



March 2023

SCHOOL NEWS

<http://www.sibford-gower.oxon.sch.uk/>

Dear Parents & Carers,

We have had a lovely half-term, full of learning fun.

Science Week involved children from across the school. As well as our usual Science curriculum, children took part in special science-based activities through the week and had access to live lessons by experts, exploring questions like 'How are tractors connected to space?' and 'How are sheep connected to seaweed?' The children in Acorn and Beech Classes joined an online lambing session with our colleagues at the Warriner Farm. We finished the week with a whole school assembly in which the children shared some of the science activities they had taken part in, for the children in other classes.

We have also had a focus on our school values this half-term, with Dean Woodham from NOSSP (North Oxfordshire School Sports Partnership) visiting school to lead a special assembly focusing on the My Personal Best initiative which links with our whole school values through an awareness of 'Healthy me, Social Me, Thinking Me'.

It is always a pleasure to welcome guests into school to support and enrich the children's learning. This half-term, we have been fortunate to welcome staff from the Oxfordshire Museum who led a workshop on the Ancient Egyptians, Revd. Neil Bowler who has delivered assemblies on Lent and the meaning of Easter, the Bikeability team who led Cycling Road Safety for our Year 5 children, Becky from the Dog's Trust who led an assembly and workshops with her dog, Rolo, and I.M.P.S who ran an accident prevention and resuscitation workshop with our Year 6 children. It has also been lovely to welcome parents into school; during Reading Week, for class assemblies and the Acorn Class Open Morning and for Parents' Evenings.

Many thanks to those parents who completed the governor questionnaire. We really do appreciate you taking the time to share your views with us and will be sharing the outcomes of this with you after we have held our next governor meeting early next term.

In the meanwhile, we wish you all a very Happy Easter holiday.

With warmest wishes,

Jane O'Sullivan
Headteacher



Our school bell is ringing again

Thanks to the efforts of ex-governor Mr Fred Inns and local resident Mr Alan Burke, our school bell can be heard ringing out across the valley again.

The ringing of the bell to mark the start of afternoon lessons is a special privilege for the Year 6 children.

Mrs Humphrey's father has supplied us with a proper bell rope with a 'sally' at the bottom. This makes the job of bell-ringing even more special ... and such great fun!

**Best Class Attendance
this half term:**
Willow 97%



**Children return to
school on Monday
17th April**



DOGS TRUST VISITORS

Rolo helped the children learn how to be safe around dogs.



ACORN CLASS NEWS

Despite the weather trying to convince us otherwise, Spring has truly sprung in Acorn class this term. The children have enjoyed lots of activities all about the changing seasons. This half term also marks the half way point in the school year too and it's been wonderful to reflect back on just how far our fantastic Acorns have come in this time.



Marvellous Maths

This term the children have been continuing their mathematical journey, looking at numbers up to 10 - finding different ways to make them using a range of resources (10s frames, counting objects and cubes), the children have also enjoyed lots of free play in the maths area - exploring Numicon with pom poms and tweezers (developing our maths and fine motor skills together) and playing with our ladybird counters and mats.

We have also looked at shape - exploring and sorting 3D shapes into those that roll and those that stack (what did we do with those that do both?) and exploring symmetry through butterfly painting.

Mega Marbling

Acorn Class are always super creative and this term have enjoyed making some wonderful marbled books. The children loved watching the colours swirl and mix in the water and were fascinated by how the paper was transformed by being gently laid into the marbling tray.



Red Nose Day

Comic Relief this year was introduced to children in the Early Years by one of Acorn's favourite characters - Bluey! Following in Bluey's footsteps, the Acorns went on a Springtime adventure across the Big Field to spot signs of Spring - we saw lots of things from buds, butterflies and birds to flowers and - much to everyone's amusement - rabbit poo!





Brilliant Beans and Super Seeds
 Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum! Watch out Jack,
 here I come! Run and hid behind
 your Mum, Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum!

The children have enjoyed exploring the story of Jack and the Beanstalk - our Small World play miraculously grew a beanstalk and the children have enjoyed creating castles for the giant and hiding places for Jack.



Inspired by the story, the children have 'planted' their own beanstalks using beans, a wet paper towel and a food bag. We talked about the best place to put them to help them grow and decided to stick them to our window - we love checking them everyday and can't wait to pot them up and take them home - watch out, there might be a beanstalk growing in a garden near you sometime soon!



We have also started growing some cress (yummy!) and have explored life cycles in science and dance, creating a dance based around a caterpillar turning into a butterfly.



World Book Day 2023
 The children had a great time on World Book Day, celebrating the joy of reading. Some children had fun dressing up as their favourite characters. That week we also welcomed our grown ups from home in to share stories with us in the mornings. Reading is so much fun!



BEECH CLASS NEWS

On St. Patrick's Day we sang a version of, 'The Rattlin' Bog,' which was great fun! The children made some Shamrock prints during their art session with Mrs. O'Sullivan which they used to make these St Patrick's Day cards.



Our focus in Science is on, 'Life Cycles.' We began with the life cycle of plants. To bring this to life, we planted our very own cress seeds. We have just welcomed a special delivery of caterpillars which will take care of until their metamorphosis into butterflies.



We learnt about Everyday Heroes as part of Red Nose Day.





**Block prints and colour mixing
with Mrs. O'Sullivan**



Developing ball skills during a crisp outdoor PE session



As part of our World Book Day celebrations, we played, 'The Masked Reader.' Once we figured out who the masked readers were, we were given clues about the stories they were reading. We had to decipher what the name of each story was. This was great fun.





Willow's Spring Newsletter



What a brilliant term we have had in Willow Class. We have really enjoyed our theme of Ancient Egyptians and, as a class, decided that it has been our favourite theme of the year so far!

We have had a busy term full of motivation, writing, creativity and achieving our own personal goals.

Enjoy seeing a 'snippet' of our term in Willow Class



British Science Week

What a wonderful week we had, experimenting with gravity and forces, participating in a science live lesson with other schools across the country, creating our parachutes with a range of different materials and finally, an investigation with our *finger prints*. (This was amazing!)



In literacy this term, we have been learning about direct speech, descriptive features, and the planning stages needed for an adventure story. The children have worked extremely hard with these areas of learning and have created the most amazing adventure stories!

To help us remember the rules and structure of directed speech we connected it to a sandwich; we then acted the order out to make sure we were fully secure. The children were absolutely animated by this active way of learning and can now use speech within their writing. Please ask them to show you their order of actions. It will make you smile!



Here are some examples of the children's descriptive sentences which they are building into a narrative.

The glimmering, bright sunshine flashed through the humungous window, into Varjak's emotional eyes.

In the musty house, the dimmed shadows loomed in and out of sight.

Varjak's clean, soft and silky paws delicately moved up the creaky, black wooden stairs.

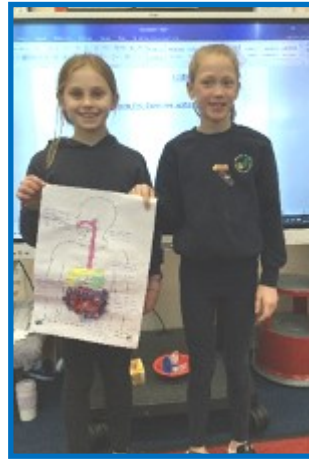
The dust sprinkled above Varjak as he looked out of the huge un-used window.

Our Science Curriculum Learning

Our theme this term in science was 'Animals and Humans'. We explored food chains, food webs, teeth, and finished off by learning specifically about the digestive system. This was our favourite area (as I am sure you imagine!)

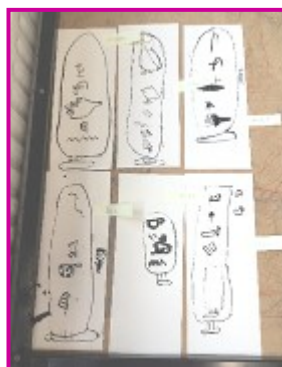
After learning the key functions of the digestive system, we created our very own 'maps' of the digestive system within the human body using a range of collage materials.

We worked with a partner to do this, which gave a good opportunity to talk about all that we had learned—a good way of helping us remember it!



Our Ancient Egyptian Workshop

This was one of our favourite days of the term. Our visitor from the Oxfordshire Museum brought all sorts of things to share with us and she was able to answer all our questions about the Ancient Egyptians. We love special workshops because they are such a memorable way of learning. We had the most amazing day, exploring Ancient Egyptian artefacts, exploring how to move the huge stones that were used to make pyramids, writing our names in hieroglyphics with reeds and learning lots of interesting facts that helped us with our learning by adding to our knowledge and understanding.



The children finished the topic with an exciting Egyptian Day. They came dressed in Egyptian costumes and took part in all sorts of creative activities, including bread making and jewellery-making. To see some photographs from the day, please look at the Willow Class web page at <http://www.sibford-gower.oxon.sch.uk/willow-class-years-3--4.html>

OAK CLASS NEWS

Science



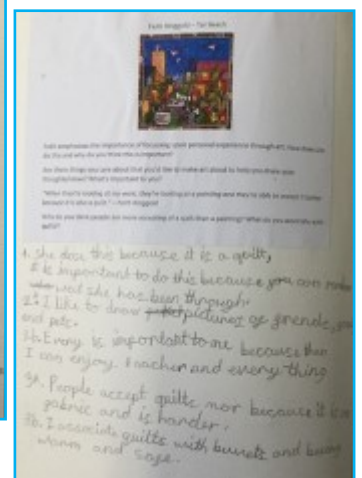
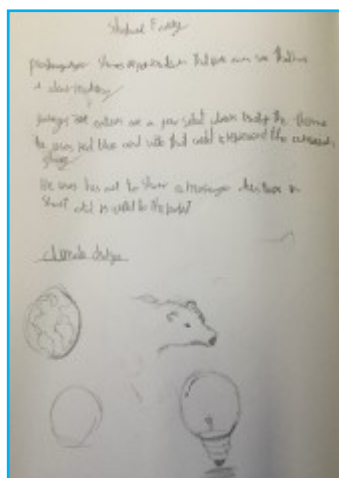
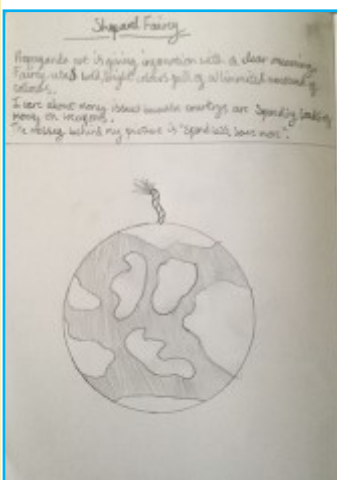
This term in Science, Oak Class have been learning about the different ways in which power is produced – such as fossil fuel power stations, wind farms, bio-mass power stations, etc. - and the advantages and disadvantages of these.

Linked to this, we have also been learning about the science behind global warming, including a practical demonstration of its causes in the school hall! We have then considered the consequences of global warming and what practical measures we can all take to slow the process down. The children all did very well in their 'retrieval quiz' where they recalled many of the things that they have learned. Ben, Theo and Joe gave a short presentation in our Science Week Assembly to share Some of their knowledge about global warming. Very well done!



Art

This term in Art, the children were introduced to the idea that they can use art as a way of sharing their passions and interests with their peers and community. We started by introducing the children to artists who are viewed as activists, then we talked about what the children cared about as individuals, encouraging them to 'find their voice through art'.



First the children decided upon a theme that they 'cared' about to start to design the content of their poster. We used the work of artist, Shepard Fairey, as an inspiration. We also studied Lula Lukova and Faith Ringgold, artists known for their Activist art, and the children recorded their reflections and developed ideas in their sketchbooks.



We started our final project by sourcing articles relevant to the themes we had chosen for our posters and then tearing and collating these to create a textured collage background.



Then we designed and created stencils to transfer an image or lettering onto our poster using paint and colour. This required a lot of care and skill—we rose to the challenge.



The children are proud of their finished pieces which visually represent global causes and issues which the children care passionately about.

More Special Assemblies...

Miss Keogh led a special whole school assembly all about Saint Patrick's Day. The children learned the story of St. Patrick, along with some more fanciful myths and legends linked to him. They learned some phrases in the Irish language and some of the children played along on the 'bodhrán' as we sang the song of 'The Rattlin' Bog'. Great 'craic' was had by all!



'My Personal Best' Assembly



Dean Woodham from NOSSP visited us to lead an inspirational assembly exploring the values & attitudes encapsulated in the 'My Personal Best' initiative.

These link very well with our RESPECT Code and our growth mind-set approach across the school. They also underpin our approach to Physical Education, encouraging each child to try to be their best in everything they do.

Our Outdoor Classroom

Our friends at **Town Estates** and our hardworking **P.T.A.** have provided the funds for us finally to begin the development of the walled outdoor learning area behind the Victorian part of the school. This funding covers the cost of resurfacing the cracked and broken ground and installing a 'sail' canopy to give shelter. We have been thinking about this project for a number of years and the area has long been one of the Wombats 'grot spots'! It is wonderful, finally, to be able to get to this stage and we really are hugely grateful. Once this stage is complete, we will be able to work with the children to plan which resources we want to introduce to the space to support learning across the curriculum.



Music Appreciation Assemblies

Tuesday assemblies in Key Stage 2 regularly have a 'music appreciation' focus. We have been using resources from the wonderful BBC Ten Pieces initiative to explore key works by significant composers. As well as listening to music and finding out key facts about the composers and the inspiration behind the music they composed, the children have been invited to make 'in the moment' responses through 5-minute drawing, mark-making and talk opportunities.

So far this year, we have explored music by Britten, Stravinsky, Tchaikovsky, Vaughan Williams, Grieg, Holst and Mussorgsky.

We listened to MARS' by Gustav Holst and we thought it sounded...

nerve-wracking dramatic
aggressive speedy
frightening
It starts little and grows bigger and bigger
warlike
adventurous ferocious
breath-taking loud
It made me tremble
ominous It made me jump.



Stravinsky's 'Firebird'



We listened to Mussorgsky's 'Night on Bare Mountain' and we thought it sounded ...

Intense & creative heart stopping scary ghostly
boisterous furious crescendo
erratic bellowing
horrificing monstrous eerie
frenzied dramatic unsettling
chaotic a furore mysterious
out-of-control

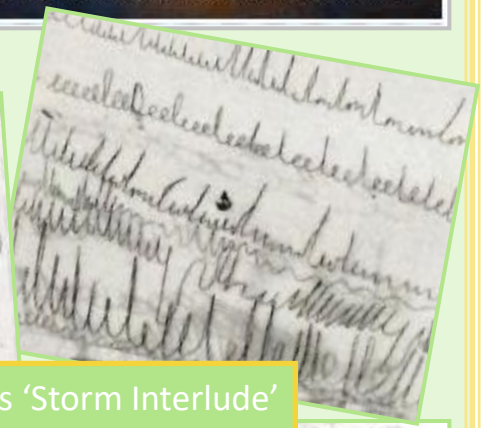
As the day broke the furore died down, the music felt calming and relaxing. We all breathed a sigh of relief.

Some examples of our 5-minute, intuitive musical responses to Benjamin Britten's 'Storm' Interlude from the opera Peter Grimes.

For our pupils, musical response is the ability to listen and communicate how the music makes them feel, what they hear in the music, and more!



Britten's 'Storm Interlude'



Science Week was great fun!

The following Monday morning, the whole school came together to share just a few of the scientific activities they had taken part in.



The children from Acorn class shared some of their learning about how plants grow and the life cycle of the butterfly. They showed us their beautiful, symmetrical butterfly paintings.



The children from Beech have also been learning about life cycles. They gave an excellent verbal account of what they have learned, explaining the meaning of terms such as 'germination'.



Willow class told us all about their exploits making (and testing!) parachutes for eggs. Only two eggs made it through but the children learned a lot! We think the eggs chances of survival might be better next time!

They also did some investigations of fingerprints, discovering that human fingerprints are unique, and that koala fingerprints are almost indistinguishable from ours!

Well done, scientists!

Some of the children in oak Class were tasked with devising contraptions for moving eggs across a distance under their own steam. They had free choice as to how to do this and came up with some ingenious ideas.

Here we see one 'egg car' powered by air and one powered by electricity. Both worked really well.



Sibford Gower

SPORT and PE- Spring Term

Acorn Class

In PE, the children learnt how to catch a ball by throwing it in the air and catching it and also bouncing it and catching it. Ask your child about the 'Magic Moment!'



Beech Class

Developing ball skills during an outdoor PE session.



Willow Class

In addition to our weekly swimming sessions, the children have been learning the skills and key movements of gymnastics, as well as focusing on their own 'My Personal Best' targets during their weekly mile.

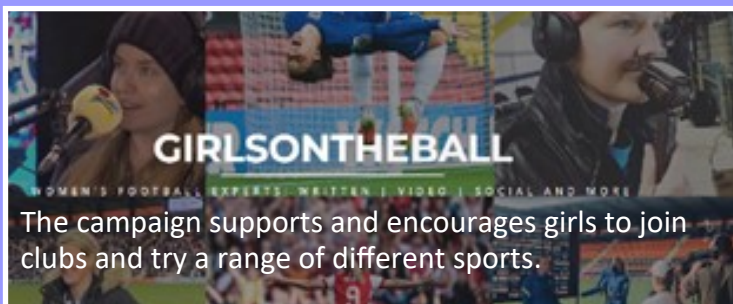


Oak Class

The children have been learning the play of hockey and netball this term. They have thoroughly enjoy these two areas of sports.



As a school, we celebrated and participated in the nationwide campaign 'Girls on the Ball'.



Our Finalists!

We are so proud of all the children who made it through to the County Cross Country Finals in Oxford. The children were competing against hundreds of others from across the County. Our two fastest runners, Andrew and Auden, both came 17th in their races and the girls team came 6th overall! Absolutely Amazing!



Please remember to make time for reading

It was lovely to welcome parents and grandparents into classrooms to share books with the children each morning during Reading Week. During the holiday and as we return to school after Easter, please remember the importance and joy of regular reading to, by and with your child. Even though the chart below refers to test outcomes, we know that regular reading and sharing of books has an enormous impact on children's learning across the wider curriculum, their word power, their writing (including confidence in using the correct punctuation) and their overall educational outcomes.

HERE'S THE IMPACT OF READING 20 MINUTES PER DAY!



Cycling Road Safety

Our thanks to the Bikeability Team who spent the week in school with our Year 5 children, training them in cycling proficiency, both the theory and in practice as they went out and about on their bikes around the village. All the children did really well and learned a lot about how to be safe on their bikes.



When we return after Easter, we will be continuing with our Total Recall initiative with children awarded badges for their swift recall of number facts, which helps them in maths lessons and prepares them for the statutory multiplication test in Year 4.

Children from across the school have responded really well to the challenge of learning these (all part of the National Curriculum) and we have lots of colourfully decorated school jumpers.

TOTAL RECALL



FINGERTIP QUICK NUMBER FACTS AT SIBFORD GOWER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Yellow - one more, one less	Silver - recall of 3, 6, 4, 8 times tables
Orange - number bonds to 10	Gold - recall of 7, 9, 11 times tables
Green - number bonds to 20	Black - 12 times table plus TOTAL
Pink - number bonds to 100	RECALL OF ALL TIMES TABLES AND
Bronze - recall of 2, 5, 10 times tables	NUMBER BONDS TO 100



*We managed to raise over £100 for Comic Relief.
Many thanks for your contributions.*

HAPPY HOLIDAY!