

Dear parents and carers,

I trust this newsletter finds you well. My time of late has involved me attending a two-day conference organised by the Oxfordshire Association of Special School Headteachers. Networking with my colleagues has given me a wealth of ideas to trial and implement in school. I have also been exploring the school's attendance data. Ideally, we would like your child to be present in school 95% of term time. We appreciate some absences cannot be avoided, and others are entirely appropriate. I will, however, be writing to some of you if we have concerns about individual pupils. This is not to alarm you, more an invitation to let us know if there is anything we could be doing to support you on this front.

I am also now able to share with you some analysis of last year's end of Key Stage 1 data. The figures show that our value added and contextual value-added progress in reading, writing and maths are in line with the national average, and that, compared to the 2016 data, the progress of our Key Stage 1 pupils has improved.

I am pleased to announced Elizabeth Hiner, one of our teaching assistants, gave birth to a beautiful baby boy last week. We look forward to welcoming them into school very soon. With regards to staffing, we currently have adverts out for two new full-time teachers and an additional teaching assistant. Interviews for these posts will be held in December and any successful applicants will start working in the school in January 2018.

We recently had an independent review of our Team-Teach practice. Team-Teach is the behaviour management system used in school to ensure the children are kept safe if in crisis. The expert who conducted the four-day review was more than satisfied with our work and what he saw. In summary, he feels *'Northern House School applies the Team-Teach approach very effectively in both principle and in practice.'*

As you will see overleaf, the pupils have been enjoying lots of exciting activities in school. Miss Youngman organised a ramble in aid of Children in Need - we raised a whopping £540 - and, as last week was anti-bullying week, Mrs Lee encapsulated some of the activities the pupils were engaged in through a whole-school assembly.

As we move towards the time of year when colder weather may well be on its way, please be aware that we will be using Parentmail as a means of contacting you if the school needs to close in case of bad weather conditions. Getting into the habit of regularly checking Parentmail will help you keep in touch with urgent notices as well as all other aspects of school life. If you are experiencing any problems with connecting to or using Parentmail, please contact the school office for assistance.

With best wishes,



Jonathan Willis

Headteacher



Falcon Class

Falcon have been tackling algebra and made excellent progress with their understanding. We have been exploring what life was like for Scott of Antarctica and writing some of the missing pages from his diary. We enjoyed our visit to Cutteslowe Park as part of the Children in Need walk.

Osprey Class

Osprey class have been busy learning about The Arctic and Antarctica as part of our Frozen Kingdom topic. We have learnt about explorers who tried to get to The South Pole and about The Titanic. In science, we have been learning how animals adapt to their environment. We have also been lucky enough to visit Oxford Academy to learn hockey skills!

Kingfisher Class

We have learnt about the water cycle and about bullying. In art, we are making our own bridges out of things like straws, cardboard and lolly sticks. We have been working out what signs belong to which company and playing tag rugby. As part of our Children in Need activities, we enjoyed a ramble in and around the local environment.

Red Kite Class

We have spent the week preparing for our class assembly. We have been using PowerPoint, learning our lines and practising our presentation skills. We have been studying the Christmas traditions around the world, locating countries on maps, globes and in atlases and researching interesting facts and traditions to include in our assembly. We've made Christingles, designed flags, prepared props and learnt how to sing 'Silent Night' in German (Stille Nacht).

Eagle Class

We have been looking at non-fiction texts based on migration. We have looked at various features including the contents page, pictures and captions. In addition, we have been working on the difference between fact and opinion. In maths, we have been working on telling the time as well as accurately measuring using both centimetres and millimetres. In our topic work, we have looked at the Equator and Tropics as well as the different hemispheres of Earth. We have also been making our own icebergs and ice flows.

Heron Class

Heron have been learning about solids, liquids and gases and how they are all made up of tiny particles, in differing levels of density. We played a fun game of particle tag in PE to reinforce this. We also enjoyed the ice cube challenge of seeing how quickly we could make our ice cube melt. Heron are enjoying rehearsing for the forthcoming Christmas performance. We have also used our adding skills to work out how much our snacks cost in Heron Cafe.

Chaffinch Class

This week Chaffinch class have been learning about symmetry in numeracy lessons. They used peg boards to create their own reflective symmetry patterns and then copied the design onto squared paper. They also enjoyed developing their basketball skills, and working together to play a small sided game.

The Nest

In The Nest this week we have been learning about Britain At War. As part of learning on the First World War, we have been making our own trenches using shoe boxes. We created a No Man's Land, some ladders and flags. As part of our learning on World War Two we also watched the film Goodnight Mister Tom, and then imagined we were Evacuees. For our Big Writing session, we wrote a letter home in role as an evacuee.

When Class

Wren class enjoyed their trip out to the Watermill Theatre this week to see The Borrowers. They have enjoyed writing about their favourite parts and comparing it to the film version. Both have helped them to develop their understanding of stories and how enjoyable they can be.