



## January 2016 Update

Despite the usual winter bugs and a rotation of children being unwell and off school, they come bouncing back and we are embarking on another active term with some special weeks focusing on particular specialist subjects.

I am delighted to report that we are almost a full school now for the first time in many years as we welcome some new families to school, we are totalling 100 pupils! We are told this is because of the good local reputation of Kennet Valley School where we continue to strive to always improve all that we offer the children.

### New Positions...

**Chair of Governors** - Sarah Till Vattier and Rob Gittins [parents of children in year 5, Sammy and Tom, and also Rob to Martha in reception] have taken on a Co-Chair role following on from Maria Shepherdson, who remains an active member. Rob and Sarah have a wealth of management and leadership experience in the private sector and the NHS and will have a lot to offer us in this demanding role. They are meeting with me regularly, with a focus on delivering the school development plan.

**Year 4 teachers** - Miss Hughes has joined us as class teacher with Mrs Hues! [already a staff member who many of you will know from West Kennet] We are also pleased to also announce that Mrs Clare Porter, who has been volunteering with this class group since last year, is now beginning her Teaching Assistant training.

**Lockeridge Traffic Calming** - I welcome the opportunity to work closely with the Lockeridge Traffic Group and Parish Council to ensure our village roads become safer places for us all. We will be continuing to use the railings and trees on the kerb to alert people to the school and seek to reduce the speed of passing cars. The children's homework this month has included designing a poster to slow the traffic down and we hope that the best of these can be used at the entrance "gates" to the village. We are actively encouraging the children to wear high visibility jackets at the beginning and end of the school day.

**Music** - Very special congratulations to ...

- Phoebe Salisbury [grade1 flute distinction]
- Georgia Galley [debut drumming exam merit]
- Amber Boyer [grade 2 flute distinction]
- Daisy Miles [singing distinction]

Great results girls! Well done!

**Design and Technology Week** - The children enjoyed building on their knowledge and skills from last year's Science Week to work in small teams & make vehicles to fit a design specification. This included a Mars Rover for years 5&6. These were tested and then the designs improved. The children then documented their learning from this exercise, including some impressive power-point presentations!

**Information Technology Week** - We were most delighted and very fortunate that Ian Drew from the British IT company ARM, who lives in Lockeridge, was able to join us to launch this week. He was such an inspiration and demonstrated a selection of amazing IT gadgets of the future. The children tell us this was "epic and completely awesome!" Mr Drew was impressed by the children's questions and their detailed level of thinking.

During the week we have developed a school blog that Mrs Kate Fry kindly set up for us. This will be maintained as a regular feature for the children to share their work.

The younger children have enjoyed programming our new mini Blue-Bot robots and all classes now have their own digital camera. This has been enormous fun! The Blue-Bots & cameras were purchased from money raised at two cakes sales and the royal box ticket sales at Christmas.

We also reiterated the e-safety message to all our year groups. It's really important that our children understand the dangers of the IT world as well as using it for learning and fun. A special thankyou to our parent volunteers who supported us this week.

**Sport** - We continue to use the field at Kennet Valley Hall for our weekly whole school PE sessions no matter what the weather [the walk up has become much quicker than when we started in September 2015!] and after school we have a new tag rugby club to aid our preparation for the inter schools tag rugby festival in March. We also hope to report some good results from the inter-schools swimming competition in February!

Remember like Mr Drew, if you have a job or talent that you feel would benefit our children's learning, please get in touch even if you can only offer an hour of your time - it will be very much appreciated.

Finally, we will once again be supporting awareness of Prospect Hospice on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February by dressing in green & yellow, as well fundraising by trying to fill as many jars with coins as possible. If you have any spare change you would like to donate, please drop it in at the office or pass them to a child who comes to our school.

Mrs Karen Venner, Headteacher