



February 2016 Update

Although this has felt like a short half term, the children have worked very hard and continued to enjoy a full range of activities and exciting learning opportunities. For February this included the Prospect Hospice Day, fundraising cake sales, a coffee morning for invited local residents led by our year 6 pupils, a new healthy eating tuck shop started by the School Council and a school disco arranged by the Friends - always a highlight of the school year!

Sport

Some of our year 5&6 pupils took part in the inter-schools swimming gala and demonstrated some great teamwork and individual efforts in the races. It was particularly noticeable how our pupils were very encouraging of each other. Special mention goes to Francesca Hutton and Amber Boyer for their amazing wins but we were also very proud of those who put in a spectacular personal effort to compete and do their very best. It was a great morning and I am also pleased to report that our parent supporters received a special sticker for their outstanding energetic vocal support! We came a well deserved 4th position out of 8 local schools.

Music - Special congratulations to Sammy Till Vattier for achieving his grade 1 piano exam and also for the progress he is making with the trombone. Most impressive!

We are a school that loves music. That is why I am pleased to see a record number of our pupils taking part in the Swindon Music Festival in March, as well as noting that a number of our ex-pupils are also continuing to feature in this event.

School Trips

Our younger pupils have been learning about railways and Isambard Kingdom Brunel and have created some brilliant art work about this. We recently took them on a trip to the Steam Museum to support and bring alive their learning - this involved driving steam trains, hands on exploring with artefacts and original objects, story-telling, role play and dressing up! This trip included our new 4 and 5 year olds in reception who were so well behaved throughout. This trip was a good opportunity for the older pupils to help guide and care for their younger school friends which is always an important aspect of our school ethos.

The year 6 pupils have also been away on an adventure, meeting the extreme physical and emotional challenges of a residential week at the Kingswood Centre on the Isle of Wight with myself and class teacher Miss Chalker. This is a specially designed outdoor learning centre with expert teaching staff that brings learning to life in a safe and secure environment, whilst encouraging the children to take risks! For the children, key highlights were the 3G swing and the "Leap of Faith!"...scary! We recognise this was also a challenge for the parents left behind too, especially when

we left in rather stormy weather conditions and faced the choppy Solent Water! For some children, this was their first trip away from home and this year included some children who have only recently joined the school.

This was a great outdoor opportunity for the children to...

- build their independence & resilience
- learn new leadership and team working skills
- use their initiative in new situations
- broaden their horizons
- learn more about themselves and their classmates

All the children enjoyed some challenging and rewarding experiences and developed their self-confidence which was lovely to see. We know from our experience in previous years that that this trip increases the children's appetite for learning and contributes significantly to enabling them to raise their standards of attainment. We were all shattered at the end of the week but returned with many memories of fun times and amazing personal achievements.

We will be continuing to support our year 6 pupils next term as they prepare for their SATS tests in May. To enable them to reach their potential, their class team undertakes a range of group and individual activities so that they are confident with the subject areas and are familiar with the process of examination. I also run an after-school session, we call the "biscuit club" to help with focussed preparation.

Our year 4 pupils will be away for an outdoor focused residential trip in March to New Barn, with similar learning objectives.

IT Development

As part of our 3 year strategy to become a Digital School, We are delighted to announce that we have been awarded a £8k grant from a Salisbury Diocese fund that will allow us to equip the school with ipad tablets and associated infrastructure, in addition to the large selection of laptops that are in regular use already. We have signed up to the superfast broadband coming to Lockeridge, and we are looking forward to the opportunities this will create.

Dragons for breakfast!

In addition to our after school Dragon Club, which runs Monday to Thursday until 5.45pm, we are also starting a new Breakfast Club on Monday 22nd February from 8am, to support working parents, run by Mrs Bushnell.

Art week in May

We are starting to plan a week of art focused activities in school and would be delighted if any local residents with artistic talents would like to come in and share these with the children - either demonstrating their work and perhaps showing us some of their skills in action or coming to work alongside the pupils in the activities we have planned. Do contact the school office on ph.861202 if you are able to help us.

Mrs Karen Venner, Headteacher