

BERKHAMPSHEAD  
SCHOOL  
MAGAZINE

AUTUMN TERM  
2018

# BLAZER



## Mindfulness & wellbeing

BERKY ARE MENTAL  
HEALTH CHAMPIONS

MODERN FOREIGN  
LANGUAGES

*C'est bon ici!*

## Christmas

A TIME TO REJOICE!



## Thoughts from THE HEAD

If you were to ask the children what the school motto is, I am certain that they would be able to tell you. They would also be able to explain what it means and, most importantly, what they do to make sure that it is more than just words. 'Perseverantia Vincit' or 'Perseverance brings success' is an important part of what Berky is about and Mrs Andrews, the School's Founder, was very astute in choosing this as the motto... it is as relevant now as it was in 1945. This starts in Early Years where the 'Values Tree' celebrates those children who persevere, who are kind, honest, polite and can be trusted.

This term we have seen this in abundance. The children and staff have worked hard to learn more about mental health and to achieve the Gloucestershire Mental Health Champions Award. They have been on numerous trips and visits to learn about how what we learn in school applies to the real world. In chess, the A team remain undefeated and are on track to win an unprecedented four league titles in a row! They have developed their mathematical skills and their language skills which includes developing a love of a foreign language through the specialist French teaching. At the youngest ages they start to learn about themselves and to develop a curiosity - in the Day Nursery, using aspects of the 'Curiosity Approach' has had a very positive impact. Year 6 pupils achieved fabulous results in the Grammar School tests and many others have sat Scholarships and entrance exams for the Independent Schools. In the Prep, they have played over 100 fixtures - just this term! Of course, we finished the term with the delightful Christmas Nativities and Carol Services... a special time of the year.

As the pages that follow in this edition of the Blazer demonstrate, our children are always keen to do all that they can to persevere, be kind and thoughtful and to learn so much about themselves and the world they live in. I hope that you will enjoy reading of their many exploits during the Autumn Term.

*Richard Cross*

Richard Cross  
Headmaster



## Spotlight on CHARLOTTE KEEGAN

Charlotte Keegan joined Berky in September 2018 and is Head of PE and Girls' Games. She is also a Year 5 form teacher. Before coming here, she taught at Hereford Cathedral School for 10 years, and has been Head of Girls' Games, Head of Netball and Head of Athletics, teaching children from Reception through to Year 13.



### What are your favourite childhood memories?

Having grown up in Cornwall, all my memories involve the beach. I have spent countless days on the beach and hours in the sea over the years and still visit all my family back in Cornwall most school holidays. Both my girls love the seaside and enjoy the sea air, even during the winter months!

### What do you do in your spare time?

If I have any spare time left after spending time with my two girls, Ivy (aged 5) and Neala (aged 2 years), and my fiancé Phillip, I play netball! I also love the outdoors and enjoy going for walks around the countryside or historic houses with my family.

### What is your favourite sport?

I have been asked by many of the children at Berky what my favourite sport is. I love to teach hockey and netball as they are sports I continued with myself having left school. I enjoy playing Saturday League netball, and football is one of my favourite sports to watch.

### Which skill would you like to have?

I wish I could play the piano. It was something I have always wanted to do, but never had time as a child to learn, due to my sporting commitments. Maybe one day I will learn!

### What might you have done if you weren't a Sports teacher?

I would have liked to have been a Clinical Psychologist. Psychology has always been an interest of mine: why do we do the things we do and make the decisions we make?

### What is your favourite Berky lunch?

Fajitas, even though most of it ends up in my lap!

### Do you have any pets?

We have a cat named Alfie.

### What is one of your favourite books?

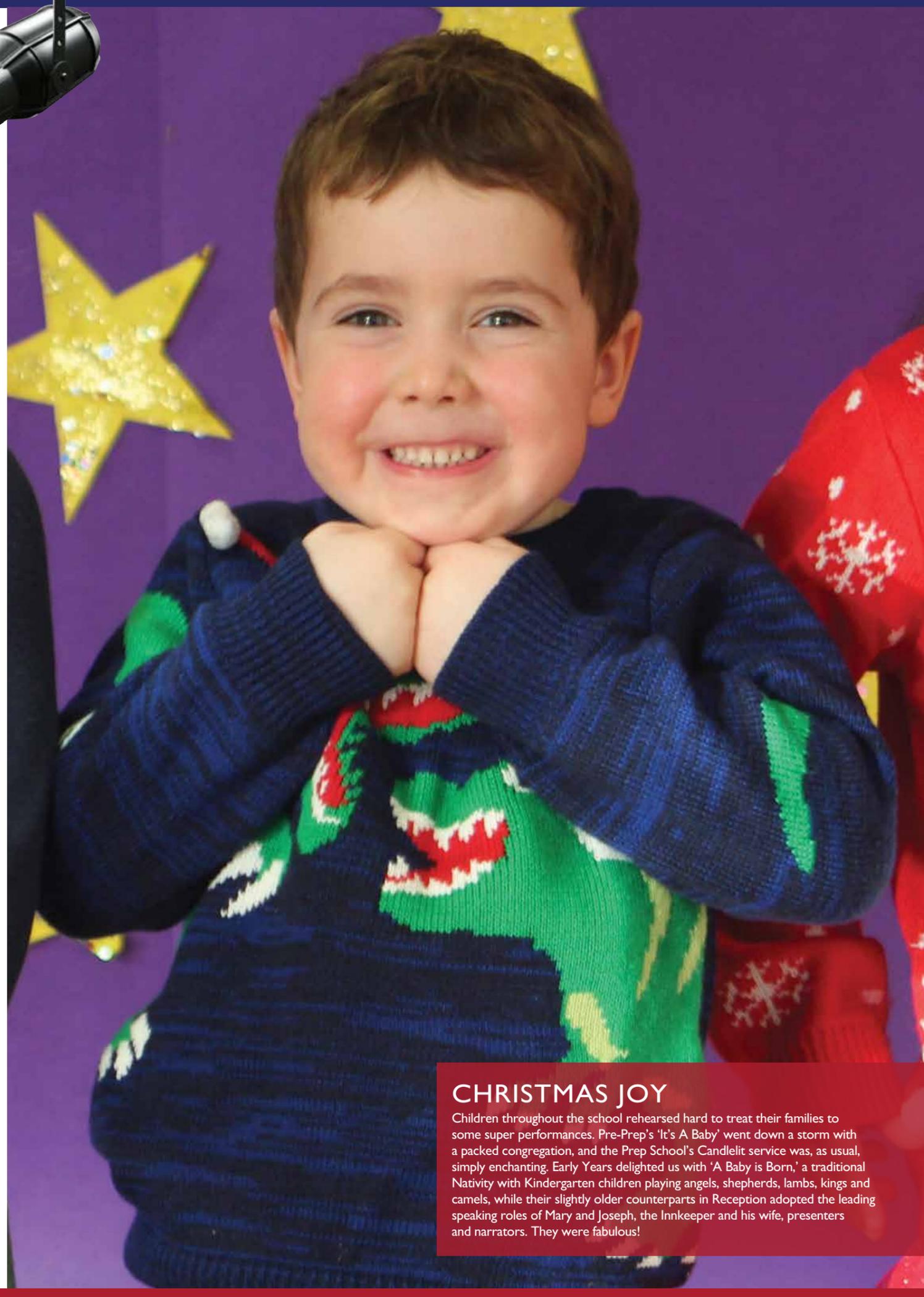
I read all the Harry Potter books as soon as they came out and really enjoyed them because they are so gripping. The characters are very interesting.

### What do you admire most about a Berky child?

Their energy! They are always full of life and ready to go!

### What have been the best bits about Berky so far?

Getting to know the children. I am lucky enough to teach every pupil in the school from Kindergarten through to Year 6 and it will be great to watch them grow over the years. Berky has such a wonderful family feel to it, and I am delighted to become part of the family.



## CHRISTMAS JOY

Children throughout the school rehearsed hard to treat their families to some super performances. Pre-Prep's 'It's A Baby' went down a storm with a packed congregation, and the Prep School's Candlelit service was, as usual, simply enchanting. Early Years delighted us with 'A Baby is Born,' a traditional Nativity with Kindergarten children playing angels, shepherds, lambs, kings and camels, while their slightly older counterparts in Reception adopted the leading speaking roles of Mary and Joseph, the Innkeeper and his wife, presenters and narrators. They were fabulous!

# News

FROM AROUND THE SCHOOL



## CHARITY NEWS

Remembrance Day has always held a special place in our hearts here at Berky: three young men lived in Beechmount and Fernbank (now the Pre-Prep building) in 1914, and died as a consequence of WWI. This year the day was even more significant as it marked the centenary of the Armistice that brought the First World War to an end. With this in mind, kind-hearted Year 3 pupils, Zoe and Georgia decided to sell handmade poppy hair accessories and badges to symbolise the brave soldiers who so sadly lost their lives, and simultaneously to raise money for the Poppy Appeal. The organisation's Mrs Steel has been coming to Berky each November for twenty-five years, and was delighted to accept the girls' impressive total of £62.54, along with the general collection presented by our Year 6 School Council reps.

In other charity news, the School Council has chosen Water Aid and The Acorns Children's Hospice as their charities this year. Money has already been raised on our Christmas jumper day, our annual Christmas stamp competition and carol singing at Waitrose.



## CURIOUS THINKERS

Now in its third year, Forest School at Berky continues to go from strength to strength. A popular weekly carousel activity for our Reception children, Mrs High plans each session to engage the children in wildlife and their natural surroundings. Each week is an outdoor adventure, with lessons taking place in the Wildlife Garden or in the neighbouring Outdoor Classroom. Fresh air is guaranteed, and learning is hands-on. This term sessions have included leaf rubbing, iPad photography, and the popular creation of 'forest faces'. Forest face week offered an opportunity for the children to discuss emotions, and they loved finding all manner of resources in the wildlife garden to create their very lovely and imaginative faces. Young Fergus commented,

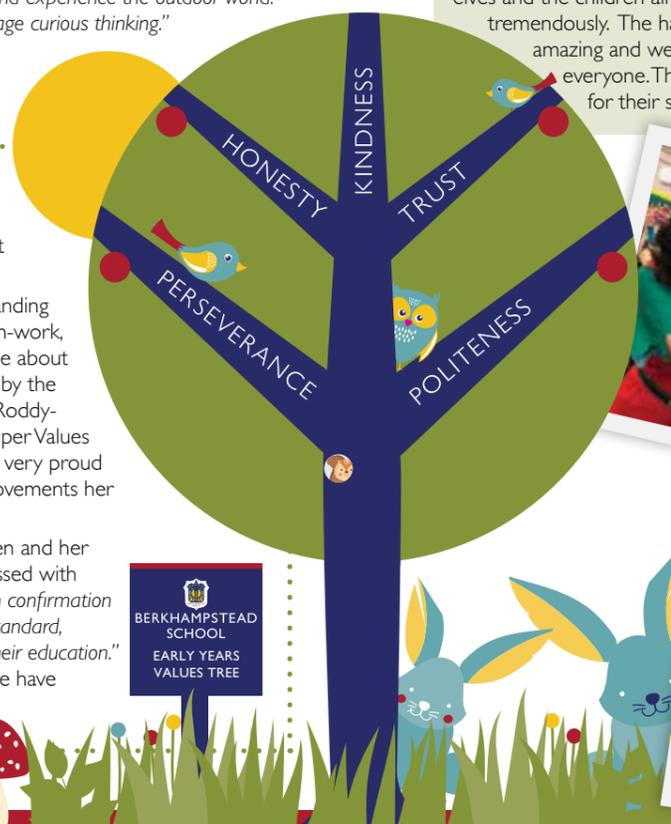
*"I used bark for the eyes and the eyebrows and flowers for the hair." Meanwhile Izzy was chuffed with her happy face, and reported that she "used leaves to do the ears, wood for the mouth and some flowers." Mrs High was delighted with Izzy's careful planning of the resources she found for the features of her face. Another particularly fun week involved a 'Jolly Postman letter hunt' - a nature-themed treasure hunt! Mrs High clearly loves teaching her Forest School lessons and enthuses, "Forest School helps the children gain confidence as they share ideas, explore and experience the outdoor world. I aim to encourage curious thinking."*

## THE BRISTOL STANDARD

Awarded annually since 2014, our brilliant Early Years department work incredibly hard to achieve The Bristol Standard.

This prestigious accreditation is recognised nationally as an outstanding self-evaluation framework for Early Years settings, promoting team-work, and encouraging staff to be ever-reflective, questioning all the time about how they can improve their provision. Three or four targets - set by the team themselves - are a necessary part of the process, and Mrs Roddy-Watts and her team concentrated this time on developing the super Values Tree, the Outdoor Classroom and Forest School. Helen is clearly very proud of her department, and is delighted with the success of the improvements her department make each year.

The work involved in collating the portfolio is immense, and Helen and her loyal team put endless hours into the process. Mr Cross is impressed with what they achieve, and commented, "It is always reassuring to gain confirmation from an independent and rigorous organisation such as The Bristol Standard, that the Berkhamstead children are getting the very best start in their education." At the time of going to press, we are waiting to hear whether we have been awarded the Bristol Standard for 2018.



## PTA NEWS

### IT'S BEEN A BUSY AND FUN PACKED TERM FOR PTA EVENTS!

The start of the term saw the annual AGM and Quiz Night, always a fun night with top questions from the amazing Mr Titley, Simpson's fish and chips and a couple of glasses of wine. The AGM saw a new committee voted in and it is great to see some new volunteers join the team! Thank you to the new members for standing and giving their time to the PTA.

Having been postponed for a week, the Fireworks evening was a huge success, with the most amazing fireworks display put on by Graham and his team. The atmosphere was lovely, especially without the gusts of wind from the previous week! The hot dogs, mulled wine and posh hot chocolate were all big hits! Thank you to the staff for selling the flashing novelty items - I am sure everyone will agree that Mrs Agg and Mr Cross looked splendid in their glow ears!

Clearly Berky children are very well behaved as Santa visited the Christmas Fayre again and delighted a record-breaking number of children with a gift!

Mrs Agg and Mrs McInnes made wonderful elves and the children all enjoyed themselves tremendously. The hampers looked amazing and were a big hit with everyone. Thank you to everyone for their support!



The Christmas discos rounded off the term beautifully! It's always a fun evening for the children and thoroughly enjoyed by all, especially Mr Cross when he hits the dance floor!

A huge thank you to all the PTA volunteers who have put on many wonderful events, and especially to our Class Reps who have done an amazing job. Your support has been tremendous, and I thank you for this.



## KINDNESS CUP

Sally Lee was a much loved Pre-Prep teacher who joined Berkhamstead in 2003, and sadly passed away in February 2017. Bearing in mind her qualities - and influence on - encouraging the qualities of good citizenship and emotional well-being in children - we remember Sally with a special award given half-terminally to a child in Pre-Prep who has consistently shown care and consideration for others. During the Autumn term, it was awarded to Valentine D and Ella H. Well done!



## FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

Reception children were delighted to welcome Rishik's Mum one afternoon during Diwali. Beautifully dressed in a vibrantly coloured sari, she gave the children a really fun and informative talk about the Hindi Festival of Lights. The children were particularly fascinated by the diva lamps she brought in. Meanwhile Year 1 donned saris and shalwar kameez, and celebrated the festival with Indian music and 'Bollywood' dancing. Both year groups enjoyed creating intricate Mehndi and Rangoli patterns and lucky Year 1 sampled treats such as naan bread, popadoms, mango chutney and sweets.



# THE CURIOSITY APPROACH INSPIRING AWE AND WONDER IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

A passionate believer in the importance of encouraging a child's natural curiosity, and inspiring their sense of awe and wonder, Day Nursery Manager Emily Collett began introducing elements of 'The Curiosity Approach' back in the Summer.

The approach blends together elements from Montessori, Reggio, Steiner and Te Whariki pedagogies, and its ethos is all about stimulating a child's natural curiosity by going back to basics. Natural resources foster their in-built desire to explore and try new things, so instead of plastic toys, 'real' and natural resources are being used in each of the five rooms at the Day Nursery. For instance, instead of a plastic garage which can limit a child's imagination, wooden blocks, planks and cardboard tubes are available and can become so many things! The only limitations with 'curious resources' are the children's imaginations themselves. Possibilities are therefore endless! Using real and natural resources also teaches children about the value of objects and looking after things. A real china tea cup will break, whereas a plastic one can be mistreated as it's pretty indestructible. Using breakable resources teaches the children to respect them and handle them with care. So real kitchen paraphernalia - even glass cake stands - can be found in the rooms. The children are closely monitored!

The environment is key to the approach, and as a result, the Day Nursery has become far cosier and more homely in the last few months. Emily is delighted with the changes she has seen in her young charges and enthused: "The children are more creative in their use of the resources provided, they are using their imaginations far more to discover and learn, and the environment is generally calmer as children are more engaged and engrossed in their play."

The Day Nursery - which is now awash with conkers, leaves, pebbles, sticks and real vegetables - continues to work towards its accreditation. "We are very excited to see where the journey takes us," added Emily.

"THE CHILDREN ARE USING THEIR IMAGINATIONS FAR MORE TO DISCOVER AND LEARN, AND THE ENVIRONMENT IS GENERALLY CALMER AS CHILDREN ARE MORE ENGAGED AND ENGROSSED IN THEIR PLAY."



## KINDERGARTEN

### KINDERGARTEN HAVE HAD A BUSY TERM LEARNING ABOUT EACH OTHER AND PEOPLE WHO HELP THEM!

We have loved getting to know all our new starters this term. Kindergarten is full of many experiences and the children have been brilliant in trying new things and have settled well in to a routine. We are all enjoying a calm and fun learning environment.

Our topics of 'Marvellous Me' and 'People Who Help Us' have enabled the children to learn about each other and form strong friendships, simultaneously helping us to learn about the children's interests and then plan activities around them. We have been looking at jobs, roles and real life situations which has enabled the children to talk about different occupations and what they would like to be when they grow up. We have some budding doctors, firefighters, paramedics, a pilot and even a Queen of England!

During Circle Time we have discussed what makes us different from each other and when looking in mirrors the children noticed how their faces differed from those of their friends; this led to them painting and drawing detailed self-portraits.

While investigating the outdoors and looking for signs of autumn we collected leaves to make autumn crowns and squashed blackberries to produce some interesting patterns with the juice while exploring different materials the children have had great fun playing with jelly, pasta, gloop and playdough. They have experimented with different foods and cooking utensils which they would use at home to create cakes and tarts in the home corner.

Andrew Bear has been on his adventures again, and we went on a hunt around the School following a series of picture clues left by him. We eventually found him guarding some hot chocolate and our delicious snack. During the same week the children listened to winter stories and made winter crafts including bird feeders, salt dough and Christmas tree decorations. They also made yummy biscuits with Mr Cross. MM



## RECEPTION

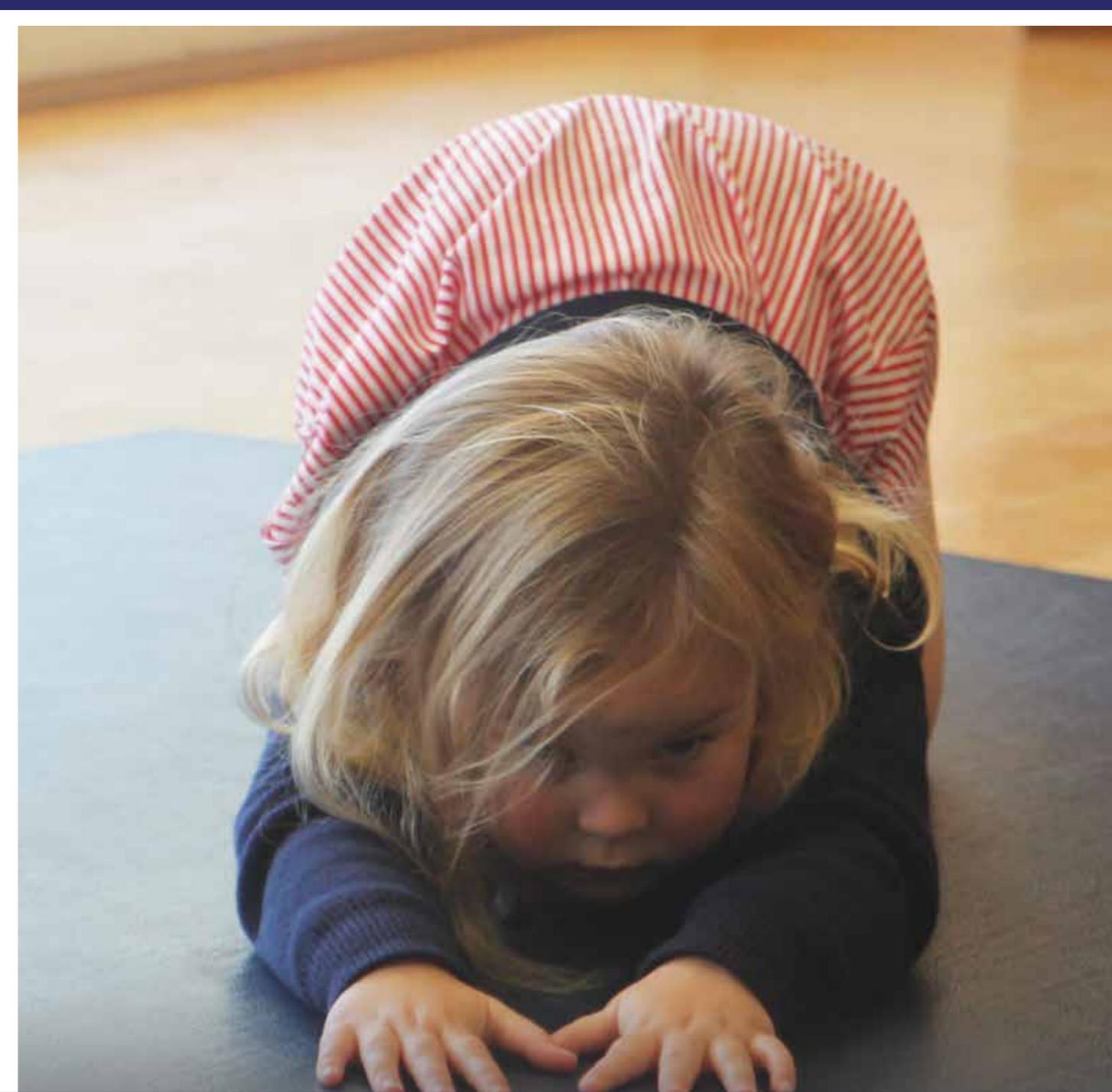
### FAMILY, FRIENDS AND CELEBRATIONS - THERE'S BEEN PLENTY TO INSPIRE RECEPTION THIS TERM!

The beginning of the Autumn is always exciting as it is a time to get to know all our new children and form positive relationships with them. Our topic, 'Family and Friends' was perfect for this. The children loved painting their portraits, and we had fun adding their blazers, caps and boaters! The portraits were displayed to create "The Class of 2018." We then learnt about Picasso, and the children used iPads to take photographs of each other as well as selfies. They printed them and used a portrait template to create their own Picasso-inspired abstract portraits complete with cut out features! During Forest School the children explored the natural resources to create 'Wild Art' linking with our Picasso theme. They were shown some examples of abstract art, and their creations were very individual.

The topic after half term was 'Toys,' and various celebrations were also marked, including Guy Fawkes Night and Diwali (see page 5). The children loved finding out about Advent and what it means to be a Christian. They particularly liked the tradition in Germany whereby on the 6th December, St Nicholas visits and leaves sweets in the children's shoes!

At the end of term, it was time to party, as the Early Years department held their annual Christmas Party Day! The morning was filled with games and dancing and a party lunch. During the afternoon, the children heard a jingle of bells coming from the corridor... a very special visitor had arrived... Santa! The children took turns to tell Santa what they would like for Christmas and because they had all been so good, Santa gave them each a chocolate lolly to enjoy. What a fantastic end to a very busy and successful term! HR-W





# BERKY ARE MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPIONS!

HAPPINESS AND WELLBEING ARE ESSENTIAL FOR A WELL-ROUNDED BERKY EDUCATION

It was a proud moment during a Prep assembly in October, when Fiona Quan - the woman in charge of Health and Well-Being in Education for Gloucestershire - presented us with the Mental Health Champions Award. This is not an easy award to achieve: Berkhamstead is just one of 31 schools, out of the 352 schools in Gloucestershire to have been awarded this. Mrs Bareham - Head of Pastoral Care - worked tirelessly to provide evidence showing all that we do here to provide top-notch children's and staff's mental health and wellbeing provision and this was presented for the department to see. Happiness and wellbeing have always been of the utmost importance at Berky, but we were keen to be formally recognised for this.

**“BERKHAMPSTEAD IS JUST ONE OF 31 SCHOOLS, OUT OF THE 352 IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE TO HAVE BEEN AWARDED THIS.”**

'Five Ways to Wellbeing' in the Prep School continues to be a great success. One of its components is 'Keeping Learning' and teachers are witnessing that children, are taking great pride in sharing their skills with their pals by introducing and running clubs themselves such as last year's model railway club. Knitting club is a popular weekly event taking place on a Tuesday lunchtime. CVWB (Citizenship and Well-Being) is a vital part of the curriculum throughout the School, and is ever-evolving. New in the Autumn term is the introduction of yoga. Dana from The Little Yogi - a specialist in children's yoga - comes in each week to run carousel courses with our senior pupils in Years 5 and 6, and also with our youngest children in Kindergarten. There is also an after-school club for Years 4-6. Sessions are carefully planned to suit the age group she is teaching, but her approach is always holistic. Her classes are based on the five main principles of Yoga: learning breathing techniques, relaxation techniques, exercise, positive thinking and yoga values about a good diet.

The aim is to teach our children the importance of looking after their minds and bodies - a skill learnt at a young age will be beneficial for a happy, healthy and less stressful life. Staff sessions run weekly with Dana too.

Also during the Autumn term, the school introduced a special Berky postcard to be posted home for outstanding acts of helpfulness or kindness. Commendations and bonuses for good behaviour have always been awarded in the Prep School, stickers in the Pre-Prep, and leaves on the Values Tree for Early Years, but the postcard home marks something even more special. Year 5's residential trip to Viney Hill took place last term, for instance, and one lad was so kind and helpful - showing compassion for a homesick pal - that a postcard was sent home by an impressed teacher.

**“GOOD SCHOOLS HAVE ALWAYS UNDERSTOOD THE LINK BETWEEN GOOD MENTAL HEALTH AND ACHIEVEMENT. GREAT SCHOOLS HAVE ALSO UNDERSTOOD THE IMPORTANCE OF STAFF MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN THIS EQUATION.”**

These are just a few examples of our exceptional pastoral care - the evidence we showed the Health and Wellbeing department at Gloucestershire County Hall was sizeable. They were hugely impressed with all that we do here at Berkhamstead, and Fiona Quan commented: "Good schools have always understood the link between good mental health and achievement. Great schools have also understood the importance of staff mental health and well-being in this equation."

And rather than resting on her laurels, Mrs Bareham has plans to roll out the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' to the Pre-Prep and to continue to develop the CWB curriculum. This latest award will be displayed, alongside the one we already have: the Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning Award.

## CHOOSE RESPECT

Anti-bullying week is always an important time in the Berky calendar, and inspires all manner of discussions in Mrs Bareham's Citizenship and Wellbeing (CVWB) lessons. This year the theme was "Choose Respect," and Mr Cross kicked off the week with a rather eyebrow-raising assembly telling the children to 'shut up!' if they were talking as they filed in. He was disrespectful to the staff too!! The children then watched a short film made by the Anti-Bullying Alliance about respect. Another assembly focussed on Harry Potter actor Rupert Grint who was bullied at school for his ginger hair. CVWB lessons that week focussed on what is and what is not bullying, and the difference between rude, mean and bullying.





# News

FROM PRE-PREP

## Tour of the United Kingdom



### YEAR 2

This year's topic, the United Kingdom, began with a trip to Crickley Hill to look down on Gloucester City and the surrounding villages. Key places were identified and maps drawn. Year 2's careful observations showed the amazing 'patchwork' of the landscape. Back at school further time was spent looking at how the famous David Hockney landscapes were created. His use of colour and textures were discussed.

A day out to Gloucester Cathedral and the city was a brilliant learning experience for the children. After looking carefully at the features of a city, we headed into the countryside to look at the village of Ashleworth. Sitting on the village green eating our fruit and thinking about sounds we could hear highlighted the differences between the city and the countryside. (See page 14 for further news about this trip). On reflection, the majority of the children thought village life would be the best, although one or two thought being near shops was essential!

A quick imaginary train journey to Scotland and Wales gave a further flavour of the countries. The Loch Ness monster and imaginary Welsh dragons (who could have been ferocious or perhaps incredibly kind) inspired Year 2's very own game of Dragon Top Trumps. The children's travels ended in Northern Ireland where the legend of Finn McCool and his clever wife left many wishing for a trip to the Giant's Causeway and wondering if giants really existed! With the Nativity taking over in the last two weeks of term, the Christmas story was told. This is such a special time as Mrs Sallis yet again works her magic and the children's voices fill the church. For me this is when Christmas can begin. SO

### YEAR 1

This term Year 1 have been following Berky Bear with his travels around the UK. He decided to visit friends in London, Snowdon, Giant's Causeway and some Scottish islands. Throughout the topic we have carried out lots of the fieldwork which has enabled the children to describe and compare their local geography with Scottish islands, Welsh mountains and Northern Irish coast lines! As we were unable to make a visit to these places, we had to write some letters to Berky Bear to find out what living in these places is like. The children enjoyed receiving the correspondence, especially the packages of local foods and souvenirs. Berky Bear got a bit nervous at times, especially when he came across some Welsh dragons and Irish Giants! As part of our cross-curricular topic we had the opportunity to study some traditional stories from around the UK. The children wrote their own stories and poems on a range of themes including Katie Morag, the Legend of Finn MacCool and Guy Fawkes Night. We also spent some time thinking about Poppy Day and how so many soldiers died to keep us and the United Kingdom safe. When the countdown to Christmas began, we couldn't help but get the glitter out and go all festive! The children loved finding out about different Christmas traditions and comparing them to other festivals like Diwali and Hanukkah. There was great excitement when performing in the nativity, going to see 'Aladdin' at the Everyman Theatre and having our own sparkly Christmas party! LL-K

# News

FROM PREP



### BERKY IS IN THE RUNNING!

We have had two races this term, one at Newlands rugby ground and one at St Edward's, the second with the testing steep hill.

There were over 75 children in each of the four races; our pupils worked hard and tried their best against very tough opposition. First in for the Year 6 races at Newlands were Anna and Millie for the girls, Jensen and Noah for the boys and, for the Year 5s, Arabella and Darcey and Sebastien and Rupert. The St Edward's race was a tough race. First in from the Year 6 races were Millie and Varnika for the girls and Jensen and George. For the Year 5's race Rosemary and Hazel and for the boys Sebastien and Otto. Well done to all the runners! CK

### CHESS SUCCESS

The Berky chess team has enjoyed a busy and most successful autumn. Early in the term, victory against Holy Apostles saw our players claim a semi-final berth in the District Knockout Cup while a series of fine and accomplished wins against St. John's, St. Gregory's, Bishop's Cleeve and Richard Pate leaves the school in a wonderfully strong position at the top of the District League. No school has ever won four District League titles in a row but our team now has a fabulous opportunity to achieve this. The core of our 'A' team is Edith H (captain), Griff L, Rupert G, Oli S, Finian C and Jonathan B. Their efforts are to be saluted. Ethan A, Will B and Lottie A - all promising players - have also played for the 'A' team this term.

Berkhampstead retained an important piece of silverware in November, claiming the 'Top School' trophy at the annual Musketeers Club Congress. Congratulations to Edith H, Rupert G (who both won their individual sections), Oli S, Jonathan B, Henry R, Otto B and Beatrice N who all contributed to the school's success.

Domestically, the school chess clubs remain lively and busy. There is always plenty of determined and skillful chess to admire at lunchtimes. MC



### AYE AYE CAPTAIN!

Our Prep House Captains are chosen because we deem them to be excellent role models. They do a superb job of leading and motivating their house mates.

House Captains are elected at the start of the school year and second House Captains are voted in at the end of the Autumn Term. Year 6's Noah W and Emma S are House Captains for St Patrick's, Eloise M and Georgie J are Captains for St David's, Daisy O and Lorien S are Captains for St Andrew's and George R and Simran D are Captains for St George's. House Captain duties include leading inter-house competitions such as the 'House Shout', and handing out commendations in assembly. The House system is at the heart of the Prep School. When a child starts Prep in Year 3, they are allocated a House and receive a smart badge to wear on their blazers. They sit in their houses for lunch, to encourage pupils of different ages to mix. House contests take place regularly throughout the year. It is a House Captain honour to receive winning cups at these events.

### MUSIC NOTES

The Autumn term started with excitement as 35 new players began individual music lessons at school; they join many others in developing musical skills and have the opportunity to take part in ensembles during the week. Two new groups have been formed - BerKeys for Keyboard players and Percussion Ensemble. 18 of our most experienced instrumentalists attended an Orchestral Day at Dean Close School in October during which they learnt a fantastic variety of pieces to perform in the afternoon. The Autumn Recital followed in November with some delightful solos performed confidently by young and older players - warmly received with encouragement and enthusiasm.

The end of term brought with it opportunities to sing many traditional carols and favourite Christmas songs to entertain the elderly residents at Bay Tree Court and also to raise money for charity outside Waitrose. VoxBox singers from Y5 and Y6 sang tunefully and with great energy for an hour and their efforts were greatly appreciated with many shoppers donating funds. The highlight of the Autumn term was, of course, the triumphant candle-lit service at All Saints.' (See page 16) PM

### MUSIC EXAM RESULTS

Congratulations to all those who took music exams in the Autumn Term - what a great set of results!

- Prep Test Piano:** Matilda H, Lizzie H
- Grade 1:** Daisy O (Piano\*), Simran D (Piano\*), Millie W (Piano\*), Will S (Cello\*), Cressie F (Violin\*\*)
- Grade 2:** Rosemary B (Piano\*), Otto B (Drum Kit\*), Will J (Guitar\*)
- Grade 3:** Phoebe M (Percussion\*\*\*), Emma S (Violin\*), Edith H (Flute\*), Varnika B (Flute)
- Grade 4:** Jack E (Saxophone), Phoebe M (Piano\*)
- Grade 5:** Grace W (Theory), Griff L (Theory\*\*)

\*Denotes - Pass with Merit \*\*Denotes - Pass with Distinction



C'EST BON ICI!

"TO LEARN A LANGUAGE IS TO HAVE ONE MORE WINDOW FROM WHICH TO LOOK AT THE WORLD"  
CHINESE PROVERB

Modern Foreign Language teaching is great fun here at Berkhamstead, and regarded as being of the greatest importance, as we believe that teaching a foreign language to young children improves their literacy levels, builds their self-confidence and broadens their cultural horizons. Our tiniest pupils in Kindergarten benefit from learning French in intimate groups of just 5 or 6, with sessions lasting 15 minutes; their lesson times increase during the school year, and groups increase in size, but are never larger than 12.

Pre-Prep children look forward to engaging weekly lessons singing songs with rhymes, actions and the help of Madame McCreanor's popular family of soft toys, puppets and her other imaginative props. Up until Year 2, topics covered include numbers, greetings, animals, parts of the body and colours, but the subject is always linked to the class topic too. For instance, recently the Kindergarten topic was 'Places We Go,' so French lessons involved planning a picnic, naming food items and asking for them, as well as thinking about what they might wear!

When the children enter the Prep School in Year 3, time devoted to written French is increased, but spoken French always fills the lessons too. Our lucky Year 4s - to link with their 'Dans Ma Ville' topic - have the opportunity to visit Cheltenham's French restaurant L'Artisan and practise their conversational French with real French people! They delight in ordering their own crêpes, toppings and drinks - but only when they have asked for their cutlery and plates first!

Spanish is introduced to pupils in Year 5, with half a term devoted to French, and the other half, Spanish. This cycle repeats throughout the year. Some of our most enthusiastic Year 5 pupils are taken to Malvern St James School to participate in a language workshop where they have a taste of various languages including Italian, Spanish and Mandarin Chinese. We aim to foster a love of languages, and for children who leave us in Year 6 to have the confidence to build on the firm MFL foundation provided here in their Senior schools.



### BON APPETIT!

Each year, Year 4 visit a lovely French restaurant in town called L'Artisan. The trip enables the children to speak French to French people in a real situation, and they choose a drink, and either crêpes au sucre, crêpes au chocolate or crêpes a la confiture de framboise. Elizabeth, the owner, speaks entirely in French, teaching them the vocabulary for the cutlery which they have to say correctly before being allowed to order their crêpes! It is always a lovely morning.



### MANDARIN CLUB

Mandarin Club is for children in the Prep School. It is taught by Taiwanese teacher Mrs Thorn who brings Chinese to life for the children with lively games and even karaoke. The children have great fun! The club takes place after school on a Tuesday. For further information, please contact the office.



"MFL IS REALLY FUN! WE USE ACTIONS TO HELP US REMEMBER VOCABULARY, AND A GREAT APP CALLED 'LINGUASCOPE' WHICH HAS LOTS OF BRILLIANT GAMES. IT WILL BE HELPFUL GOING TO SECONDARY SCHOOL WITH A STRONG FOUNDATION IN LANGUAGE."

DAISY & SOPHIE, Y6 PUPILS





# Off we go...

LEARNING BROUGHT TO LIFE FOR  
OUR INQUISITIVE PUPILS

## LIFE LONG MEMORIES

At the start of this term, Year 5 went on their first residential to Viney Hill. They left school on a Wednesday looking forward to the next three days. This residential is all about team work and taking part in activities with children within the year group that they might not know well. Activities included archery, climbing, crate stack, tunnelling, bush craft, low ropes, bridge building and a night hike. The weather was glorious and everyone had a go at each activity. I was also impressed with how well each group was working together by the end of the trip. Well done, Year 5, it was a successful trip! DB

## CRICKLEY HILL

Our first Year 1 trip took us up Crickley Hill to give the children a sense of the physical geography of Cheltenham. We set off up the hill with our pencils and sketch books hoping to get a clear view of what our area looks like from above. After battling through the blustery wind we found a spot to perch and were able to get a good enough view of Cheltenham and Gloucester to record a landscape sketch of what we could see. We all had a great morning! LL-K

## TURNING DETECTIVE

Year 6 took part in a fascinating Detective Day and learnt how science is used to catch criminals.

*"First we learnt about fingerprints and discovered that nobody in the world has the same fingerprints. We rubbed ink on our fingers then placed them on a sheet to work out what type of fingerprints we had: loop, arch or whorl."* Eloise

*"We learnt that there is a database where all the shoe prints are stored. There is also a database for criminals' fingerprints."* Luke

*"We were given a pretend murder scene and we had to work out what happened. We found clues such as hair, credit cards and a random note. It was thoroughly interesting."* India



## WE THE CURIOUS

We The Curious is one of the UK's largest science centres and is home to the country's only 3D Planetarium. Here Year 5 pupils tell us what they thought of their visit.

*"I liked the bubbles because you could make a wall of bubbles - it was so cool. You could also put them over your head, and it was funny when they popped!"* Isla

*"My favourite experiment was the water power project. I particularly enjoyed running on a hamster wheel to move water from the first tank to the second."* Griff

*"I really enjoyed the vacuum experiment. There was a vacuum box with music playing inside that you couldn't hear, but when you put a straw on one of the metal bars attached to the vacuum box, and bit on the straw, with hands on your ears, you could hear music! This is because the vibrations go from your mouth through your bones to your ears and turn back into sound."* Amazing" Viera

## WELSH ADVENTURE

As part of their topic on Medieval times, Year 4 made the journey over the border to Chepstow Castle. The children were able to see how effective the castle defences were as they explored the various parts of the wonderful building. The blood-thirsty lot enjoyed learning about the horrors of medicine in the Middle Ages - some of the implements were quite shocking! A super day out for our young historians.



## LITERATURE FESTIVAL

Once again the Literature Festival returned to Cheltenham and Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 were ready and eager for their visits. Year 3 went to see Phil Earle who talked to the children about drawing upon their own experiences to find a story. He was very entertaining and they thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Year 4 went to see Tongue Fu who were an interactive performance poetry group. The children enjoyed performing a poem about Marmite - whether they loved it or hated it. It was an energetic and lively performance bringing poetry to life with the help of a band. Year 5 visited M.G. Leonard who told them stories about creepy crawlies while also encouraging them to look for that elusive unique idea. She explained how she had found hers in her fears - bugs - rather than her passions which would have meant another dragon book in an already rather saturated market. Year 6 had the pleasure of watching Maz Evans who was a bundle of energy and stories. One highlight for the children was when she started picking out teachers to join her for a quiz on the stage - despite the children's best efforts and very loud cheering the Berky teachers returned unscathed. All the children from Y3 -Y6 enjoyed themselves and it was wonderful to hear the discussions, thoughts and ideas after their return. BE

## VISIT TO THE RAINFOREST

An excited Year 5 arrived at the rainforest with the news that the sloth 'Cinnamon' was in clear view - and she was. They were very lucky as this was the best view of her, ever! Not only was she in clear view but she was actually moving albeit very slowly and when we came back from lunch she had moved to a very well camouflaged position in a tree. Our 'Amazing Adaptations' tour was fascinating, and the children listened well and took a lot of information on board. The giant stick insects were in a new display and their camouflage was incredible - it was only when they moved that you could distinguish them from a twig! All the usual characters were there - Madagascan Hissing Cockroaches, Emerald Green Boas and the adorable Pygmy Marmosets. The children worked hard on the worksheets in their free time in the glasshouses and I hope they enjoyed their day in the rainforest. Well done! LW

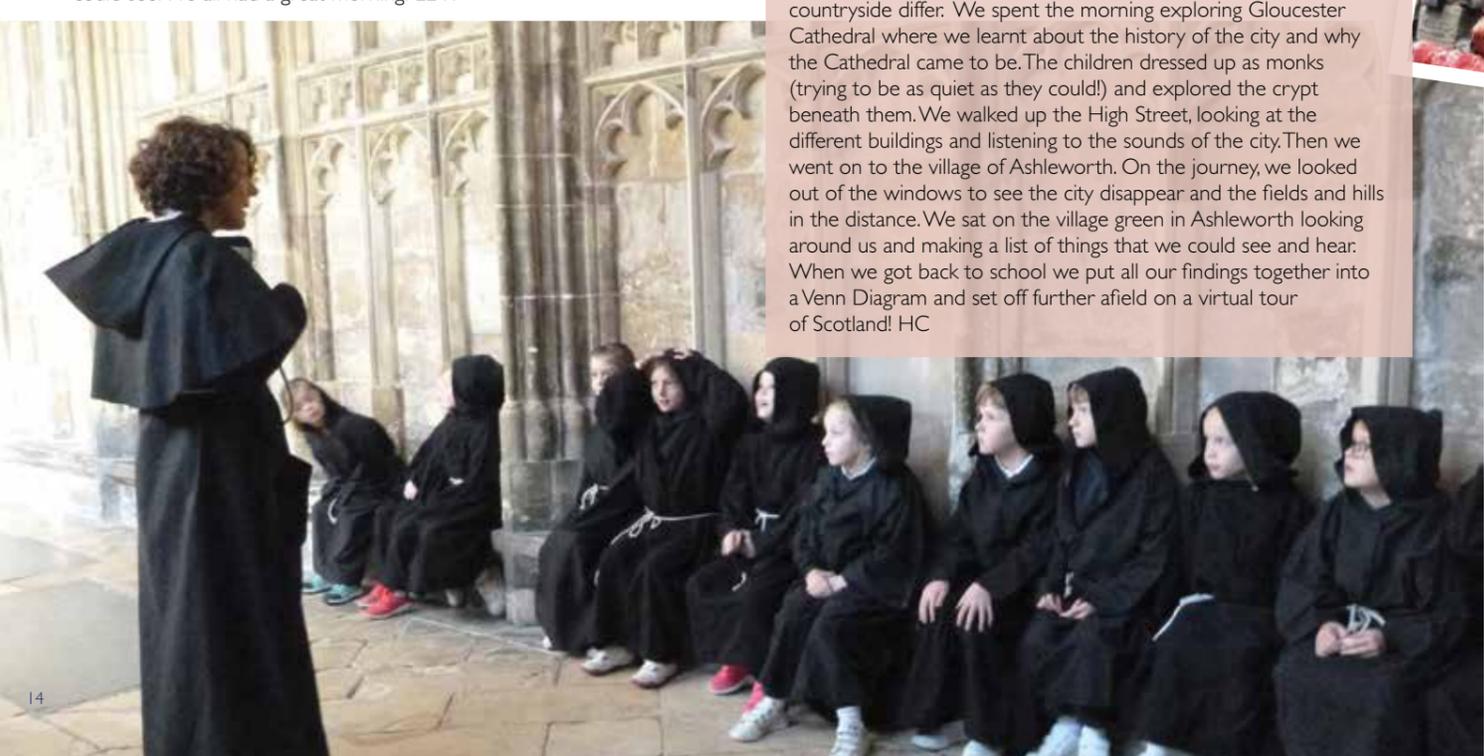


## STEAM MUSEUM

This term, the Y6 children had the opportunity to visit the Steam Museum in Swindon. They all looked the part, dressed as evacuees with ID cards, ration books and even some with their teddies. Once there, they met the local air raid warden who had arranged for us to spend time in a public air raid shelter and handle many artefacts from the 1940s. It was then on to the train to learn about the experiences of evacuees. The trip really enhanced the children's learning about World War Two, as they were able to 'walk in the shoes' of children from the past. PMcC

## IPADS, RIVERS AND SKETCHBOOKS

The weather was set fair and the Y6s set off on their Rivers and ICT trip. The Severn at Broadoak was the first stop and it was low tide so there was more to see than when the river is at high tide. Drawings and pictures were gathered and then on we went to Cannop Ponds in the Forest of Dean. This was the highlight of the trip for most as wellies were needed for wading in the water to take various measurements - for some, more splashing than measuring! Symonds Yat was more impressive and glorious than usual with the magnificent Autumn colours being illuminated by the sunshine. Flood plains, meanders and river bank erosion were much in evidence and the children appreciated what superb countryside we have on our doorstep. The second road closure of the day prevented us from following the Wye down its valley, but both the Wye and Severn were observed again at their estuaries from the view point near the Severn Bridge crossing. Well done, Year 6! LW





# The Spirit of Christmas!

CHRISTMAS AT BERKHAMPSTEAD IS ALWAYS MAGICAL, AND NEVER MORE SO THAN DURING THE PREP SCHOOL'S CAROL SERVICE HELD IN THE AWE-INSPIRING ALL SAINTS' CHURCH.

YEAR 6 - AS BERKY TRADITION DICTATES - LED THE CANDLE-LIT PROCESSION AND READINGS, AND THE TONE WAS SET FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON.

“A FANTASTIC PERFORMANCE! BRILLIANT SONGS,  
PARTICULARLY THE “BUMPY CAMEL!”  
MRS BAREHAM, PREP TEACHER



## EARLY YEARS PRESENTS A BABY IS BORN

The children performed their traditional Christmas Nativity, 'A Baby Is Born' for their family and friends towards the end of the Autumn term. They were fantastic narrators, and they all spoke clearly and confidently as they

told the story of the very first Christmas. The children sang an enchanting range of carols and accompanied the vocals with upbeat percussion playing. Overall it was a fantastic show - the audience loved it - and we were very proud of

all the children for all their achievements. Thanks to Mrs Sallis for teaching the children to sing and play along to the songs in such a joyous way, and to Miss Henderson and Mrs High for creating such a vibrant backdrop. HR-W



“BEGUILING AND JOYFUL! SUPERB ACTING AND  
HEARTFELT SINGING. A TRUE CELEBRATION.”  
MISS EVANS, PREP TEACHER



## PRE-PREP PRESENTS IT'S A BABY!

This year's Pre-Prep children told the story of the first Christmas through the words and songs of 'It's A Baby!' Mary, Joseph, the angels, carol singers, innkeepers and their wives, the shepherds and the kings all played their

parts beautifully. The words were spoken clearly and the enthusiastic singing of all the children from Year 1 and Year 2 left a tear in the eyes of many adults. In the words of Mr Cross, "Thank you Pre-Prep for kicking off

Christmas in such a magical way.' A big thank you too to the staff for all their hard work, especially Mrs Sallis, Mrs Cole and Mrs Taylor: SO



“A TRULY MAGICAL CANDLE-LIT EVENT THAT EMBODIED THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS.”  
MRS AGG, DEPUTY HEAD



PREP PRESENTS  
**A CANDLE-LIT SERVICE**

Gaudete! Gaudete! Christus est natus! The words of this ancient carol rang out every day during the final weeks of term as all the Prep children prepared for the Carol Service. In the beautiful candle-lit surroundings of All Saints'

Church, Y6 led the worship with 'God rest you merry, gentlemen' as they processed to the altar carrying candles symbolising the birth of Jesus, the Light of the World. The sequence of carols during the service reflected the narration of the

Nativity told by clear and confident readers and the centenary of the Armistice was remembered with the moving story of English and German soldiers sharing in the singing of 'Silent Night' and the informal truce in December 1914. PM



Sports reports...

**GLOUCESTER RUGBY COACHING!**

At the beginning of the Autumn term, the Year 5 boys travelled to King's, Gloucester for a coaching session with the Gloucester RFU coaches and players. They were met by two current Gloucester players; Will Safe, who is local and went to Bournside School and Jaco Kriel, a South African International Rugby player. The boys had a great experience and learnt much about working together as a team on the rugby pitch - they also came home with an 'England Supporters' scarf each! RC





### U8 | TAG RUGBY

Both the Bisons and the Buffaloes had impressive results throughout the season. As the term went on we could see the improvements of the boys in all aspects of the game. Both the attacking and defensive lines got better in terms of their position and movement. The boys worked well together to slow down the opposite team's attacks and got many of their tags. In attack we had some great darting runs and we started to support each other better. A great term of rugby. Well done to all the boys. TM

**Bisons:** George B, Max H, Arsalaan H, Edward M, Felix S, Otto S, Max Y

**Buffaloes:** Samuel B, Richard D, Jacob D-T, Jacob F, Azlaan H, Benjamin J, Barnaby W



### U9A | RUGBY

The As have worked hard all season in training and showed in the 9 matches played a steady improvement in both their skills and confidence. Captaincy was shared weekly with all boys working together as a unit and always supporting each other. Tackling was the most improved skill of the term with just about all the boys showing a growing confidence in this tricky area. Passing and handling out of contact was an area of strength for us and was evident in our best game of the season against Dean Close. Despite losing, the boys played periods of the game at a high tempo with some superb phases of play. The As have been a pleasure to take on fixtures this term and they should be extremely proud of their achievements. Well done, boys.

**U9A Team:** Freddie B, Albie B, Michael C, William C, Patrick D, William J, Harry M, Oli M, Henry R, Henry T

### U9B | RUGBY

The Bs played 7 games this term facing some strong competitive sides all away from home. In training they were always enthusiastic and committed and this spirit was taken into matches. What was impressive was the boys' attitude to competition; they were never

disheartened by defeat and showed a genuine enjoyment of match play. They developed a good working understanding of the organisation in defence and showed tenacity on a weekly basis. Many of the lessons learnt this season will be transferable to other sports. They have been responsive and adaptable and gained much from the experience. Well done, boys.

**U9B Team:** Harry A, Robert A, Albie B-C, Charles C, Rufus H, Luke R, William S, Mateo S, Hugo W



### U10A | RUGBY

The U10A team have had a great season of rugby, remaining unbeaten for almost all their matches. Their skills have improved across the board with better ball handling and their passing has improved significantly. This was evident at the Dean Close tournament where they played some of their best rugby of the term. The boys played three matches against schools from across the region including another match against RPS. This was one of the most challenging matches for the boys because both teams played in a similar style but they worked hard and secured a win. There have been some great performances from all members of the team, they've been hungry for success in every match and even when they've been down they've worked hard together to try and bounce back to victory. Well done boys, you should be proud of how well you have played this season.

**U10A Team:** William B, Max C, Alex D, Jack E, Lincoln H, Theo J, Seb L, Griff L, Alessio T

### U10B | RUGBY

The U10B rugby team have had a superb season. Not only have they had huge success, but they have thoroughly enjoyed playing together and developing both as individuals and as a team. They have taken turns as Captain and quickly developed specific roles within the team. The whole squad tackled well but the more determined tacklers were Oli S, Alex S and Harry W. In the ruck, Harry was almost always first to arrive and very few opposing players could stop him winning the ball for his team. In attack we had two very talented runners, Jonathan and Ethan, who were also very astute at being in the right place to receive the ball. Archie and Rupert too were very good at poaching the ball from the opposition, particularly after the tackle. All the boys scored tries and some were just brilliant, but my favourite was in the Prior Park game when the whole team handled the ball, making good ground and off-loading the ball in the tackle. I can't remember who scored that try but a very proud Headmaster stood on the touchline applauding a superb team effort.

Well done, boys and thank you - you have been a joy to watch. RC

**U10B Team:** Ethan A, Jonathan B, Otto B, Rupert G, Archie L-B, Oli S, Alex S, Harry W



### U11 | RUGBY

The Y6 boys have enjoyed their best season together in their time at Berk. They have played some tough matches against teams such as King's, Worcester, Bromsgrove and Beaudesert and with each match they have continued to improve. Victories in the first half of term against Hatherop, Wycliffe and Cricklade Manor really boosted the boys' confidence and enabled them to play with freedom in the subsequent fixtures. They were always willing to attack from anywhere and their superb handling skills caused problems for many teams. Fine victories against St Edward's, Richard Pate and Rendcomb followed, showing the boys' improved work at the breakdown and some tough tackling which rocked our opponents. All of these elements came to the fore in the final game of the season with a stunning 8 tries to nil victory against King's, Gloucester.

The cohesiveness of the group and the way they have supported each other has been really impressive. With only 9 boys in the year and never having any subs, the boys' achievements have been amazing. I have been really proud of all of them.

**U11 Team (all awarded colours):** Oscar A, Jensen A, Finian C, Luke F, Oscar H, Andrew P, George R, Edward S, Noah W

**Outstanding Player Awards:** Finian C, Andrew P, George R, Noah W

### RUGBY STATS

	PLAYED	WON	LOST	DRAWN
U8 BISONS	16	9	1	6
U8 BUFFALOES	16	8	2	6
U9A	9	4	3	2
U9B	7	2	5	0
U10A	10	9	1	0
U10B	12	10	2	0
U11	14	8	5	1



### U8 | HOCKEY

The Year 3 girls have had a great start to the hockey season and we have seen some brilliant progression over the term. The girls have had to learn a lot this term, positioning possibly being the trickiest. During their last match they played really well, actively passing and tackling, creating great opportunities for us. There have been some fantastic triumphs throughout the season with Red team winning against Hatherop Castle 2-1, Blue team winning against Richard Pate 3-0 and the Yellow team with two great wins against St Edwards, 3-0 and Richard Pate 4-0. Well done to all the girls; you've really worked hard and progressed this term.

**U8 Team:** Georgia A, Ellie A, Ellie B, Zoe B, Nancy B, Katy C, Thea C, Hannah D, Sophia E, Chloe E, Lucinda F, Maisie G, Isabel G, Kitty H, Vivienne H, Ena M-L, Primrose P, Isla R, Zoe S, Alice S, Hetty W, Sydney W



### U9 | HOCKEY

I have been thoroughly impressed by the attitude and the sporting behaviour of the U9s this term and both teams have had a fantastic season. The U9As played 7 matches, attended one tournament (where we were winners of our group) and one festival. Of the matches, the girls won 5 and lost 2 with 24 goals scored for and only 13 against! These are pretty amazing statistics and show what a competent A team we have!

The U9Bs played in 6 matches and a tournament, winning 2, drawing 1 and losing 3. Interestingly they scored 8 goals and had 8 goals scored against them. I was very pleased by the great progress they made over the season and the two wins were their final two matches, with 7 of the 8 goals scored! If we had seen some of the goal-scoring that was in evidence in the final games at the beginning of the season as well, it would have been a different story. We definitely ended on a high!

**U9 Team:** Serena A, Anna A, Lottie A, Jennella A, Rosemary B, Lilah C, Uma C, Isabella E, Matilda E, Hannah H, Holly H, Matilda H, Aurielle M, Bea-Bea M-D, Beatrice N, Elodie O, Lucy P

### HOCKEY STATS

	PLAYED	WON	LOST	DRAWN
U8 YELLOW	3	2	1	0
U8 BLUE	3	1	1	1
U8 RED	4	1	2	1
U9A	7	5	2	0
U9B	6	2	3	1
U10A	7	5	1	1
U10B	6	3	1	2
U11A	9	4	4	1
U11B	8	6	2	0



### U11 | HOCKEY

The U11A team had a slow start to the season, but with some hard work and determination their season took a turn for the better half way through! They were starting to win games and play some great hockey. There has been lots of movement on pitch and across teams; the girls have adapted well and kept working hard in their new roles. The B team made a great start to their season, beating St Edward's in their first game; the defence has worked hard this season and have kept us in the game on more than one occasion. The attacking players have improved their passing and created some great opportunities to score, which have often ended in goals, 22 to be exact! Well done girls, it has been a great season.

**U11 Team:** Varnika B, Simran D, Beatrice D, Emily G, Sophie G, Edith H, Lizzie H, Georgie J, Eloise M, Daisy O, Frankie R, India R, Hattie S, Lorien S, Emma S, Anna T, Millie W

**Colours awarded to:** Varnika B, Beatrice D, Simran D, Daisy O, Anna T, Millie W, Hattie S, Sophie G and India R

**Outstanding Player Awards:** Hattie S, Beatrice D and Daisy O



### U10 | HOCKEY

The U10A team have enjoyed a successful season with 4 strong wins, 2 drawn matches and 1 loss against a very strong Richard Pate squad. The girls worked hard to develop some set play and were really beginning to understand positioning on the field. As the season progressed, so did their teamwork and they became a tight squad, playing in different positions when required. A super season girls! The B team have had a great season with only one loss. Lots of goals were scored and this was down to very good play and passing amongst the forwards. The defence proved strong too, with only a few goals getting past the defenders and our great goalkeepers. The players all had opportunities to move around and play in different positions. It was wonderful to see how they adapted to new challenges.

**U10 Team:** Isla A, Daisy B, Poppy B, Charlotte B, Joy C, Hazel C, Darcey C, Cressie F, Becky F, Viera M, Jasmine M, Phoebe M, Kimora P, Eleanor T, Eleri W, Grace W, Bella W



## BERKY GIRLS GET A KICK OUT OF FOOTBALL

Football has long been the boys' main Spring Term sport here at Berky, but for the last five years, our senior girls in Years 5 and 6 have had the option of attending a Tuesday lunchtime football club. The club takes place on the MUGA, and is run by Mr McCreanor - with the help of Mr Banks - with nearly all the girls in these year groups taking part. They are keen to master basic football skills (passing, controlling the ball, using space effectively, shooting, dribbling and positional awareness) ready to participate in the annual Cheltenham Primary Schools Competition that takes place in October. Twenty-four local schools compete in this and we invariably do well. Mr McCreanor is enthusiastic about the club and commented, "The girls play hockey as their main winter sport, and football is a great sport to teach alongside it because it is a game with transferable skills - the tactics used in each sport are similar. I have seen a growth in the popularity of the club as the England Women's Football team has been so successful." The club runs during the Winter and Spring terms.



## BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL AND DAY NURSERY

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BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL, PITTVILLE CIRCUS ROAD, CHELTENHAM, GLOUCESTERSHIRE GL52 2QA  
TELEPHONE: 01242 523263 EMAIL: [office@berkhampsteadschool.co.uk](mailto:office@berkhampsteadschool.co.uk) [@BerkyCheltenham](https://www.facebook.com/BerkyCheltenham) [@BerkyDNChelt](https://www.facebook.com/BerkyDNChelt)