



Great Tew School Newsletter

Issue 208

Friday 9th January 2015



Dear all,

A happy new year to all of you, particularly those I haven't yet seen. The children have come back full of enthusiasm for their learning and lots of them have started the year with really positive new year's resolutions, showing a mature understanding of what they want to get better at and how they are going to do it. This links nicely to a new initiative we are embarking on called "Building Learning Power". This encompasses many interlinked aspects but fundamentally it is focused around teaching the children HOW to learn, using the 4 "R"s of Resilience, Resourcefulness, Reflectiveness and Reciprocity. It shifts the emphasis onto attitude and effort and empowers the children to take the initiative and be positive and proactive towards their learning. You will hear more about this over coming months.

Developing Independence

As part of our initiative on Building Learning Power we are working on developing the children's independence; this is such an important life skill for the children and if learnt and practised now it will serve them for ever in numerous different ways. We would ask that you support us in this wherever you can, starting small and building on this as your children become more confident. You will be amazed at what the children can do for themselves if they are encouraged to do so, but if someone else will do it for them they will often (as we all do!) take the easy route!

First target please –no more pack horses! Your children should be expected to carry their own belongings to and from school each day!

Reception

The children have settled down to work and play really well after the holiday; they have enjoyed telling us all about their Christmas celebrations with you and the presents that they had, even recounting the sound of Santa's footsteps on the stairs! We have looked closely at the spelling patterns /ch/sh/ in Letters and sounds this week, reading and spelling words that contain one or even 2 of these patterns. See if you can hear or see one at home this weekend.

We have had a lot of fun with the story of 'The Three Little Pigs'! We have all tried out our best wolf voices and tried hard to recall details and information from the story. We have tried to find words to describe the wolf, such as, greedy, mean, scary, sad, wily... We will continue to focus on this story next week, making up and writing our own versions, then telling them to each other!

In maths we have been recognising and ordering numbers at the children's own levels and really getting to grips with the 'teen' numbers. We have been spotting whether a number pattern is counting up or down and finding the missing numbers or saying what comes next.

We have sent home a letter this week with a topic plan for the term and information about Show and Tell arrangements for the term and how your child can get involved and contribute to the topic.

Years 1 & 2

The children have had great successes this week with their performance poetry. They have taken on board both positive comments and constructive criticism about how to make their performances even better.

In maths Year 1s practised number bonds to 8, 9 and 10, with Year 2s using their ability to count in 10s from any number to make adding and subtracting 11, 12, 13, 21, 22 & 23 more efficient!

We started our new topic: "Which material should the Three Little Pigs have used to build their house?" We've looked at the buildings in Great Tew to see how straw, wood and brick have been used and have devised some tests to carry out on the three materials next week to discover which are waterproof, which would make rigid walls, which would keep things warm and which are strong!!

After our assembly on Tuesday when we talked about New Year's Resolutions, lots of the children wanted to write a resolution or target. These were brought to me and have been put into envelopes sealed with wax. The children have come up with strategies for achieving their targets, with support from their friends, and the envelopes will be opened later in the year so as the children can reflect on their personal achievements. I have a feeling they will do well.....

Years 3 & 4

Mysterious, worrying, fascinating. These are just some of the adjectives being used to describe the Rollright Stones. We are studying the stones this half term basing Literacy, History and Geography around these Jurassic Monoliths. Already the children are being pulled in by the sight of this circle of warriors, their King and 'The Whispering Knights.'

We have returned to place value, addition and subtraction in Maths focusing on building confidence and comprehension.

A visit to the Falkland's Meadow produced a rare collection of leaves, shells and mud. The hard work has begun to identify the collection by studying books, the internet and microscopic evaluation. Well we are having a jolly good look.

The New Year brings very cold, wet and muddy conditions to our rural idyll. Can you ensure that all children have coats, gloves, scarves and wellington boots. It may be warm in the car, but it is not when it comes to playtime. Thank you for processing the children's P.E. kit over the Christmas holidays. Can you make sure that your children brings their kit home on a regular basis as exercise and the great outdoors produces a heady mix to our school.

We are all looking forward to the coming months and this wonderful group of young people are approaching everything we do with great enthusiasm.

Years 5 & 6

The children arrived back on Tuesday refreshed, eager and ready to work and we got stuck straight into short division and what to do with leftovers (and I don't mean the turkey!) We have practised turning our remainders into fractions, or decimals and next week we will be rounding up or down depending on the question. We also looked at the thorny issue of possessive apostrophes – there are a few rules and also exceptions to the rules! We kicked off our topic on the Ancient Islamic Civilisation of Baghdad by trying to place it on a world timeline of other dates and famous civilisations we have studied. In P.E. we started our astronaut course with endurance training in the form of a 2-mile run and working together and trusting their training partner! Children will continue their training with different exercises every week until they qualify as an astronaut! You can see more of the course by going to www.trainlikeanastronaut.org. P.E. stars were Maddie and Matilda who worked as a team really well and completed the run easily. Our homework hero this week is Jamie for a great debate on the advantages of the internet – Jamie always puts a great effort into his homework, well done and keep up the great work!

On behalf of Mrs. Tibbetts, Ms. Furnivall, Mrs. Phillips and Mrs. Taylor and myself we would all like to thank both you all for your kind and thoughtful Christmas presents and cards. We felt very spoilt!

Stars of the Week

Well done to the following children, who are this week's stars. They have all been working hard and impressing their teachers.

Reception	Sophia
Year 1 & 2	Monty
Year 3 & 4	Isabella
Year 5 & 6	Matilda

A very big thank you to Isabella and Lucia's Grandpa, Herman, who has refurbished the Year 1 and 2 Star of the Week so it resembles a throne! It is a work of art, the children (and staff) are delighted, and further orders may be forthcoming!!

Good Manners' Champion

This week's Good Manners' Champion is Lily in Year 2. Lily is someone who is good fun but with a lovely gentle manner, both in the classroom and towards her friends. Lily is always polite and friendly and she is someone who looks out for the other children and is a really kind friend. The children told us: *she is just a really good friend and I like playing with her; she doesn't get cross and over-react if someone bumps into her; she is always kind to other people; I like working with her; she comes to ask me if I want to play.* Well done Lily and keep up those super manners.

Bag2School

If you are having a post-Christmas clear out, please do remember to put things aside for our Bag2School collection on Thursday 26th February. Bags will go home during the first couple of weeks in February and the following items are accepted:

- Men's, ladies' and children's clothing
- Paired shoes (tied together or elastic band around)
- Handbags, hats, bags, belts, scarves, ties and jewellery
- Soft toys

Philosophy for Children (P4C) in Year 5 & 6

The children enjoyed a first lesson of philosophy this afternoon. We used an interesting picture as a stimulus, shared some ideas and thoughts and decided to base our enquiry around the question, "What is normal?" The children listened brilliantly and were incredibly responsive to each other's ideas and in a very short space of time we had a deep discussion, with comments like: *I think that what I think is normal might be strange to someone else; everyone's normal is different; it's good that we all do things differently; I think man-made things can be normal but I don't think humans can be normal; everyone is different so how can they be normal; it depends what your views are as you might think I'm weird but I think I'm normal! I don't think there is any such thing as normal.* Eliza said, as she left school, "Philosophy is my favourite subject!" What a great way to end the week.

Enjoy the weekend everyone; let's hope we don't all get blown away!

Mrs Lucy Miles

Dates for Your Diary

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
Friday 16 th January	Swimming starts for Year 5 & 6 children	Letter was sent home in Book Bags.
Wednesday 28 th January	U11 Netball Festival at Chipping Norton School	
Monday 2 nd February	Y6 children to IMPS – Horton Hospital	
Monday 16 th – Friday 20 th Feb	Half Term	
Thursday 26 th February	Bag2Schools Collection	Bags will go home in early February
Friday 27 th February	Swimming starts for Year 3 & 4 children	Letter to follow
Monday 2 nd – Friday 6 th March	Y6 Residential Trip to Yenworthy Lodge	
Friday 13 th March	Science Day for Y5 children at Tudor Hall	Letter will be sent home – lunch will be provided
Wednesday 18 th March	Netball Festival at Tudor Hall for Y5 girls	Letter will be sent home – lunch will be provided
Wednesday 25 th March	Y5/6 trip to Ashmolean Museum and Central Oxford Mosque	Letter will be sent home