



Great Tew School Newsletter

Issue 244

Friday 11th December 2015



Great Tew Celebrates Great News

Some of you may already have heard the news, either from the national press or from assembly this morning, (or simply from the very effective bush telegraph!) but I am delighted to tell you that Great Tew was ranked 8th in the country for attainment in 2015 (measured by the average point score achieved by our Year 6 pupils)! The national performance tables were published yesterday and can be accessed from the school website.

These results are impressive indeed, and testament to the very hard work put in by our last year's Year 6 children and the commitment and expertise of all of our staff. I know you will all join me in saying a very big thank you to all of the staff for the hard work that goes in to achieving results like these. Without this small team of talented and dedicated staff, Great Tew would not be the sort of school it is, a happy place to learn and play, to make mistakes and to thrive. Well done and thank you to every one of them.

Naturally, we take great pleasure in these exceptional results but we always caution that, given our small pupil numbers, results from year to year can and do vary widely (sometimes just because a child was away during the week of the tests) and it is wiser to look at results over a period of time to gain a true picture of the school's performance. Looking at 3-year averages (2012-2015) offers a fairer picture and here too we have plenty to celebrate.

- Averaged over three years our Key Stage Two results (Year 6) put us in the top 1% of schools for reading and writing and the top 5% for maths.
- In the last three years, every single one of our pupils has made at least the expected level of progress in reading, writing and maths.

Academic results and performance tables are, however, only one aspect of Great Tew's effectiveness, telling only part of the picture, and we pride ourselves on offering so much more for the children too. Just as important to us are the things that cannot be measured by tests or put into a league table: the children's growing confidence and their enthusiasm for learning, brought to life by an enriched and engaging curriculum. The pride they take in doing something well, their notably good manners, their sporting prowess or their developing sense of concern and respect for others are all characteristics which the school values and nourishes alongside academic success. We continue to focus on ensuring that our children achieve the very best of which they are capable, but just as importantly that they have a really balanced educational experience and that they leave Great Tew as confident young people with a real sense of whom they are and where their strengths lie.

Far from resting on our laurels after these magnificent results we want to push on to achieve an even better education for the children. Next term will see us continuing to work on developing a "growth mindset" in the children, supporting them to understand themselves as learners, to truly value the importance of effort, to learn from, rather than be fearful of, mistakes and failure. There is plenty that parents can do to support us with this and you will hear more next term.

Stars of the Week

Well done to the following children, our hard-working and enthusiastic Stars of the Week.

- Reception:** Evelyn
Year 1 & 2: Oscar
Year 3 & 4: Sophie
Year 5 & 6: Eliza

Something Else to Celebrate

Last weekend's Christmas Fair was a huge success, a really happy event that launched us into Christmas. Thanks to the very hard work of parents, staff, children and friends, the fair raised a very impressive £2,464, including £800 from the bidding wall, some of which is still coming in. A huge thank you goes to everyone involved, for playing your part in making this event such fun and so successful – for organising and running stalls, for baking and creating, for serving drinks, for providing exceptionally generous prizes for the raffle and bidding wall and for coming along on the day, digging deep into your wallets and spending lots of money. A particular thank you goes this year to Mrs Catling and Mim Clubb, who between them did a great deal of planning and organising to make sure the fair was such a success. Two people were really missed, not just by all of us on Saturday, but in the run-up to Saturday – Angela (whom we did manage to keep quite busy with her wrapping paper and sellotape!) and Mrs Sam, both of whom are always so instrumental in masterminding these events and galvanising support. I know how much both of them wished they could have been here to join in all the fun. Thank you to everyone for supporting the school so generously; we are planning to put this money towards interactive screens for the classrooms and quotes are beginning to come in.

Good Manners' Champion

This week's Good Manners' Champion is Amber in Year 5. Amber has not been at Great Tew for that long, but she has proved herself to be a very positive member of the class and she is someone that is genuinely good to have around. Amber is smiley and cheerful and she is always polite to the adults in school, going out of her way to offer help. She is easy going and supportive in the classroom; if something doesn't go quite right for her she doesn't make a fuss but just gets on with things. The children told us: *in our School Council meetings Amber always listens to other people's ideas and she has really good ideas too; if people fall over outside she always comes to check how they are and she helps them; in gymnastics if someone doesn't get the routine right, she supports them and encourages them rather than being critical; when Amber says hello, she always asks how you are and she is always really interested to hear about how your day is going without telling you all about herself; Amber is really good at sharing the stilts and I like playing with her; she is always really sensible and enthusiastic in choir and she has a lovely singing voice too!* Well done Amber – we really love having you at Great Tew.

Reception and KS1 Performance of "It's A Baby"

This week's performance of "It's a Baby" was a triumph. The audience watched enraptured as the children danced, sang, performed and entertained and made us all feel so proud of them. It is so special to see the children performing, overcoming their fears and visibly growing in confidence. There can be no more magical way of thinking about Christmas than watching a children's nativity performance, and the children so successfully reminded us exactly why it is that we celebrate Christmas and what all this tinsel is about. This nativity show has come at the end of a very long term and I know it's not just the children who might be feeling a little bit tired this weekend! There is a huge amount of work that goes into putting a performance together – thank you to them all for going the extra mile and making it so special.

Thank you to Cotswold Marquees

A last minute hitch on Tuesday morning left us with no lights for the Christmas performance. Several frantic telephone calls were made to no avail but John Easter at Cotswold Marquees (a small family run company based in Brilles) came to our rescue. He couldn't have been more helpful and charged us nothing for the high quality lights he lent us, which really did brighten the show!

News from Pre-School

What a fantastic week we have had in the lead up to Christmas. On Monday we watched our friends from reception, year one and year two perform their wonderful Christmas performance - they were brilliant. We then practised and prepared ourselves for our own Christmas concert and party on Friday. We all enjoyed performing to our parents and enjoyed a fun filled party with a very welcome visitor to complete a perfect morning.

News from Reception

We are a classroom full of rather tired performers this week! After lots of rehearsals and 3 performances this week we certainly deserve a rest this weekend. The costumes were fantastic (thank you for all your efforts!) and I'm sure you'll agree the children all took their roles very seriously and concentrated well under the hot lights and in front of quite so many people. As well as all the performing we have also managed to fit in learning some new sounds /j/ and /ll/, coming up with a list of class rules for us all to stick to and ordering numbered strips of paper to make paper chains to decorate our classroom. With still a week to go there's plenty more time for glitter, tinsel and sparkles as we finish off our decorations and prepare for the end of term festivities!

News from Years 1 & 2

A big 'well done' to all the children for their fantastic performances of 'It's a Baby' this week. We were all very impressed with their singing, dancing and confident narrating. There have still been children humming the songs as they worked this week! Yes, they have worked, and of course we have returned to the pirate topic and written some fantastic pirate information texts.

On Wednesday afternoon we had a most enjoyable time investigating the properties of clay; we made thumb pots and scratched or rolled patterns onto the surface of a flat piece of clay to make our favourite designs. Next week we are going to make imaginary sea creatures with professional help from Mr Cobb Stanier.

Two dates for your diaries

Tuesday 15th December come to school as a pirate, no weapons please and **Wednesday 16th December at 2.30** the long awaited performance of 'The Night Pirates' dance.

News from Years 3 & 4

This week has been a busy week in our Year 3/4 classroom. Our classroom was transformed into Santa's workshop on Tuesday afternoon. Top Secret activities took place and you may see the results of the children's labours next week..... In English the children have really impressed me with their comprehension skills this week. I can see that some of them will soon be ready for their pen licences as their handwriting has really improved this term.

Star of the Week: Sophie -for her enthusiasm and confidence in whatever task she tackles.

Sporting Hero: Lara - who despite being unwell this week, expertly filmed the Yr 5/6's gymnastic lesson.

Homework Hero: Royce -for presenting his work on 'Time' beautifully.

News from Years 5 & 6

This week has seen the children immersed in preparing for their Dragons' Den presentations next week. They have designed their games, created them, tested them, promoted and advertised them and now they are finishing off their sales pitches and nearly ready to present their prototypes to the public! The children have really enjoyed this topic and their team work skills have developed enormously. I overheard a conversation between two children this week, and I was very impressed by the calm way they were speaking to each other when they didn't quite agree (!) and the negotiation skills that they were using!

Christmas Dates

Sat 12 th Dec 5pm	Village Carol Service – all children are invited to sing in the service – St Michael and All Angels
Weds 16 th Dec	Whole school trip to the pantomime – Aladdin at the Oxford Playhouse
Thurs 17 th Dec	Christmas Feast – for all children – further details to follow
Friday 18 th Dec 9am	End of Term Church Service- St Michael and All Angels - all parents and families invited Term finishes at 2pm

Village Carol Service

Do try to come along to the village Carol Service if you can, tomorrow at 5pm at St Michael's Church. It is always a lovely service and I know that many children are coming along to sing, wearing something Christmassy! Mulled wine and mince-pies will be served after the service.

Whole School Trip to the Pantomime - Aladdin at the Oxford Playhouse

We will be leaving school promptly at 8.45am, in order to get to the Oxford Playhouse and find our seats in time for the start of the panto at 10am. Children should arrive by 8.30am. **Further details are in the attached letter.**

Christmas Feast

The Christmas Feast on Thursday is shaping up to be its usual extravaganza and I, for one, am already looking forward to it! Please do make sure you have let us know if your children will be taking part – we are asking for £4 per child to cover the cost of the food. A letter should have come home and **further information is in the attached letter.**

Hoping to see many of you in the Church on Saturday, for the very special village Carol Service.

Mrs Lucy Miles

Dates for Your Diary

Saturday 5 th December	Christmas Fair 11-2pm
Tuesday 8 th December	KS1 and Reception Production 2pm
Tuesday 8 th December	KS1 and Reception Production 6.00pm
Saturday 12 th December 5pm	Village Carol Service
Wednesday 16 th December	Pantomime
Thursday 17 th December	Christmas Feast - £4 per child, letter to follow
Friday 18 th December at 9am	End of Term Service at St Michael & All Angels, Great Tew. Term ends, 2pm
11 th -15 th January	Year Six Residential visit to Yenworthy
Wednesday 20 th January	U11 Swimming Gala - 1-3.30pm

Great Tew Primary School

Term Dates for 2015-2016

Autumn Term 1

Wednesday 2nd September to **Wednesday 21st October at 3.15pm** (*INSET days on 1st September, 22nd October & 23rd October*)

HALF TERM – Monday 26th October to Friday 30th October (*plus INSET on Thursday 22nd & Friday 23rd October*)

Autumn Term 2

Monday 2nd November to **Friday 18th December at 2pm**

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY – Monday 21st December to Friday 1st January (*plus INSET day on Monday 4th January*)

Spring Term 1

Tuesday 5th January to Friday 12th February at 3.15pm

HALF TERM – Monday 15th February to Friday 19th February

Spring Term 2

Monday 22nd February to Wednesday 23rd March at 2pm (*Thursday 24th March is INSET day*)

EASTER HOLIDAY – Friday 25th March to Friday 8th April (*plus INSET day on Thursday 24th March*)

Summer Term 1

Monday 11th April to Friday 27th May at 3.15pm (with May Day Bank Holiday on Monday 2nd May)

HALF TERM – Monday 30th May to Friday 3rd June

Summer Term 2

Monday 6th June to Wednesday 20th July at 2pm

INSET (Staff Training) DAYS no school for children on these days:

Tuesday 1st September

Thursday 22nd and Friday 23rd October

Monday 4th January

Thursday 24th March

2015-2016 TERM DATES	
Autumn Term 1 begins	Wednesday 2 nd September
Autumn Term 1 ends	Wednesday 21 st October at 3.15pm
Autumn Term 2 starts	Monday 2 nd November
Autumn Term 2 ends	Friday 18 th December at 2.00pm
Spring Term 3 starts	Tuesday 5 th January
Spring Term 3 ends	Friday 12 th February at 3.15pm
Spring Term 4 starts	Monday 22 nd February
Spring Term 4 ends	Wednesday 23 rd March at 2pm
Summer Term 5 starts	Monday 11 th April
Summer Term 5 ends	Friday 27 th May at 3.15pm
Summer Term 6 starts	Monday 6 th June
Summer Term 6 ends	Wednesday 20 th July at 2pm