents Day' letter that went out on Wednesday!

Years 1 & 2

Letters and Sounds for Year 2 last week covered the suffixes ful, y and less. We have learnt how they change the meaning of the base words and spelling rules. Year ones have been practising reading and spelling words with *split digraphs* 'i-e' (eg time, pine) and "a-e" (eg same, make etc.)

Come and read our fantastic patterned poems about being at the school gate. We will publish them in a class book so we can share them with you.

In maths we have been learning the names and properties of 3D shapes; some of the class have excelled themselves and can name and describe very advanced shapes such as an octagonal prism! The children have been reading (and thoroughly enjoying) reading some traditional tales. Please do try to find the time to read some of these wonderful stories with your children – fairy tales are a wonderful way to introduce the children to story conventions – and all of the children LOVE them! Any version is fun – try a traditional one followed by a humorous version to get the children really thinking. This afternoon we had fun with a Red Riding Hood rap!

“Commotion in the Ocean” at Chipping Norton School

On Wednesday afternoon, the Year 1 children took part in a Dance Festival at Chipping Norton school with 240 other Year 1 children! They worked with one of the Chipping Norton Sports Leaders, who taught them some dance moves and then the children worked together with their Sports Leader to create a dance sequence of their own on the theme of Commotion in the Ocean, which they then performed. Well done to all the children, who were very good ambassadors for their school. The children said: *I loved sliding on the floor because it was very slippery; I liked making big sea monsters as a group - we had to make very scary faces!*

Years 3 & 4

Just after Half Term the children met Chilly. The children vote each week for the person who they feel should look after Chilly for the weekend or holiday. He has, in previous schools, been around the world, skiing and even sky-diving! Where will he go and what will he do with children from Great Tew?

Continuing our topic – “Great Tew to Southend”, we have been looking at foul water leaving our village. Last week we paid a visit to our local sewage farm and enjoyed the aroma of Great Tew’s output! The amazing thing is that within thirty five metres of entering the plant, clean water is discharged into the river Durn.

Back in the classroom we imagined that we were some water entering the plant and becoming clean. Some wonderfully imaginative writing ensued. Our focus on handwriting is producing noticeable improvements. Well done to the class for listening, understanding and applying themselves this week.

Years 5 & 6

In Year 5 it was quite a week last week without Year 6! The children practised their songs for the music festival next week. They talked about the origin of sea shanties and they also learnt a Liberian lullaby. The children were busy writing and typing their story entries for the Deddington literary festival. Whilst they missed Year 6, they loved being the oldest in the school and having the swimming pool to ourselves on Friday morning!

This week Year 5 and 6 have been indulging in lots of retail therapy! We got stuck into some clothing and toy catalogues, chose our favourite items and then worked out, using written calculation methods, what we would pay if we applied the following sale discounts; 15%, 1/3 and 40% etc. The next day we talked about VAT. The children were surprised to learn that this is applied to most items we buy (even Lego as Gus fumed!) We looked at the different bands of VAT rates; did you know how much you pay on cycle helmets and child car seats? (0% and 5% respectively.) We then discussed the recent VAT increase in 2011; Emily thought it was shocking that the government took so much tax but as Phoebe reasoned we need the money to pay for essential things like NHS and teachers! The children then worked out how much VAT you would pay on various items, such as toys and trainers etc. In English we are thoroughly enjoying researching local folklore and ghost tales; ask the children to tell you what happened at the Crown and Cushion Inn in Chipping Norton High Street which is of national importance! In two weeks’ time we shall be going on a walking tour trip of Chipping Norton and visiting some interesting places for our local ‘Horrible History’ topic - letter to follow. We also took advantage of a very warm and sunny afternoon on Wednesday and did some more orienteering up at the pitches. Mrs Sellers had laid out in advance a really challenging course for us, which involved finding numbers and marking off certain colours on our clipboard sheets...next week we are progressing onto compass points and bearings!!!!

Good Manners’ Champion

This week our Good Manners’ Champion was Phoebe in Year 5. Phoebe is a very kind and thoughtful member of her class and he is someone whose caring and outgoing nature makes her very popular with children throughout the school. I often see Phoebe at playtimes helping one of the younger children. The children told us: *she is very helpful; she is kind to the grown-ups and the children; she never leaves anyone out; she always tries hard; I like her smile.* Well done Phoebe – you have lovely manners, both to children and adults, and you deserve that shiny cup!

Stars of the Week

We have two weeks' worth of stars to celebrate: A very well done to all of them:

Last Week

Reception: Willa
Years 1 & 2: Otterlie
Years 3 & 4: Gethin
Years 5 & 6: Daniella

This Week:

Reception: Laura
Year 1 & 2: Isabelle
Year 3 & 4: Silvia
Year 5 & 6: Esme

Green Bus

Yesterday we were very lucky to be paid a visit by the Green Bus. Children from all the classes from Year 1 upwards enjoyed practical, hands-on workshops learning about some very important environmental issues and how important it is to "Reduce, Re-use and Re-cycle." They had compost workshops, made wind-powered buggies, learnt about how much electricity the gadgets in our homes use. The children loved their day and they certainly learnt a lot; I am sure you are all being nagged at home by your little Eco-Warriors!

Some ideas for family fun.....

Cogges Farm

Attached is a flyer for Cogges' Farm Spring open weekend on 22nd and 23rd March. Why not take the children along to meet the animals, take part in some family craft and cooking activities, watch a demonstration or do some planting.

Brookes Science Bazaar

If you fancy something a little more scientific, as part of the Oxfordshire Science Festival, Oxford Brookes University are running a free family Science Bazaar on Saturday 22nd March. Discover how your body and brain work, explore the miniature world of cells, viruses and germs.... More details on the attached flyer.

Earth Trust, Little Wittenham

Go along to a Lambing Weekend at Earth Trust: 22nd, 23rd, 29th and 30th March. Visit their working farm and see the lambs being born! Den building, outdoor play area, craft activities, seed planting and refreshments available. **Flyer attached or see www.earthtrust.org.uk for more details.**

Outdoor April activities! Plenty of activities for children and families during the holidays. See www.earthtrust.org.uk for more details.

Table Top Sale

We are holding a 'Table Top Sale' on Monday 17th March in school, (outside if weather permitting), for selling your unwanted good as new clothes, toys, books, bric a brac etc. Setting up may begin at 2.30 pm ready for pick up time at 3.15 pm. We have 5 tables booked so far, so please do let Angela know if you would like a table but haven't yet booked it. Tables will cost £10 each with all proceeds going to the school. If you know of anyone, friend, family member etc who would like a table, please ask them to contact the office or you can book for them.

We do ask that any items you do not manage to sell are taken away with you and not put into our rubbish bins or left at school.

Sainsbury's Active Kids Vouchers

We are collecting Active Kids vouchers, hoping to put the vouchers towards purchasing some new play equipment for the children. Please remember to ask for the vouchers if you are shopping in Sainsbury's – and do ask your friends, neighbours and family to collect for us too! There is a box in the main cloakroom.

Great Tew Free-Cycle!

Mrs Tibbetts has a 60litre Bio-Orb fish tank (empty!), pump and filter looking for a new home. It can be used with cold water or tropical fish. If you are interested please let Angela know.

Dogs

Please could I remind all dog owners that dogs are not allowed in the school grounds. Lots of us love dogs, but there are plenty more who don't, and large, over-friendly dogs that jump up can be very intimidating to small children who are unfamiliar with dogs. Please make sure that you do not let your dog run around on the green during drop-off and collection times. Well-behaved, small, child-friendly dogs can be left tied up at the school gate while you drop your children at school. **Please see attached poster.**

Disguising the Mud!

I am sure you will have noticed how much nicer the playground has been looking in the last two weeks, particularly today with the sun shining! This is thanks to a small but very energetic group of parents and children who very generously came along on a Saturday morning to



spread bark and unload sand. They worked incredibly hard and between them managed to unload, shift, spread and rake 5 pallet loads of sand and bark, which has made a huge difference to our play facilities. A very big thank you to all of them (Mr Heath, Mr Zibarras and Theo, Mr Collins, Gethin and Ioan, Mr and Mrs Reece and Tilly, Mr Williams and Indiana (with a couple of little sisters to help too!))The children are particularly delighted to have a new sandpit to play in and I am particularly delighted to see the boys and girls playing so happily together.



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Sweeping Away the Signs of Winter....

Thank you also to Mel Tosh, JossGrant, Jane Zibarras and Dawn Wilson-Fry, who have been busy with their brooms on a Monday morning, sweeping away grit and mud from the playground and paths. The playground has been looking much nicer – and they tell me it is much better than an exercise class! If you have a broom and can spare half an hour at 9am on a Monday please contact Mel Tosh or just turn up. Thank you!

Enjoy the weekend everyone, and let's hope the sun keeps shining!

With best wishes.

Mrs Lucy Miles

Dates Coming Up

Monday 17 th March	Year 5 and 6 Girls' netball at Tudor Hall
Monday 17 th March	Table top sale after school
Wednesday 19 th March	Year 2 & 3 Schoolympics at Chipping Norton School
Thursday 20 th March	PC Chris Jones to visit Reception
Friday 21 st March	Year 5 Science Day at Tudor Hall
Thursday 3 rd April	Egg rolling competition (more details to follow) Easter Egg hunt
Friday 4 th April	Easter Service at St Michael's Church followed by Easter Bonnet parade
Friday 4 th April	Term finishes at midday