

Dear Parents and Carers,

It seems such a distant memory now that we are half way through January, but, as this is my first newsletter of the term, I wanted to take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year. Unlike myself, I hope you are still managing to keep to your new resolutions.

Thank you to those of you who offered your thoughts about the proposed changes to the school week. The comments you offered were useful in that they allowed the governors and I to make an informed decision on the proposed changes to the school timetable. Although the majority (63%) of responses were in favour of the school closing earlier each Friday, the financial impact this arrangement would have on those of you who work at this time was felt too big a concern to justify the change. As such, the time the pupils are present at school will remain unchanged. Whilst such an arrangement is suitable for some schools, it appears unworkable at our setting. Your patience, understanding and input in this matter is very much appreciated.

Those of you who have rung into school this term may have spoken to Amy Smith; our new addition to the office staff. Amy is proving to be a great appointment and is happy to help with any messages or information you have to share. She has taken over from Faustine Petron, who has changed roles and is now supporting in Woodpecker class as a teaching assistant. We also welcome Marsha Jackson, Ashli Bartlett and Lisa Rochford onto the team of teaching assistants. In fact, the current ratio of staff to pupils is better than it has been for some years.

On the topic of staffing, those of you with children in Osprey Class will be aware that Mr Moar is currently on the first of two short placements at a local mainstream school. He returns to school the week after next but will be absent from school for three further weeks when we return from the half-term holiday. Whilst such changes are unavoidable and will ultimately benefit the school in the long-run, I apologise for not mentioning Mr Moar's absence in my last newsletter.

In other news, the new term kicked off with a bang when some of our Key Stage 2 pupils visited Old Trafford to watch Manchester United defeat Reading Town in the FA Cup. Despite enduring a lengthy train journeys to and from Manchester, the pupils had a fabulous day out and behaved impeccably well. I am currently in discussions with the Managing Director of Oxford, Niall McWilliams (who has also recently joined our governing body), to organise for the school to attend a game closer to home, and one that will involve meeting the players.

Finally, for those of you living in the Abingdon area, Shift (which stands for Support, Help, Information, Families, Together) are holding an opening morning for parents and carers of children with additional needs. This is to be held at The Barns, Christ Church, Northcourt Road, Abingdon from 9.30-11.30am on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> January. They would be more than happy to welcome you and offer their thoughts and experiences.

With my very best wishes,



Jonathan Willis  
Headteacher

### **The Nest (Miss Youngman):**

Our work has seen us focus on Queen Victoria and the Victorian era. We have read Charles Dickens' story of Oliver Twist, and completed a book review of the version we enjoyed. We have decorated our classroom with portraits of Queen Victoria and used shaving foam to make puffy paint that was used to create elaborate borders. We really enjoyed welcoming Nick Cope into school this week. Aiden's choice of his music in an assembly one day led to Mr Willis inviting him into school to perform live.

### **Chaffinch Class (Mrs McClimont):**

Chaffinch have made an excellent start to the term, achieving the Diamond standard award. We have started our new topic, exploring the invasion of the Vikings. Alongside this we are working on the text Beowulf; a story set during this era. The class have been writing recounts about a vicious creature that attacks the Great Mead-Hall and adverts in search of a hero to come to rescue the kingdom. In Maths our focus has been division. Everyone has made excellent progress with their understanding. We hope you enjoyed the macaroni cheese that the class made with Mr McClimont and Mr Pankiw. A reminder please that homework is to be brought in on Friday.

### **Wren Class: (Miss Davies):**

Wren class have settled back well into their routine after the holidays. We have enjoyed exploring our new topic of Enchanted woodland. In Science, we have taken part in a woodland hunt. We have become familiar with the different types of plants and animals we may find there. Wren class have been very creative in the Art room and have produced texturized trees and hedgehogs for our woodland display. In English, we have, looked at two different stories. We have sequenced them and predicted endings. In Maths, we have looked at 1 more and 1 less and explored numbers further, looking at 2-digit numbers and understanding their place value.

### **Osprey Class (Mr Moar):**

Osprey class is having a sad start to the year with Mr. Moar's placement at a mainstream school: we are missing him a lot, but we are also doing some interesting work. We are working on Tutankhamun as our new topic this term. We enjoyed our time getting to know more about the life in the Ancient Egypt; discovering all the secrets hiding in the Pyramids and in the tombs of kings like Tutankhamen. We are also learning how to write in hieroglyphics, like proper Egyptians. In Maths we are learning about adding and subtracting on 2 and 3 digits!!

### **Red Kite Class (Miss Morgan):**

Happy New Year, everyone! Red Kite are off to a great start in 2019. In Topic we are learning about the Vikings, so have made some fierce looking shields and created a timeline of Viking events. We are reading Beowulf in English and have been using lots of drama activities to act out scenes from the book including Beowulf's longboat journey and the slaying of the evil beast, Grendel. We have written poems and character descriptions and used thesauruses to boost our vocabularies. In Maths, we have been focusing on addition calculations and rapid recall of our 2, 5 and 10 times-tables.

### **Falcon Class (Mrs Rolfe):**

Happy New Year to you all. This term Falcon class will be learning about the Stone Age. This week we looked at different recipes to eat which we then made with bread. On Thursday we had a visitor in called Nick Cope who came and sang some of the song he has written; all the children were fully engaged and really enjoyed it. They were intrigued by the animations he has to accompany his songs.

### **Kingfisher Class (Mrs Burns):**

We have started our new topic: 'Tribal Tales'. We have been learning about archaeology and have looked at timelines showing the Stone Age and the Iron Age. In Literacy, we are reading an information text called 'Who killed Tutankhamen?' We had lots of fun doing some role play, where we all pretended

we were Howard Carter finding and exploring Tutankhamen's tomb. Our Maths work has focused on place value and we have practiced ordering numbers and placing them on a number line. We made a giant number line down the middle of the classroom to help us.

### **Woodpecker Class (Mr Jeffries):**

Woodpeckers have been really excited with their Music tech lessons, where they have been creating their own tunes! Our main curricular focus is on Vikings and we have been writing dramatic news reports about what has been happening in the book Beowulf. We're looking forward to finding out more about Vikings in History and learning some of their art techniques.

### **Eagle Class (Mrs Bishop):**

Eagle class has had a good start back and we are enjoying our topic on Vikings. The children have loved writing messages in runes and have produced some fabulous descriptive writing linked to our class book, Beowulf. In PSHCE we have been considering the dreams we have for the future and looking at what needs money to achieve and what is free. This has generated lots of interesting discussion around jobs that are valued in society and what we think are 'interesting' jobs and activities to take part in. In Maths we have been focusing on telling the time and the children are picking this up quickly. In Science, the children enjoyed a class investigation to find out the weight of air, using balloons to help.

### **Robin Class (Miss Ferrer):**

Robin class have worked hard this week! We have done some art related to the Vikings and have discovered some great facts about them. In Literacy, we have been reading Beowulf and writing a report about an exciting chapter of this book and we have been practicing how to create alliterations too. In RE, we tried to mime different feelings such as anger, happiness, fear or sadness and we all did really well. We had a very good discussion about jobs and who contributes the most to society and if that is correlated to the amount of money earned. We also had a brilliant time all together doing trampolining.