

BERKHAMPSTEAD
SCHOOL
MAGAZINE

SPRING TERM
2022

BLAZER

Spring Concerts
BRING THE
HOUSE DOWN!

*History
Mystery*
EXPLAINED...

Platinum
BERKY'S
SPECIAL AWARD

INSIDE: SPOTLIGHT ON IAN PARKER | MOSAIC WORKSHOP | DAY NURSERY, HAPPY 10TH BIRTHDAY!



Thoughts FROM THE HEAD

Berkhampstead isn't about teaching subjects, it's about teaching children. I believe that we provide an education that is not about possessing the 'answers,' but understanding the importance of the questions. We are a place where the children learn to respect others, and become tolerant of all points of view, not necessarily to accept them as their own, but to understand why someone else might hold them. And our efficacy cannot be measured in numbers.

However, in recent years...

80% of the children who took the Grammar School test have gained a place

1140 sports matches have been played against other schools

70 Independent School Music, Art, Sport and Academic Awards have been gained

11 Chess Team County League and Cup Competition Titles have been won

But most importantly...

100% of the children are appreciated for their special qualities.

Glance through this edition of the Berky Blazer and you'll see evidence of these achievements... and imaginative teaching everywhere!

Music matters enormously. Our wonderful Spring Concerts, held at the Pittville Pump Room, once again showed that music is at the heart of Berkhampstead. Every child from Year 2 to Year 6 performed in this fabulous venue - and what performances! I make no apologies for asserting once again that there can be no school of similar size that comes close to us for inclusivity and musicality. It was wonderful to experience the strong feeling of community engendered by the Spring Concerts.

In this edition of the Blazer you will find even more about what makes Berkhampstead an extraordinary school. What a privilege it is to be Head of such a school!

Richard Cross

Richard Cross
Headmaster



Spotlight ON IAN PARKER

Ian Parker has recently joined our teaching team. After three years living in the USA where he was a stay-at-home dad, he returned to the UK and began teaching. For the last ten years he has taught a variety of year groups and subjects. He is enjoying bringing his passion for teaching to Berkhampstead, and teaches Year 3 as well as games and parts of the Carousel.

Some of Mr Parker's Year 3 pupils put him to the test with a number of questions:

What did you do before you were a teacher?

I worked for a charity called Guideposts Trust where I ran their friendship scheme. This required me to find volunteers to support adults with learning disabilities to participate in sociable and fun activities.

What are your favourite things to do?

I love all things to do with sport and travel. Most of my weekends are spent coaching rugby, and I coach Cheltenham North Under 9s (which my son Zack is part of), and the Girls' Under 15s (which my older daughter Evie plays for). The girls have recently reached the last 16 of the National Cup which means we need to travel further around the country.

What is your favourite country that you have visited?

I am very lucky to have travelled lots. When I was 18, I took a year out and travelled around the world. To choose my favourite place is very tricky. I am fortunate that all three of my children and my wife love skiing as much as I do so a skiing destination would probably be my choice. However, we are all huge Disney and Marvel fans, so a trip to Florida would also be very high on my list.

How many pets do you have?

I have two cats. One is a boy and he is called Dizzy because he is not very clever and the other is called Dotty because she has dots on her fur.

Have you ever done anything adventurous?

I love to do scary and challenging things. I have enjoyed trekking mountains (however I did not quite make it to the very top of Kilimanjaro), jumped out of a plane, and rafted over the highest commercially rafted waterfall in the world! But out of everything, my bungee jump was the scariest. Although it was only 49 metres high, it certainly produced a moment of panic!

What is your favourite subject and where do you see yourself in 10 years' time?

That is a challenging question. I enjoy many subjects but my favourites are probably English, maths and PE. Geography, history and science are very close behind. Having recently started at Berky, I would love to think I will be still doing the same things that I enjoy now which is teaching and coaching. However, my children will be grown up so who knows!



BEST IN EXHIBITION

We were absolutely delighted that Year 6 Art Scholar, Alice S was awarded 'Best in Exhibition' at this term's Malvern St James' Primary Schools' Art Exhibition: her study of a budgerigar was exceptional! Having fallen for the vivid colours of these sweet little birds on a family holiday in Spain, Alice decided to paint in gouache to capture their vibrancy. Typically modest, Alice credited her five-year-old cousin with the inspiration behind the striking spattering of paint which has now become a trademark of her style. For other noteworthy results from this year's exhibition, please turn to page 4.



MALVERN ART EXHIBITION!



The annual Primary Schools' Art Exhibition hosted by Malvern St James' School has always offered a wonderful and inspiring showcase of children's art from primary schools across the county, and we invariably do very well. This year was particularly fruitful as Alice S - our Year 6 Art Scholar's stunning budge - was awarded 'Best in Exhibition!' (See page 3) But this was not the only noteworthy result: artwork by Pre-Prep pupils Zac H (RL), Lucy W (IG), Isabella B (2S) and Edward S (2GS) were all Highly Commended, and Nina C (5K) was another year group winner! (pictured). We were thrilled! Well done to all our talented young artists!

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

This year the theme Children's Mental Health Week was 'Growing Together' and was all about encouraging children to consider how they have grown and how they could help others to grow. Pre-Prep and Early Years children (and staff) were invited to 'Dress to Express' - there were plenty of wonderful outfits on show! Meanwhile, activities across the school included Kindergarten children icing expressions on biscuits (and talking about why they had chosen that expression), and Circle Time discussions. In the Prep School, the children watched a special assembly devoted to children's mental health and discussed issues and concerns in their Citizenship and Wellbeing lessons.



CHARITY NEWS

Everyone was greatly moved by the crisis in Ukraine, and so the School Council decided to hold a Mufti Day where everyone was asked to come to school wearing the Ukrainian flag colours of blue and yellow, in return for a donation. We were overwhelmed with everyone's generosity, and we raised £2,205.46 which was sent to the UN Refugee Agency.



KINDNESS CUP

One of our most special and coveted prizes, the Sally Lee Kindness Cup is awarded every half term to a Pre-Prep pupil who has consistently shown care and consideration for others. The Prep School equivalent is named in honour of recently retired deputy head, (but current governor), Mrs Agg, who cares deeply about our pupils' emotional wellbeing, and is a firm believer in encouraging good citizenship. This term the Prep Kindness Cup has been awarded to Oscar C-S and Amelia E, and the Pre-Prep Kindness Cup has been awarded to Jonah B and Chloe R. Well done to all of these exemplary pupils!



PANCAKE RACES

Prep children perfected their running pancake tossing for this year's House Pancake Race event. The popular Berky event is now in its twelfth year, but wasn't able to take place last year because of lockdown, and so the atmosphere this year was particularly exciting! The crowd - made up of parents, teachers and Reception children - (who were watching through windows) - witnessed speedy sprinting, impressive tossing technique and great team spirit. Congratulations to St David's and St George's who, this year, were the joint winners of the much-coveted pancake trophy. Earlier in the day, our Kindergarten children had been involved in their own pancake races, and the whole school had enjoyed a pancake with delicious toppings for lunchtime pudding.



WORLD BOOK DAY

World Book Day was, as always, a memorable day! Children from across the school were invited to dress as their favourite book characters, and everyone made a wonderful effort! We had a plethora of Harry Potters, Hungry Caterpillars, Gangsta Grannies and Beano characters, and a host of beautiful Disney princesses. And refusing to be left out, the staff turned out in hilarious costumes too - who can forget Mr Taylor's Percy the Park Keeper, Mrs Taylor's Cat in the Hat, or the Prep School's Mr Parker who appeared as FIVE different characters throughout the course of the day! A big thank you to all of the parents for providing all the many wonderful costumes.



PTA News

Although Covid still caused disruption to PTA events during the Spring term, we had a very productive PTA meeting in January and authorised funds for a number of new items, including ten music stands, a pair of portable football stands, a new Year 6 Speech Day trophy and 3D printer cases. In addition to this, we previously agreed on a sum of £10,000 to fund the new Prep Garden. A landscape designer has drawn up plans based on those produced by one of our talented pupils. It is hoped work will start soon.

Cycling Initiative

Straight after half term, we saw the cycling initiative get off the ground! It was great to see the response from the children, with nearly the whole of Year 6 having signed up! A timetable has been drawn up and all children currently at the school will have the opportunity to take part in the scheme once they have joined the Prep department. A big 'thank you' must go to Fiona Carder-Geddes for all her hard work in organising this initiative - hopefully we will start to see a flurry of children cycling to school in future!

Now restrictions have been lifted and (fingers crossed) cases continue to fall, we will have a busier Summer term. The Headmaster's picnic is due to return in May and the PTA have offered to fund refreshments for the parents. The school will send out details of this lovely event nearer the time.

The Summer Ball is returning on 11th June and the response from parents has been fantastic. Thank you so much to Ciara Aspinall and Charlotte Kidner for helping to bring this event together.

Our final event (and mine!) will be the Summer Fayre, taking place on Saturday 25th June from 10am. We will share plans nearer the time, but it will be wonderful to be able to hold the event again, bringing the school community together, whilst raising funds for future projects.

As my time at Berky is rapidly coming to an end, we are looking for a new PTA team to take over from September. Being on the PTA is a great way of meeting new people, arranging events for the children and raising funds to purchase new items or initiatives for the benefit of all our children. Being on the PTA has been very rewarding. You can put in as much or as little as you wish, and the staff are extremely supportive. If you feel you may wish to get involved either as an individual or as a small team, please do get in touch via pta@berkhampsteadschool.co.uk; we would love to hear from you and chat through what is involved.

Thank you to parents, staff and children for your support through the year so far; it is greatly appreciated.

With Warm Wishes, **Joey**, PTA chair

BERKY GETS GREENER

Both the Pre-Prep and Prep committees are running smoothly and it is so good to see huge amounts of enthusiasm and energy to make Berky greener.

The Pre-Prep have a simplified version of the Berky eco-pledge and are awaiting their first recipient of their new badge. Year 1 have made 'Turn off the Lights' posters and all the children are working on reusing and recycling responsibly at home. I am told that the children are also keen litter pickers.

In the Prep, the committee - ably led by Sam, Jacob and Hannah - have lots and lots of ideas of what we should be doing to raise money for eco-warrior projects and hopefully we will be able to put some of these ideas into action in the Summer term. There has been a steady trickle of children being awarded their eco-warrior badges and hopefully the eco-friendly garden will be started soon. Our main push



this term has been to turn the lights off in classrooms - when not needed - this has improved hugely and to go off litter picking around the nearby streets and in the school grounds. Armed with gloves, litter pickers, bags and high-vis jackets the children looked the part and with their usual eagerness found lots of litter around and about. Now it appears the rest of the Prep want to have a go!

Well done to both committees for their keenness in promoting green living both at school and at home - it is so important for everyone to try and do their bit. LW

The inspiration for the History Mystery came from themed birthday parties I organised for my own children many years ago; unlike swimming parties or visits to Softland, these were held at home and were based on games played at children's parties when I was young - for example, I reinvented Musical Chairs as The Mystery of the Disappearing Toadstools! The guests loved the opportunity to be imaginative and found the idea of going on a quest to solve a mystery, such as where the treasure was or how to vanquish some evil villain, irresistible. Every year, they eagerly donned costumes, were put in teams by means of the first activity, then played an assortment of games each leading to the next through maps, messages and clues until the desired goal was achieved.



Once my children had grown up, creating something similar for the Year 2 children was a small step - a themed day of connected challenges based on the term's history topic. The educational value was indisputable; while thinking they were just having fun in fancy dress, the children would actually be practising their skills in reading, comprehension, writing, maths, problem solving and feats of memory, as well as working together as a team and discovering more about the relevant historical period - quite an intense day of learning!

The first ever History Mystery was based on the history of London. The children pitted their wits against Colonel Thomas Blood, a notorious character who attempted to steal the Crown Jewels from the Tower of London in 1671 and, surprisingly, was pardoned by King Charles II. The children had expected to begin the day sticking jewels onto brooches they had made previously, but to their horror, when they opened the jewel box, the jewels were gone; in their place was a taunting letter from Blood...

The next History Mystery was set in Victorian times and involved Charlie Peace, a cunning Victorian thief who carried the tools of his trade - burglary - in a violin case. The scoundrel, with his violin case full of the children's missing jewels, was eventually discovered in Mr Cross's office and proved to be none other than the Bursar!

Subsequent Mysteries were based on Boudicca's struggle against Roman invaders and a different Victorian Mystery in which Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson were helped by the children - participating as the 'Baker Street Irregulars' - to overcome Holmes's nemesis, the dastardly Moriarty. Moriarty had stolen important plans from various eminent Victorians; the children had to recover them as well as repair Mr Brunel's bridge which Moriarty had destroyed. At Christmas, the Prep children had their own History Mystery for the first time; their mission was to discover the true meaning of Christmas

HISTORY MYSTERY...

Explaining the unexplained

and transform the miserly Scrooge into a more caring and generous person while also learning about the history of Christmas. As reward, they received chocolate coins from Scrooge's own coffers.

By far the most whimsical Mystery, though, was inspired by the children's investigation of the history of Space exploration, an offshoot from a broader study of the 1950s and 1960s. When their spaceship broke down, two aliens named Zig and Zog landed on Earth and borrowed the bodies of Mrs Agg and Mrs Owen for the day; the children had to help them find an element needed to mend their spaceship. Ignorant of the ways of humans - and, unfortunately, the school rules - the aliens caused havoc, but the children showed them what to do and how to behave, especially at lunchtime! The element discovered, Zig and Zog blasted off back to their home planet, leaving Mrs Agg and Mrs Owen very puzzled as to what had been happening in their absence...

This Spring term, the Year 2 topic of 'Castles' gave rise to the planning of a castles-themed History Mystery. Unfortunately, Storm Eunice and Covid 19 resulted in two very disappointing and frustrating postponements; however, the day will be rearranged for next term when all the knights and ladies of Berkhamstead will be ready to assist the children on their special mystery quest. Quoting our school motto - Perseverantia Vincit - seems most apt at this point!

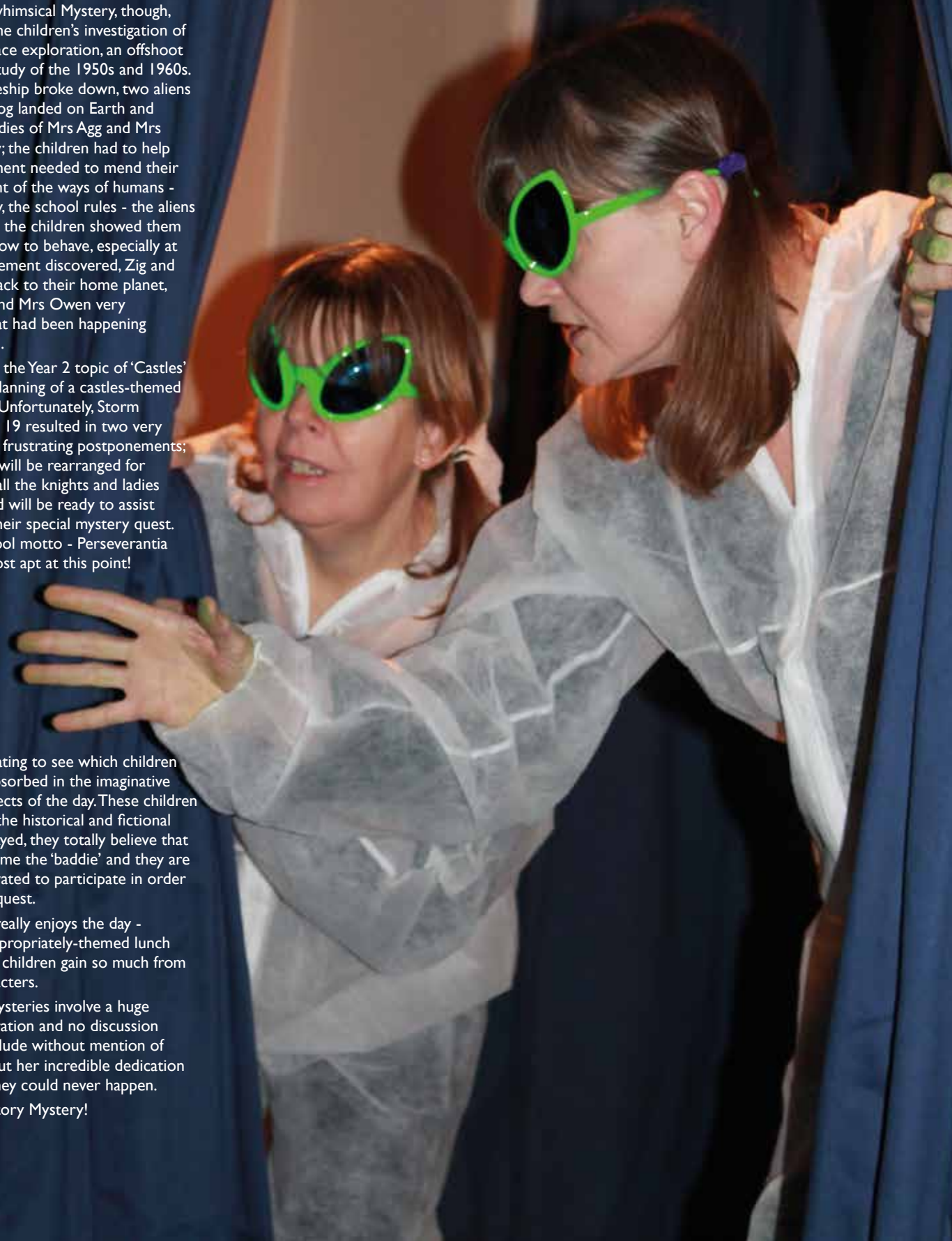
It is always fascinating to see which children get completely absorbed in the imaginative and dramatic aspects of the day. These children totally believe in the historical and fictional characters portrayed, they totally believe that they must overcome the 'baddie' and they are thus hugely motivated to participate in order to complete the quest.

While everyone really enjoys the day - complete with appropriately-themed lunch - these particular children gain so much from 'living' their characters.

Finally, History Mysteries involve a huge amount of preparation and no discussion of them can conclude without mention of Mrs Taylor; without her incredible dedication and hard work, they could never happen.

Long live the History Mystery!

WHEN THEIR SPACESHIP BROKE DOWN, TWO ALIENS NAMED ZIG AND ZOG LANDED ON EARTH AND BORROWED THE BODIES OF MRS AGG AND MRS OWEN FOR THE DAY





WE ARE CELEBRATING OUR 10TH BIRTHDAY THIS YEAR, AND WE MARKED THE OCCASION WITH A FABULOUS PARTY!

When Berkhamstead Day Nursery first opened its doors in 2012, there were just six children and four members of staff in two rooms. The intention was to create a Day Nursery that reflected the values of the highly respected Berkhamstead School, and to extend the 'Berky' experience to the very young. Berkhamstead was founded by Edna Andrews over 75 years ago as a 'happy and nurturing place,' and here at the Day Nursery, we are always mindful of this.

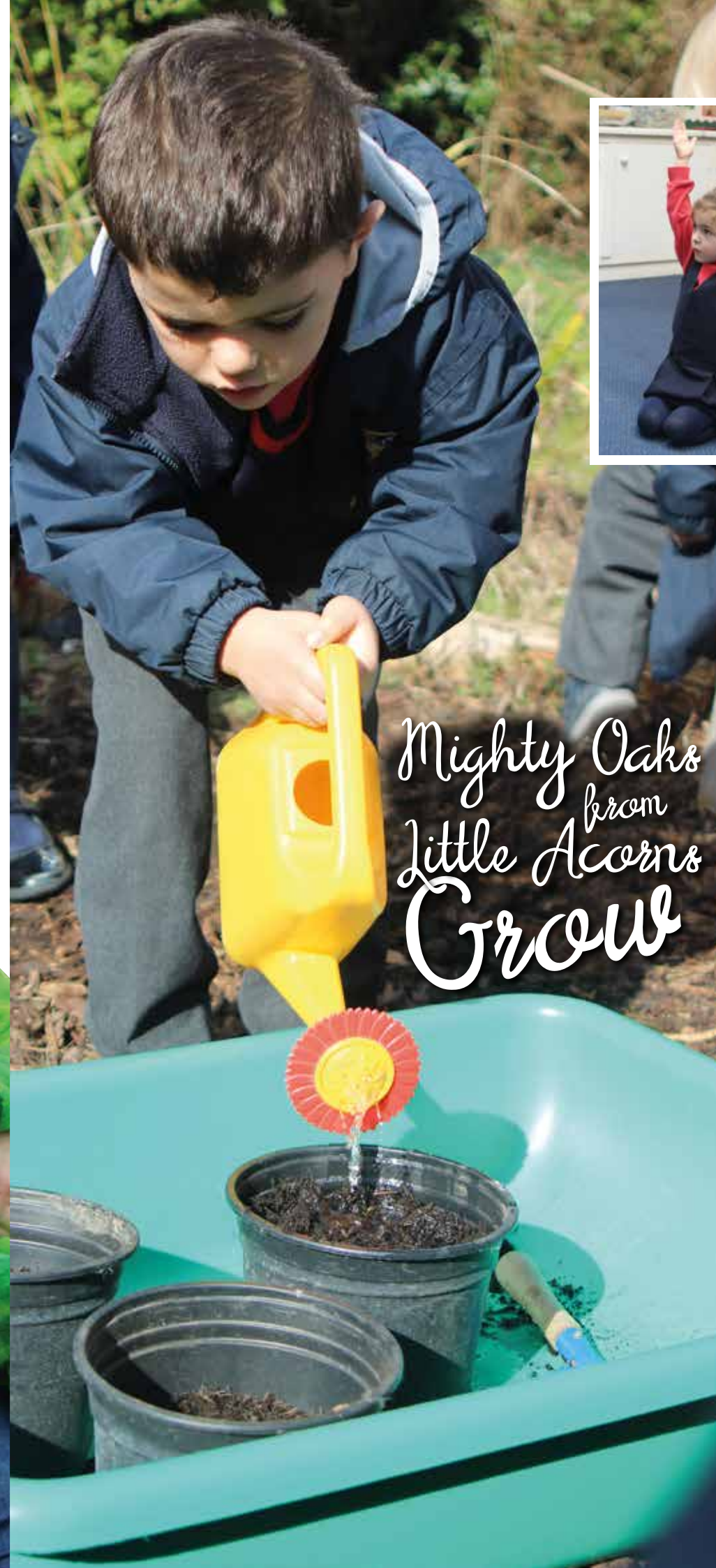
Our enviable reputation soon spread, and the Nursery quickly grew, we now have up to 140 children - from three months to school age - attending each day, and employ 30 staff to look after them! We boast five spacious and stimulating classrooms, a soft play room, a library and a sensory room. Our outside space is also noteworthy. We have an outdoor classroom, and a spacious, specially designed Early Years playground, with a fun climbing hill, a large covered sandpit and water trays. There are opportunities to get messy in the 'mud' kitchen, and the large scale construction area provides a great space for imaginative play. We also have a dedicated area for the Under 2s; a great outside space provides an abundance of learning opportunities, so our smallest children can benefit from resources such as a music wall, wooden chimes, a balancing bridge, stepping stones, a dear little kitchen area and a chalk board for mark-making.

During our 10 years, we have been inspected twice by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (in 2017 and 2019), and both times the inspection team deemed us 'outstanding' in all five areas - the highest possible grading. Both inspections highlighted the happy and nurturing atmosphere - deeply satisfying that our vision and ethos for the Day Nursery is being fulfilled.

Congratulations to Mollie and her team - Happy Birthday, Berkhamstead Day Nursery - here's to the next outstanding decade!

WORLD BOOK DAY

Our Day Nursery children need little excuse to dress up, so they were very happy to do just this for World Book Day! Everyone looked brilliant dressed up as their favourite book characters, and the dressing up day rounded up a week-long celebration of children's stories in a most fitting style!



*Mighty Oaks
from
Little Acorns
Grow*



At the beginning of the Spring term, we started our topic 'Families,' and had lots of fun in our role play area. It is always interesting listening to the children's conversations as they recreate real life situations, and demonstrate that they are kind and caring.

The children were invited to bring in their favourite story, and we enjoyed listening to why they had a particular favourite. As part of the Prep School's Platinum Award, a pupil from Year 6 visited us to read stories to the children - they were completely engaged and looked forward to her weekly visits.

Our creative interests led us to learn about Pointillism, and the artist George Seurat. To recreate his technique, the children dipped their fingers in paint to build up and mix colours to create pictures of trees, flowers and rainbows.

During Children's Mental Health Week, we thought about being calm and peaceful through practising mindfulness. The children had access to quiet spaces and glitter bottles, and calmly watched the glitter float from top to bottom. We followed simple yoga routines and listened to music whilst we lay very still with a teddy on our tummy and watched it rise and fall with our breaths. Circle Times centred around emotions and what makes us happy. We thought about our facial expressions, and the children took it in turns to pay each other a compliment. We all agreed that everyone felt brilliant after kind words!

For our topic of 'Spring into Life,' we have been caring for caterpillars, watching them change and grow into butterflies. The children enjoyed helping to feed them, and once they were big enough, we were able to move them to an indoor communal butterfly garden. Eventually we set them free in the Wildlife Garden. To better understand changes in nature and how plants grow, we planted some runner beans and watched how the roots grew below the soil and the shoots grew up towards the sun. The children named the runner beans Beanie, Bella and Jack, and we had a competition to see which one grew the fastest. MM



Reception children
have travelled...

Far, Far, Away

Our topic 'Far, Far Away' - which centred around traditional fairy tales - has provided wonderful opportunities for storytelling and drama this term. The stories' simple construction and repetitive patterns are very accessible, and thus most appealing to the children.

Each week, the children were introduced to a new story, and these included 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', 'Little Red Riding Hood' and 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'. We looked at the characters, the characters' homes, the morals of the story and the typical lay out and sequence of traditional fairy tales. During the topic there were some fantastic opportunities to retell the stories using story maps, pictures, story actions and puppets, and ultimately to write their own story! The children loved experimenting with materials to ensure the Big Bad Wolf could not blow down their houses, creating a new bridge for the Billy Goats Gruff to escape the Troll, designing their own troll using iPads, and making and tasting porridge!

Our topic 'Growing' led the children up a beanstalk to an exciting land where they became expert horticulturists, artists, and authors. They explored a variety of stories such as 'Jack in the Beanstalk,' and 'Jasper's Beanstalk,' and they also explored non-fiction.

The children then had a great time planting beans, observing the changes as the beans grew, and learning how to care for them.

Using Andy Goldsworthy as inspiration, the children became artists, creating their own Goldsworthy-style pictures using a variety of natural resources such as sticks, conkers and stones. During the busy term we also celebrated Children's Mental Health Week, World Book Day, Mothers' Day and Easter!

Early Years could not end the Spring term without a party. All the children participated in a variety of Easter games, had an 'egg-cellent time,' and agreed it was a great way to end another successful term! H R-W

This term, Year 1 has been on safari to the fascinating continent of Africa.

In English, the children came up with some very creative lists of what they would pack in their backpacks for a trip to Africa. They then heard the lovely story of the Ghanaian Goldilocks and compared it to Goldilocks and the Three Bears. The children also did some research and wrote fantastic fact files on Nelson Mandela.

We learnt all about Kenya - where it is, its typical weather patterns, what they have in Kenya - and we compared our own lives to life in Kenya. The children put their navigational skills to the test by using their compass knowledge on maps to find safari animals. Then we learnt about life in Ancient Egypt and the various ways that Egyptians used the River Nile. The children also learned about Tutankhamun and hieroglyphics, which they found fascinating.

Art has been incredibly colourful this term with the children creating sunset silhouettes, some awe-inspiring paper kente weaves and African collar necklaces using pasta as decorations. The children really enjoyed making thumb clay pots, which they carefully and meticulously designed with African-inspired patterns.

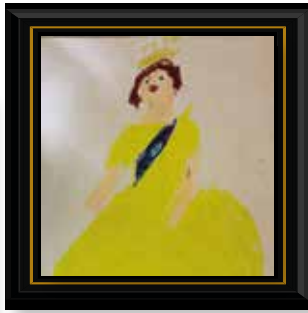
Based on our African theme, the children attended a brilliant workshop and decorated their own African Mask, sculpted from Albesian wood. They also learnt an African dance routine, which they all performed superbly at the end of the session.

The children's hard work and knowledge of Africa was showcased in our fabulous Year 1 assembly. It went brilliantly, with the children teaching their parents all about Africa, performing the dance that they learned during the workshop and enthusiastically performing their own composition of African music.

Africa has been a really exciting topic for the Year 1 children and they have thoroughly enjoyed exploring it! JM



Castle Capers!



This term Year 2 have been transported back in time to explore medieval castles in Britain. Features of a castle have been studied and the children were eager to use the iPads to find out facts about how castles were defended and attacked. The school was full of knights and medieval maidens when we found out all about jobs within a castle. The children discovered all about various roles and had to apply for a job within a castle. Hot seating for interviews made us realise that actually, despite being brave and skilled swordsmen, we did not want to become knights! Inspired by the castle theme, the children created their own stories filled with exciting story language, plenty of description and interesting plots! The children were amazed when their stories were tied together to make their own books, which Year 2 thoroughly enjoyed reading to Reception children on World Book Day.

Paul Klee inspired the children's art work. After studying his 'Castle and Sun' the children created their own collage castle and water colour masterpiece using a range of techniques and effects. Towers were created with clay and the children were fascinated to see how the kiln works. Their wonderful, glazed turrets and battlements can be found on display in the classrooms.

Of course, we had to visit a castle. Our trip to Warwick Castle was a highlight of the term as the children experienced first-hand what it was really like to live and work in a castle. AS



PITTING THEIR WITS

Quizzing is becoming a growing feature of life at Berkhamstead and the school has competed in two competitions this term. Two Berky quartets contested the National Schools' Quiz Championships in March. Both teams showed their impressive range of general knowledge but didn't quite score enough points to progress to the next stage. Congratulations to Barnaby W, Joseph W, Alastair M, Evie W, Zoe B, Seb C, Wilf M and Rishik R on representing the school with such pride and enthusiasm. Towards the end of term, Berkhamstead participated in its first ever fixture in the Gloucestershire Schools' Wildlife Quiz. Our team of Isabel C, Harry H, Ben A and Amelia J demonstrated a very wide range of knowledge about British flora and fauna to emerge 31-23 winners. A berth in the next round of the championship awaits these keen quizzers next term. MC

News FROM PREP

AUGMENTED REALITY

With technology at our fingertips, there are endless exciting opportunities to enhance our teaching here at Berky, and with this mind, recent additions to our Computing equipment have included the purchase of Spheros, Kubos Robots, MacBooks, Crumbles and Micro Bits. Never one to stand still, Head of Computing, Mr Banks constantly reigs and improves the computing curriculum, and has introduced 'Augmented Reality' to Year 6's computing lessons this term. Augmented Reality (AR) involves adding computer-generated graphics into the live view of a phone camera - or in our case, a tablet - so that the children are able to feel as if there are objects in the classroom that are not actually there. This happens in real time and enables children to learn in a more interactive way. Our oldest pupils have been loving these lessons, and have used AR very imaginatively to recreate scenes from fairy tales. They have also built bridges to carry a truck from one side of a road to the other using AR!

There are plans to use AR in more lessons, across more subjects and in different age groups: imagine learning about the organs of the human body and being able to interact with the heart, on a space in front of you without the mess! Using AR models of the heart, the children can look inside and follow the tubes to the chambers. Watch this space for further developments!



FOOTBALL

Well over 100 of the Berky community enjoyed an afternoon of football during the half term break. Cheltenham Town FC took on Crewe Alexandra at the 'Jonny-Rocks' stadium in Whaddon Road, and although Crewe scored in the last 10 minutes to win the game 2-1, spirits weren't dampened - everyone had a great time!

CODING WORKSHOPS

Children from other schools have also been benefiting from our resources, and Mr Banks' expertise. Armed with Spheros and iPads, he has visited two local state primary schools to run coding workshops for Year 6, both of which have been very successful. 'Sharing our resources and knowledge is rewarding and benefits our local schools,' enthuses Mr Banks, 'The children in both schools could code on a screen but they had never coded a robot before. The reaction from the children when they created some code and ran it was amazing!' The plan is to roll out the workshops to more schools next term.





THE RETURN OF THE Spring Concerts!

What an incredible thrill to be staging two wonderful Spring Concerts in the beautiful Pittville Pump Rooms again this year! In our last concert, in March 2019, the current Y6 were in Y3 and some members of Y5 performed as Y2, but otherwise this was a new experience!

And what an experience!

The glorious setting of the Pump Rooms, a splendid concert stage and thrilling musical performances from all our many ensembles showcased musicians and singers from all Y2 to Y6.

The afternoon concert featured a composition 'The last Dragon of Grindley' by Y2 with every child playing an instrument and contributing to an exciting and atmospheric story. Stringed instrument groups continued with Jigsaw and Berky Bows, demonstrating skill and energy in their rhythmic performances of Drunken Sailor and Midnight Highway and a beautifully expressive Skye Boat Song. We enjoyed

Swing Low and Rocking all over the World from a lively Guitar Club and then the exhilarating sounds created by our new percussion ensemble, Berky Beats. With a decibel warning issued and hands firmly over ears amongst the youngest (and some others) in the audience, Mr Peverelle directed his skilful group with a March to Lunch and a delightfully contrasting improvisational item, Puzzle Piece.

Powerful percussion sounds were also very much in evidence as the thrilling Y3 and Y4 Samba Band took to the stage with Samba Recycled. Concentration and great rhythmic skills were obvious as every player watched and responded instantly to Mrs Sallis and her whistle! Finally, all Y3 and Y4 combined their beautiful voices in Junior Choir's performances of Go the Distance and Hot Chocolate!

The evening concert continued with some of our more advanced ensembles showing their strengths and amazing development

of ensemble skills. This is particularly significant since they have not had these experiences for the last 2 years. Keyboard players entertained us with their lively renditions of Believe by Imagine Dragons and a Pirates of the Caribbean theme, led by Mr Sharp. Razzamajazz includes all our brass and wind players with a rhythm section of percussion and bass and their upbeat performances of Gospel Rock and Tequila were enthusiastically received. Mr Trim's Chamber Ensemble showed skilful and expressive playing in Irish Gig and Whirligig, both of which suited their distinctive sound.

Singing is a big part of music at Berky from Berky Bears in the Day Nursery to VoxBox in Y5 and Y6 and it was delightful to hear their songs from Cats sung with precision and neatly choreographed.

In this very special year of renewal, a resounding finale was called for and all the Prep children combined with their enthusiastic rendering of Roald Dahl's musical The Three Little Pigs. With a strong choir of Y3, Y4 and Y5 backing them, Y6 led the story with narrators and actors (multiple pigs, wolves and two Red Riding Hoods!)

The enjoyment, excitement and confidence on stage was clear to see and this was a truly thrilling culmination of our Spring Concerts 2022. PM



MAGNIFICENT MOSAIC-MAKERS!

Year 6 have been involved in a very exciting and creative project this term: mosaic making! The children's brief was to come up with designs based on flora and fauna, which were then to be mosaicked during a two-day workshop led by TomatoJack Arts. Our oldest pupils learnt how to carefully cut the tiles into the correct size and shape, and then how to apply each tile following a

colour by numbers type plan. The children made eight stunning panels, featuring all manner of plants and creatures, ready to adorn especially made planters for the new Prep well-being/eco garden. Head of art, Mrs Bareham commented, 'The children have thoroughly enjoyed making the mosaics, and they are extra special as they will become a legacy of their time at Berkhamstead.'

News

FROM PREP

MUSIC NEWS

One Friday in February, the Prep Hall was filled with the sounds of gongs, cymbals and drums as children from Years 4 - 6 learnt how to create the rhythms and texture of Chinese music for a Lion dance and the traditional Dragon dance. Fantastic costumes and dancing resulted in a lively and colourful workshop with lots of rhythmic percussion! PM

MUSIC EXAM RESULTS

Initial Grade: Will H (Piano*), Nina C (Piano)
Grade 1: Arwen H (Recorder), Barnaby W (Piano*), Freddie L (Cornet**), Ben R (Piano**)
Grade 2: Jacob F (Cornet)
Grade 3: Ted L (Piano**)
* Denotes pass with merit ** Denotes pass with distinction



ALL THE RIGHT MOVES

The school chess clubs have been very busy with the Y3 pupils meeting every Monday and all the older children attending their club on a Thursday. The quality of chess being played remains very high and some of the battles have proved extremely eye-catching. It is now two years since Berky played a chess fixture against another school and it is with expectation and hope that, in the Summer term, we can enjoy the cut and thrust of competitive chess once again. One eagerly awaited event is the staff versus school match and this should take place after Easter. MC



CROSS COUNTRY

It has been a very successful cross country season! Berky has been represented at two more events this term and we have had runners in the top 10 at every event. The first event at Cheltenham College was a flat race, but the course was wet, which made it harder for our runners to stay on their feet. The second event was at St Edward's which included the steep hill. Our runners seem to prefer hilly courses, and they picked off runners from other schools as they made their way to the top. In the Year 6 events, Max H, Otto S and Ben J ran very good races. Lydia M, Ella H, Ben R and Tom R all ran in the Year 5 and Under races, with Lydia and Ella both finishing in the top 50 in both events. These four were brilliant considering other runners were a year older than them! Max and Otto both qualified for the county race which took place at St Edward's. This was a tough event and the boys were representing Cheltenham district. Otto and Max's positive and determined mindset meant that Max finished 5th, whilst Otto finished 15th! The top 10 runners in this race went on to represent the county in a national race which was held in Leicestershire, and so Max qualified for this. This was a difficult race; the standard was very high with the best runners in the country taking part. Max did amazingly well though and finished 31st out of 160 runners.

Well done to all those who have taken part in the cross country events this year. DB

HOUSE CAPTAINS

Congratulations to these Year 6 pupils who were elected House Captains at the beginning of the Spring term. Being a House Captain is a privilege and a responsibility, and needless to say, the staff found it a very difficult decision choosing these four pupils as we have so many fantastic children in Year 6. But we were delighted with our final choice, and we are confident that these exemplary pupils will act as superb role models for their younger counterparts. The pupils joined the existing four elected earlier in the school year.

AND SO THE Adventure BEGINS



A CRAVING FOR ADVENTURE AND 'HAVING A GO' IS AT THE HEART OF OUR PLATINUM AWARD

To commemorate the school's 70th anniversary in 2015, Mr Cross launched his own junior version of the Duke of Edinburgh Award, and named it the Platinum Award. It embraces the school motto, Perseverantia Vincit, (Perseverance Wins), and was aimed at our oldest girls and boys in Years 5 and 6. Our pupils are quite used to having successes applauded within school, but Mr Cross felt it was time to spread the net further, and to celebrate the achievements of the children who also participate in a huge range of activities outside school. However, rather than completing the award overnight, it was designed to take a few terms - to encourage children to learn to commit to a project.

The award is all about creating a thirst for adventure and having a go at new challenges. Its aim is to develop healthy lifestyles, community spirit and resilience, qualities that we believe are fundamental in developing happy, focused and successful children. All-round achievement is the key to this award rather than mere attainment, and it should be a fulfilling and joyful experience; over the last few years it has certainly captured the children's imaginations.

Children who wish to take part are given their own logbook to track their progress in four areas: Volunteering, Physical, Skills and a Residential Adventure or Expedition. Volunteering is all about choosing to help others or causes. These could be the community within or outside school, the environment or perhaps helping look after animals. All children in Year 6 have leadership responsibilities, but they are encouraged to develop this role to achieve the award. Some listen to younger pupils read, (current Year 6 pupils, Oscar, Lucinda and Zoe are enjoying doing just this), while others in the past have, for instance, helped elderly neighbours with everyday errands. Lucinda is also keen to raise money for the Alzheimer's Society as her grandmother suffers from dementia, and Manas has volunteered with Cheltenham Open Door - and last Christmas - Gloucester Royal Hospital's paediatric ward.

Meanwhile, Jacob, one of our brilliant Year 6 eco-warrior leaders, collected all his neighbours' soft plastic every week for a month.

To pass the Physical section, the children must undertake two activities. These might be hockey or dance, rock climbing or archery. Ena is planning to set herself walking and running challenges, (while simultaneously raising money for The National Deaf Children's Society and Steps - a hip dysplasia charity) while Zoe is swimming, cycling and walking 354km - which is the length of the River Severn! The children know that they must commit to these activities for at least three months - always remembering the school motto - Perseverantia Vincit. Learning a new skill is always a challenge. Many children are keen to learn a second musical instrument or to pick up a new sport, but we have also had more unusual ideas such as sushi making or making jewellery. The aim of the Adventure section is that the children must undertake their two adventures or expeditions over two years - in Years 5 and 6. These can be school residential expeditions, or adventures that happen out of school. The children record their activities in the logbook which, once completed, they present to Mr Cross. If he chooses to give them their award, they are given a certificate, a t-shirt and a badge to wear on their blazer. And at speech day, the pupil or pupils with the most impressive logbook are presented with a trophy.

Mr Cross has been delighted with the uptake over the last few years and enthuses, "I have been thrilled with the quality of the logbooks that the children have produced. I knew that we had many talented and intelligent children at Berky, but I now also know that we have many who are determined and considerate and who show perseverance. This Award has shown many of our pupils what is possible with regard to developing new skills, improving fitness, supporting others and having adventures."

Mr Cross is looking forward to seeing Year 6's completed logbooks later this year.



Ohh we go...

LEARNING BROUGHT TO LIFE FOR
OUR INQUISITIVE PUPILS



THE COMMANDERY

As part of our study on the Stuarts, the Year 5s enjoyed a wonderful visit to the Commandery in Worcester. They took part in a variety of activities which focussed on everyday life in Stuart times, as well as handling arms and armour from the Civil War. The children experienced what it would be like to be a marching soldier whilst carrying a pike. In addition we experienced how wounded soldiers would have been treated on the battlefield. Part of our day involved trying on clothing and handling other artefacts, which the children very much enjoyed. We finished the day with a quick tour of the wonderful buildings, which covered several periods of history. The Year 5s enjoyed it very much. PMcC



SKILLZONE

At the start of January, Years 4, 5 and 6 children went on trips to SkillZONE in Gloucester. SkillZONE is a fantastic purpose-built environment for learning all about different types of safety. The Year 4 and 5 children visited the Water Safety, Park, House, Building Site, Electricity Substation, Road and Farm areas, whilst the Year 6 visited the Magistrate's Court, a Police Custody Suite, Dark Alley, Train and Bus Safety areas. A new addition this year was the introduction of an interactive mobile phone area where the children could all learn how to make a 999 call. Usually the SkillZONE trip is only for Year 4 and Year 6, but this year Year 5 visited too as they had missed this valuable learning experience last year due to Covid. Everyone agreed that they had learned something new about how to keep themselves safe whilst having an interesting and fun time. Our thanks again to the wonderful volunteer guides. MB



CRICKLEY HILL

Kindergarten had a brilliant time at Crickley Hill enjoying a 'Mini-Beast Spring-Time Bop'. The sun shone brightly, and the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust staff had planned a morning packed full of nature-inspired activities including stories, bug hunts, treasure hunts, den building and nature crafts. We thoroughly enjoyed the morning, and hope to visit again soon! MM



DETECTIVE WORKSHOP

Year 6 were visited for the morning by Jenny Williams who previously worked for the police. She led our pupils on a variety of brilliant, hands-on activities demonstrating how science is used to capture criminals. The pupils learnt all about finger printing and chromatography, all the time developing science skills already picked up in their lessons. The use of DNA from living cells such as blood or hair roots, dental records or skeletal information was also discussed. To conclude the exciting morning, the pupils were given a crime scene and had to explain what happened by investigating a variety of clues on a body such as mobile phone, invitation to a party, jelly baby in the mouth and many more. The pupils had a great time and entered into the spirit of things throughout the morning. TM



WARWICK CASTLE

Wandering through the great hall at Warwick Castle, Year 2 were amazed by the knights, the medieval weapons and chainmail! Climbing to the top of the Conqueror's Fortress gave amazing views of the whole castle including the huge trebuchet. A visit to the Peacock Garden and Horrible Histories Maze further sparked the children's enquiring minds - with great acting skills in the stocks! AS



CHEPSTOW CASTLE

This term, a group of very excited Year 4 children travelled over the border to visit the magnificent Chepstow Castle. We started with a tour of the castle and learned much about the defences and uses of various parts of the castle. We also had a workshop learning about the weapons that were used in Medieval times as well as the clothing that was worn. The children had the opportunity to handle swords, shields, poleaxes, longbows and a variety of other implements, as well as trying on mail shirts, armour and a variety of other garments. Although the weather was a little on the wet side, in typical Berky fashion, the children embraced the experience and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. We had a fantastic day, which really enhanced the children's learning of the Middle Ages. PMcC





U8 | FOOTBALL

This was a fantastic football season for the boys. They dominated the majority of their matches and only lost one game and drew another between the two teams. All of the boys worked hard to improve their skill level and contribute towards the matches. There is an impressive skill level that the boys have which has been demonstrated regularly on the pitch. With the development of team work, getting into better space and more movement off the ball, this year group will be a force to be reckoned with in the future. A brilliant season of football: well played to all of the boys! TM

U8 Team: Hughie B, Oliver B, Leo C, Lucas DCV, Jacob D, Jack F, Charlie F, Fergus G, Jack H, Miles H, Atlas M, Rishik R, Toby R, Isaac SR, Charlie W, Jasper W



U9 A/B | FOOTBALL

Both sides have worked hard in training and have displayed 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. It wasn't a very successful season for either team: both struggled at times in defence but still managed to retain their enthusiasm. The As changed their goalkeepers on a weekly basis but were still unable to stem the flow of goals as we suffered heavy defeats at the hands of RPS, Beaudesert and Cheltenham Prep. The Bs, on the other hand, found some consistency with their defence and goalkeeper and did record a victory against Wycliffe and were unlucky to not record victories against St Edward's and King's. The As, despite having endless chances in the opposing team's penalty area, could never quite finish well worked moves and ended the season goalless with their best effort coming in the last game of the season against King's to record a 0-0 draw. The boys always played with an enormous amount of energy and enthusiasm and have been a pleasure to coach. Well done, boys! SM

U9A Team: George E, George J, Edward L, Alastair M, Wilfred M, Zack P, Sidney R, Ben W
U9B Team: Dylan B, Jack F, Hugo H, Freddie L, Luis M-R, Owen P, Isaac R, Thomas R, Ben R, Ben S



U10A | FOOTBALL

The U10A team have had a great football season. There have been lots of fixtures and the weather has been kind. The first match was against Hatherop, and although we lost, a lot was learnt. Next the boys travelled to Rendcomb, and this was a good win: lots of goals were scored and positive attacking play was in evidence. After this, the boys played Kitebrook at home: a close game, in which the boys played very well, particularly on the counterattack, and they won! The next match was against Beaudesert, and this was a convincing win with lots of goals scored. The week before half term, the boys played St Edward's, and this was probably the most challenging match all season. Both teams played well, and it finished in a draw. After half term, two more matches were played: one against Wycliffe (a loss unfortunately), but the final game of the season was against King's, Gloucester; the boys won this match convincingly. An excellent way to finish the season. DB

U10A Team: Ben A, Freddy B, Victor B, Seb C, Tom C-G, Will H, Harry H, Joseph W

U10B | FOOTBALL

This proved a rather difficult season for the U10B lads who often faced more accomplished and physical footballers in their matches. Bertie L provided plenty of energy for the team and his enthusiastic running and fitness gave the team 'an extra man' at times. Gideon T was the team's most improved player; his keen defending and distribution caught the eye often. The most exciting match of the season was the narrow 4-3 defeat against St. Edward's. Berkhamstead found themselves 4-1 down with five minutes on the clock to play but mounted a spectacular comeback to trail by a single goal when the final whistle was blown. I congratulate the players on a season high on endeavour and spirit. MC

U10B Team: Ben A, Cameron J, Bertie L, Floyd R, Ben S, Gideon T



U11 | FOOTBALL

I have been so impressed with how the U11 team have developed this term. Their effort and commitment from the start of the season has never been in doubt. However, the improvement in skills and the evolving cohesiveness of the team has been very impressive. They always worked hard for each other and celebrated each others successes.

We began the season strongly with comfortable victories against Hatherop and Rendcomb. However, it was a couple of losses against strong opponents in Kitebrook and St Edward's where we learned the most about ourselves. We took this into our other games and started to keep possession for longer periods, as well as working effectively off the ball.

Highlights were a fantastic 4-3 victory over Beaudesert, a high class 0-0 draw against Wycliffe and an excellent 1-0 win against King's, Gloucester. All of these games were very entertaining and were enjoyed by our supporters.

Every member of the team played their part and they developed both individually and collectively over the course of the term. Well done, to all of the team. PMcC

U11 Team: Reuben A, Manas A, Sam B, Oscar C-S, Jacob D-T, Jacob F, Max H, Ben J, Felix S, Otto S, Barnaby W (All awarded colours)
Outstanding awards: Max H, Ben J, Otto S



U8 | NETBALL

The U8 teams played lots of matches. As the season progressed, we saw better marking and better field position from the girls. They played very well and won most of their matches. With BEE netball in full swing across schools the girls got to grips quickly with the set up. Our movement around the court space was getting better every lesson, and with no set positions all girls got plenty of shooting opportunities. They have all, at times, been able to pass the ball with accuracy and power which has allowed them to move the ball down court. There was great improvement as the season went on with some very strong passes from a handful of girls and some solid interceptions! Well done girls for your first netball season, great effort by all. MT

U8 Team: Annabelle A, Rose B, Polly B, Isabella B, Lara C, Harriet C-W, Rosie E, Amelia E, Melba F, Charlotte H, Olivia M, Matilda M, Florence P-T, Hannah P, Allegra S, Diana S, Evelyn W, Yaz Y



U9 | NETBALL

Once again, I have been thoroughly impressed by the attitude and the sporting behaviour of the Under 9s at netball this term. They have thoroughly enjoyed playing Bee Netball and have certainly shown dedication to all its values; Bee proud, Bee fair, Bee friendly, Bee strong, Bee yourself and Bee together. When scores were kept, we had a very balanced season with 2 wins, 2 draws and 2 losses. During training sessions, the girls have been developing their skills in the 7-aside format too and have progressed tremendously over the season. It has been wonderful to see the enjoyment they clearly have when playing netball in all its forms and the house matches were certainly fast and furious. Well done, girls! C McC

U9 Team: Claudia C, Harriet E, Eva H, Kitty H, Ella H, Charlotte J, Ara K, Estella L, Lydia M, Coco P, Ellie P, Millie R, Mollie R, Georgiana S, Olivia W



U10 | NETBALL

This has certainly been a tricky term with so many matches cancelled due to Covid and the weather! However, the girls have enjoyed some successes and have developed their match skills. Having missed the previous year of netball, the girls' skills were rather rusty to begin with. They have worked hard, individually and as a team to improve their understanding and confidence when playing in a match - spreading out and using space to their advantage. I am sure when they come to play netball in Year 6, they will remember to drive onto the ball and look for those strong, long passes! There has been some confident shooting and defensive play amongst the girls. Well done, ladies! JH

U10 Team: Alba N, Alexa S, Alina G, Amelia J, Arwen H, Carly H, Chloe M, Chloe H, Emily B, Emilia F, Emma C, Esha D, Esi D, Erin P, Erin R, Frankie H, Georgia E, Lettie W, Nina C, Sophia B, Tatty H, Yvie L



U11 | NETBALL

Well, what a season! We started off strongly with all games in full swing. Netball got hit by Covid over previous years and England Netball changed how netball is played in primary schools, and there was a lot for the girls to learn. We worked well and had some brilliant games in the first half term. Each girl has played her role well and adapted as and when needed. Modern netball is about being versatile and having the skills and attributes to play a variety of positions, and many of the girls have worked hard on their range of skills. Unfortunately, during the second half of term, we had a few fixtures cancelled due to Covid and weather - such a shame as they would have been tough competition. They worked so hard on their movement around court and the fluency of their game improved greatly. Our passing became stronger and more accurate, preventing the opposition intercepting. A handful of girls have shown their natural strength in defence, working hard on marking and interceptions. Most girls have worked hard on their shooting this year; I have seen some great improvement and skill development. A core few girls have shown their strength in centre court, supporting play and being quick and agile. Well done girls, it has been a pleasure to coach you, and I can't wait to hear your netball tales from your next schools! CK

U11 Team: Georgia A, Ellie A, Ellie B, Zoe B, Nancy B, Isabel C, Katy C, Thea C, Sophia E, Chloe E, Lucinda F, Maisie G, Isabel G, Vivienne H, Isla J, Ena M-L, Edith M, Primrose P, Katy P, Isla R, Zoe S, Alice S, Hettie W, Sydney W (All awarded colours)
Outstanding Awards: Nancy B, Maisie G, Vivienne H, Primrose P, Isla R, Hettie W

BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

THE

Perfect Grounding for Every Sport

GOING THE EXTRA MILE

Extracurricular sports clubs are an important and regular feature of the Berky calendar. All of our pupils are given a grounding in the basic skills in all of our major sports in their PE and games lessons, and our Prep School pupils play competitive sport all year round. With this in mind, our pupils are encouraged to participate in sports clubs. Those available to children from Years 3 - 6 during the Spring term have included after-school netball, football and fencing, lunchtime boys' hockey club and netball shooting. Shown here is our popular, early morning Friday running club, the aim of which is to develop fitness and race tactics and, most importantly, to have plenty of fun! Mr McCreanor has run the club here for 17 years.



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