

Great Tew School Newsletter

Issue 245

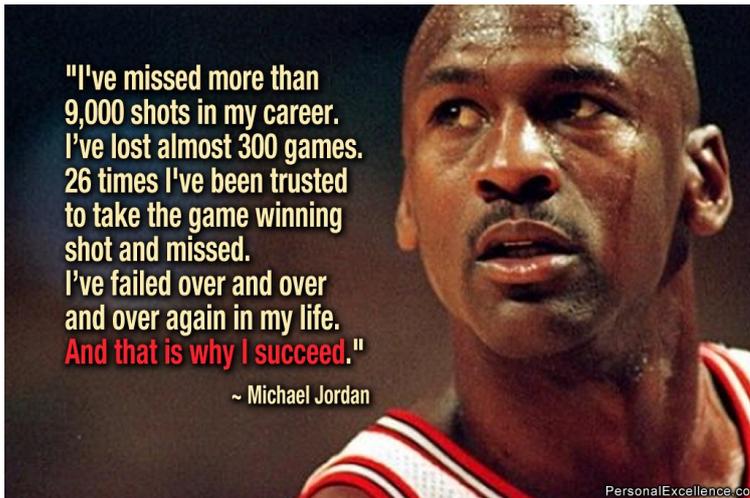
Friday 8th January 2016



Applications for Reception Places

Do you have a child of 3 or 4 years old? If so, the deadline for applications for a Reception place in September 2016 is Friday 15th January. Applications can be made online at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/admissions.

A very happy new year to all of you and very best wishes for a happy and healthy 2016. This term has started on a really positive note, with the children (and staff) beginning their journey towards developing a “**Growth Mindset**”. This idea is based on the work of Carol Dweck, and very simply put it is about supporting the children to become self-motivated learners who embrace challenge, learn from mistakes and setbacks and



know that their intelligence is not fixed but can grow through the effort they put in.

The importance of developing a “growth mindset” is now becoming widely recognised, backed up by a great deal of research. The children have taken to this idea and already we are seeing them recognise the value of getting stuck, keeping at it and learning from their mistakes. A quick look on the internet will find you numerous quotes but I have chosen just two to put here to give you an idea of what this is all about. Parents play a really fundamental part in developing a growth mindset in the children and you will hear much more about this in coming weeks.

“I haven't FAILED. I've just found 10,000 ways that WON'T WORK”

-THOMAS EDISON

News from Reception

What a busy first week to the New Year. The children have clearly loved their Christmas celebrations but are now set and ready to get back into our routines of working and playing hard in Reception class! You should have received a copy of the topic grid for this term, which outlines some of the possible ideas and themes that we may follow this term along with tips and pointers to help you support your child's learning at home. There was also a letter about the Interest Table theme and Show and Tell arrangements for this term. If you didn't receive either of these, please ask one of the team.

In maths this week we have looked at the idea of making an estimate within a range, for example, I think there are more than five, but not more than ten shells on that tray. This has been a challenging concept to explore, one that has really challenged our mathematical language and vocabulary and would definitely be something that you could have a go at at home. The children have also worked on their understanding of the place value of teen numbers, for example, 15 is a ten and 5 ones.

We have all enjoyed reading different versions of 'The Three Little Pigs' and we will continue with this theme next week; any copies of the story would be gratefully received if you would be willing to share them for next week. I think that you could be in for a weekend of, 'Not by the hair on my chinny chin chin!' as this was one of our favourite parts!

News from Years 1 & 2

News from the last week of term: Sadly our Pirate topic has come to an end but we had loads of fun singing, dancing, writing, sewing, collaging and sculpting along the way. We finished with an artistic week of sculpture and dance with Joe and Kylie Cobb-Stanier spending Monday morning with us creating imaginary sea creatures, and what an imagination some of the children have! Joe was impressed by the way the children worked with the clay and the confidence and enthusiasm they exhibited.

Many thanks to Wednesday's wonderful audience; we were staggered by the turn out. The children were thrilled to perform their dance to you, if I had £1 for every time a child had said "Mrs Butler, when are we going to perform our dance to the parents?" I'd be a rich woman!

Congratulations go to Isabelle, Parker and Florence who won the competition for who could remember to put their reading record book in the basket the most number of days and also thanks and congratulations to Thalia and Maeve's parents who listened to them read the most number of times and recorded their reading journey in their reading record book.

And this week's news: The children returned to school full of excitement and news of the exciting times they had over the Christmas holidays but have now settled back into classroom routines very well. We've started our new topic 'Where would you prefer to live; Great Tew or Skardu? Skardu is a small mountain town in the north of Pakistan. We have looked at globes and maps to discover the seven continents, five oceans, equator and poles of the earth and are currently comparing the human and physical geography of the two areas.

In English we are working towards presenting oral retellings of our own stories which will be based on stories from other cultures. We have watched videos of different storytellers and their styles, and discussed what makes one performance better than another.

News from Years 3 & 4

This week Year 3 and 4 children have begun work on their new topic on the Stone Age. They have been around and about the school grounds, looking carefully at the rocks and stones around them. There are all sorts of exciting things planned for later on in the term, including a 'Stone Age Activity Day' on Tuesday 9th February. If anyone has skills to offer with weaving, building shelters/caves, cave painting do please let Miss Mannion know. Thank you.

Home Learning Hero: James - for excellent 'reading' research on The Stone Age. Brilliant recall skills...Mr Google!

Sporting Hero: Emily - for superb listening skills and her amazing flexibility in her 1st gymnastics lesson at Great Tew.

News from Years 5 & 6

News from the last week of term: Tuesday afternoon saw the final of our inter-house Gymnastic competition. Each house performed a long sequence of group and paired balances to music which they had choreographed entirely themselves; the standard was very high with beautifully executed cartwheels, bridges, arab-springs, walkovers and pyramid balances involving up to 9 children!! After difficult deliberation and careful consideration, Bolton were chosen as the winners.

It was back to work on Tuesday though as we prepared and delivered our nerve-wracking Dragon's Den pitches; six companies delivered very confident and very different presentations of their game ideas to the Dragons (or parents) and after careful voting the winners – HAJJ (Hattie, Archie, Jamie and Jemima) with 'Robber Run' – were announced. Worthy runners up were Tecosaurus and Technosquirrels.

And this week's news: We have spent the week thinking and writing about the wonderful time we had over the Christmas holidays; on Tuesday we wrote some fantastic descriptions of our delicious Christmas dinners, including expanded noun phrases. There was some really exciting and evocative writing using all our senses. On Wednesday we then had a bit of fun writing a formal letter of complaint to Santa Claus for entering our house via the chimney, making a noise and waking us up, drinking our wine and then drink-driving!

On Wednesday in P.E. we started our training to become astronauts; we worked on our stamina at running by doing interval training mixing walking, jogging and sprinting for over an hour building up to a mile at a time. Working in pairs or small groups we also thought about the key skills of team work and how to encourage and motivate each other. Star of the lesson in P.E. was Scarlet, who enthusiastically encouraged many others, even those not in her team and really gave the lesson a great positive feeling.

In Maths we jumped in at the deep end and got to grips with all sorts of fractions; fractions of amounts; converting mixed numbers to improper fractions and vice versa, adding and subtracting mixed numbers and fractions with related denominators!

The Year 6's will be facing challenges of a much different sort next week when they complete a week of outdoor and adventurous activities when they go on their Residential visit to Yenworthy in Devon with Mrs Miles and Mrs Reid. Mrs Miles is really looking forward to a week away from her endless paperwork and Mrs Reid is looking forward to being waited on by the children (instead of vice versa at home). We look forward to seeing your daily blogs.



The Advent Wreath – and Some Hard to Answer Questions

Our assemblies during advent centred around the Advent wreath, and the meaning of the five candles. The children learned that the first candle symbolised “Hope” and our discussions centred around what we would hope for in our own lives but also in the wider world. The next candle represented “Peace” – we had a very interesting discussion about the meaning of the word peace and indeed the word hatred, why wars start, and what each one of us can do to spread peace in the world. Next was “love” - the children had lots of ideas about some of the different ways that they could show someone they loved

them and the important part that each one of them plays in spreading love in the world. The children are aware that there are upsetting things going on in the world that they don't understand but many of them, particularly the older ones, have questions to ask and really want to know more. These questions are very difficult to answer, particularly if one is to avoid falling into the trap of stereotyping, but it is important to try to talk to children at an appropriate level, and to allow them to ask questions. The CBBC “Newsround” website has some child friendly resources that you might like to use with your children – as a starting point for discussion. There is a good search engine but here are a few examples.

Refugees: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/search?q=refugees>

Syria: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/search?q=syria>

Islamic State: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/search?q=islamic%20state>

Our Christmas Celebrations

The last week of term was a buzz of excitement; we had the village Carol Service, a trip to the pantomime (oh yes we did!), the end of term service and of course our wonderful Christmas lunch. As there was no newsletter at the end of term I didn't want to let it pass without saying a VERY big thank you to all those parents involved in producing such a truly delicious Christmas lunch. Those that were there could see how much the children enjoyed themselves – it is a wonderful Great Tew tradition and huge thanks go to everyone involved, but particularly to Ed and Andrea Allen for planning, shopping for and creating the magnificent feast we all enjoyed (that gravy would win awards!!!) and to Mrs Butler, for choreographing the whole event!

And finally – welcome to Annie

We are very pleased that Indiana's sister Annie has come to join us in Year 2. Annie has settled in well and made some new friends and we hope that she will be very happy at Great Tew.

Best wishes to everyone,
Mrs Lucy Miles



OXFORDSHIRE PRIMARY CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

This event, for all primary schools in Oxfordshire, is taking place on Saturday 27th February at Chiltern Edge School, near Reading. Pupils can enter individually or in teams of 3 or more. I know we have lots of keen runners in school and it would be lovely to be able to enter a team for this event. There are separate races for girls and boys, in year group categories from Y1 (640m) to Y6 (1800m). If you are interested in finding out more, please ask in the office for further details.

Dates for Your Diary

11 th -15 th January	Year Six Residential visit to Yenworthy
Wednesday 20 th January	U11 Swimming Gala - 1-3.30pm
Wednesday 3 rd February	U11 Netball tournament
Monday 8 th February	Y6 children – IMPS at Horton Hospital
Tuesday 9 th February	Year 3 and 4 Stone Age Activity Day
Wednesday 10 th February,pm	Year 4 children to Carrdus School for drama workshop – parents invited to watch
Tuesday 23 rd February	Year 3 and 4 children to Creative Climbing Centre in Birmingham
Saturday 27 th February	Oxfordshire Primary Cross-Country championship
Thursday 10 th March	Year 5 children singing at Chipping Norton Music Festival
Friday 11 th March	Year 5 Science Day at Tudor Hall
Wednesday 16 th March	Schoolympics for Year 2 and 3 children at Chipping Norton Leisure Centre

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