



BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL



**FRIDAY 27TH MARCH
SPRING TERM**

NEWS FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Parents,

It has been a wonderfully busy and enjoyable final week of term, filled with enriching experiences, special events and many smiles as we bring the Spring Term to a close.

Head of Religious Studies, Mrs Smith, organised a wonderful Pre-Prep Easter Experience for Years 1 and 2, which took place on Tuesday. With the support of three of her friends, the morning brought the Easter story to life through a series of engaging activities. In one session, the children reflected on the meaning of the cross, writing their hopes in chalk on a large cross and decorating their own crosses with buttons. Another activity focused on Palm Sunday, where the children acted out the story, explored the meaning of 'Hosanna', and wrote prayers on palm leaves. In another classroom, the children gathered to hear the Easter story told using beautiful wooden play equipment. Meanwhile, another group brought to life the events of the Last Supper and Jesus' time with his disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane through drama. The children rotated between each activity, thoroughly enjoying this immersive and meaningful experience. Thank you so much to Mrs Smith and her friends.

On Wednesday, our House Cross Country event took place. Every child from Years 3 to 6 competed, displaying fantastic energy, determination and sportsmanship. An impressive six school records were broken: Penny S and Oliver N (Y3), Kitty L and Thomas H (Y4), Rupert S (Y5) and Edith H (Y6) – well done to all our Prep pupils for showcasing some outstanding athletic performances. Congratulations to St Patrick's, who emerged as the winning house.

DIARY DATES

THE WEEK AHEAD

Monday 20th April

Summer Term begins

Friday 24th April

8:30am Visiting Head Assembly
- Mr Morton, King's Gloucester

Saturday 25th April

10am Chess Congress open
to Year 2 and Prep, book your
place on Magic Booking





BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

NEWS FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL CONTINUED

The Prep Spring Recital took place on Thursday after school and provided an opportunity for our young musicians to perform again. The audience was treated to a delightful repertoire, and it was a joy to see the pupils' confidence, musicality and hard work shining through in each performance. Also on Thursday, our Wildlife Quiz Team (Nancy A, Betty D, Rupert S and Magnus D) competed against Warden Hill in an exciting and closely fought competition. The result was 36-33 to Berkhampstead, who are now through to the Cheltenham Semi-finals. Well done to our quiz team for their impressive knowledge of the natural world!

We were delighted to take part in the Malvern St James Art Exhibition on Saturday, which showcased a wonderful selection of artwork from local Prep Schools. The standard of work on display was exceptional, and we are especially proud to celebrate five of our pupils who were awarded Highly Commended in their age categories: Billie O'H (Reception), Evelyn F-B (Y1), Eleanor Z (Y2), Heath G (Y4) and Edith H (Y6). A fantastic achievement - well done to all involved!

I am very much looking forward to our Easter Service at All Saints' this afternoon with our Pre-Prep and Early Years children. A highlight will be the awarding of the Sally Lee Kindness Cup to Verity B (IML), and the event promises to be a delightful and fitting end to the Spring Term. Congratulations also to the latest recipient of the Gill Agg Kindness Cup, awarded in assembly this morning to Amara M (6L). Both pupils have shown outstanding kindness and consideration for others - well done!

Wishing you all a happy, peaceful and restful Easter break.

Michelle Bareham

Michelle Bareham
Head of School





BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL



NEWS FROM KINDERGARTEN

Excitement for Easter has been building this week in Kindergarten. The children thoroughly enjoyed an Easter egg hunt during our Forest School session, searching high and low for colourful eggs with great enthusiasm.

In the classroom, we have been developing our maths skills by counting up to five chicks in their nests and exploring what happens when we add one more. The children have shown growing confidence and curiosity in their counting.

Our focus book this week has been *The Rhyming Rabbit* by Julia Donaldson. The children have thoroughly enjoyed the story, particularly exploring the rabbit's emotions, such as loneliness and joy. We have also been identifying the many rhyming words in the book, which has inspired the children to generate their own rhyming pairs.

At the art table, the children have been busy creating Easter cards to take home, choosing whether to use pastel-coloured paints, tissue paper collage or a combination of both. They are very excited to share their creations, and we are especially proud of the care they have taken when writing their names inside.

The children have also loved learning spring-themed songs in recent weeks, including our favourite, "Spring Chicken". They have worked hard to learn the words and actions, showing excellent listening skills and great enthusiasm when performing.

Despite the chilly weather, our outdoor area has remained full of activity. The children have been delighted by our new equipment, including the mud kitchen, where they have enjoyed imaginative play with pots and pans. Water play has also been very popular, with children using ladles and spoons to fill Easter eggs with coloured water - supporting both concentration and fine motor skills.

We wish all our families a wonderful Easter break and look forward to welcoming the children back, refreshed and ready for a fun-filled Summer Term in Kindergarten. LS



BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL
EARLY YEARS VALUES TREE

THIS WEEK'S AWARDS
Leaves: Mylo O-H, Cece O,
Louis T, Bea C



BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

NEWS FROM RECEPTION

This week has been full of energy and growing confidence across our Reception classrooms. We are especially proud of the fantastic progress in phonics! The children are now applying their sound knowledge with increasing independence in both their reading and writing, which is a wonderful milestone to see. Alongside this, their love of stories continues to flourish. Sharing books together remains at the heart of our days, with teachers also reading individually with pupils daily to nurture a genuine enjoyment of reading while also accelerating their progress. We are so very proud of their achievements!

Our "busy learning time" has been a hive of imagination and collaboration this week. The children have particularly enjoyed working together to build impressive castles, thoughtfully decorating them with a variety of loose parts and shiny gems! These moments not only spark creativity but also develop teamwork and problem-solving skills.

In mathematics, we have been exploring repeating patterns with great enthusiasm. Whether using movements - such as claps, stamps and jumps, or classroom resources, they have demonstrated a strong understanding of repeating patterns in fun and engaging ways.

We are so looking forward to our Spring Service at All Saints' Church this afternoon. The children have been preparing beautifully, including writing their own collaborative acrostic poem - SPRING! Their joyful singing is sure to make the occasion very special - it will truly be a treat to see and hear them perform. Z M-S



THIS WEEK'S AWARDS

Berky Bear: Ralph H and Orson D
Leaves: Theodore Co, Jack G, Toby S and Eliza J.





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NEWS FROM PREP

The past few weeks in the Prep school have been especially busy, with all of our fantastic everyday lessons going on alongside some 'end of Spring Term' happenings - all of which tie into our school values of perseverance, resilience and teamwork.

Within many classes over the past few weeks, pupils have completed some end of term assessments. Teachers use the results, alongside their everyday ongoing observations, to build a picture of each child, identify what learning has 'stuck' and if there are any gaps or misconceptions that need to be addressed. While these are not always as 'fun' and interactive as normal lessons, they are a necessary part of education and each and every child has tried their best during every quiz - we couldn't ask for more and we're proud of their resilience and spirit.

The second 'end of term' special event were the house matches; an intraschool competition between the four houses: St Andrew's (Blue Bonanza!), St David's (Up the Yellows!), St George's (Reds Rule!) and St Patrick's (Go Greens!). The Year 3s and 4s, and the 5s and 6s, from each house, form a kind of superteam and compete against opposition in football and netball, with the results impacting the termly House Competition. At the time of going to press, results are not yet confirmed, but it always proves to be a nail-biting and exciting time! It's absolutely brilliant to see pupils work together and encourage each other to achieve; the pride they show is a joy to see.

The next end of term event was the truly ultra special Spring Concert; our very own super-musician Mrs Mitchell arranged the two most fabulous shows, featuring children from Year 2 to Year 6, featuring strings, guitars, drums, voices and everything in between. The show really captured the essence of how brilliant individuals can come together and, through effort, support and teamwork, produce the most fantastic outcomes. From Mrs Sallis's banging Samba band, through Berky Bows, Jigsaw and the Y2 instrumentalists, Chamber Ensemble, VoxBox, Razzamajazz, Rock Guitar Club and Berky Beats, to the Junior Choir. It was such a pleasure to witness the entirety of the school excel; it really encompassed what Berky is all about.

Our final end of term special was the House Cross Country race, an event where all pupils take part in a race around the Victoria Ground, showing their perseverance, resilience and ability to take on a challenge! Again, they compete as a house team, so each result counts, whether the finish towards the front, middle or end of the runners. The feel of the race was warm and supportive, even if the weather wasn't quite on our side! A lovely event to punctuate the end of a super term, with some records smashed and smiles all round. Happy Easter all! KJ





BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL



NEWS AROUND THE SCHOOL

SPRING TERM COMPUTING

This term has seen some fantastic use of technology to support and enhance the learning of pupils across the school. Innovative use of technology is a key part of modern schooling, but we firmly believe that this must go alongside a wide range of teaching and learning techniques; we always consider whether the use of devices will add value to a lesson and whether it is purposeful and appropriate for the learner. We also like to ensure pupils don't have too much screentime, so, as a staff body, we track average screentime so we can maintain a sensible balance.



In Reception this term, pupils have used Apple pencils and iPads to create David Hockney inspired art; selecting colours and textures using the Sketchbook app, before sharing the efforts with their friends. Within Pre-Prep, pupils also directly access devices sparingly, with a focus on maths fluency

using White Rose's One Minute Maths app, and their internet research skills, using the child-friendly search engine Kiddle to find out about Indian animals, ready for writing their information texts within English lessons. Within Pre-Prep Computing lessons, Year 1 have coded utilising the Scratch Junior platform, while Year 2 have created digital information posters using Book Creator, which also featured photos they took themselves of Indian artefacts. After Easter, our Year 2s will embark on Times Tables Rockstars, initially focusing on their 2, 5 and 10 times tables. In Reception, iPads have only been used for one main project this half term, while in Pre-Prep, device usage has averaged between half an hour to an hour per week. Online safety is woven into these lessons; teaching children how to stay safe online is absolutely fundamental.



In the Prep school, technology has been used to enhance learning in a number of ways. Computing lessons often, but don't always, feature screentime; balancing between working on a tablet or laptop as well as partner work and paper planning and assessment tasks is important. Over the term, our Year 6 pupils have explored Augmented Reality apps, as well as creating their own AR films, recording content using ARMaker before editing it within the iMovie app. Year 5s have learned about



spreadsheets, entering and organising data as well as utilising formulae to calculate, while Year 4s have recently started creating their own movie posters within the KeyNote app, using photo-editing skills alongside core digital literacy techniques, manipulating digital documents. Year 3s have even been exploring the world of podcasting, using Garageband, one of Apple's native apps.

All pupils have also completed coding activities, with Year 3s looking at sequencing, Year 4s focusing on iteration, Year 5s on conditions and Year 6 on variables. Alongside Computing lessons, technology is used in a variety of ways; within Year 5 and Year 6 Maths, Mr Lovell is able to provide questions via Showbie app; pupils will then work out and answer these questions on paper. This allows a more personalised question set for learners. The use of Times Tables Rockstars boosts multiplication skills, while Linguascope and Duolingo supports MFL learning.



Year 5 have used the Maker's Empire app to design and produce 3D printed board games pieces, while some children have used Nessy to practise their typing skills and WordWall to develop vocabulary. Children are also explicitly taught online safety principles, which are both intertwined within lessons that use technology, as well as being part of standalone e-safety lessons in both the Computing and the CWB curriculum. We have supplemented these sessions with a focus on safe use of AI during recent Safer Internet Week activities, as well as taking all the Year 4 pupils to see 'In the Net', an engaging stageshow all about staying safe online. Overall, pupils in Year 3 and 4 tend to use screens directly for, on average, 30 to 45 minutes per day, while in Years 5 and 6, this increases to between 45 minutes and an hour, depending on the day; as referenced above, maths lessons can explain this increase, as Year 3 and 4 maths questions are almost entirely provided on paper rather than via Showbie. Next term will bring some stopframe animation creation, a look through the Minecraft Education suite, 3D computer aided design, an exploration of rivers and waterways using AR technology, and even some web design; an exciting term awaits! KJ





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CHESS CONGRESS
A quick reminder to sign up for our Chess Congress taking place on Saturday 25th April. Bookings are now open via Magic Booking, and we encourage families to secure their place as soon as possible.

NEWS AROUND THE SCHOOL

A NOTE ABOUT THE SCHOOL GATES

We would like to let you know about some upcoming improvements to our school gates, taking place over the Easter holidays to enhance site security.

- An electric cantilever gate will be installed for vehicle access between the two pillars.
- The pedestrian gate (by the post box) will be locked during the school day. An intercom will be installed here so parents and visitors can easily contact the school office.
- At drop-off and pick-up times, the pedestrian gate will remain open as usual, so there will be no change during these busy periods. The same applies to the vehicle gate for families arriving with bikes or scooters.
- An intercom will also be in place at the vehicle gate for parents with scheduled visits.
- The pedestrian gate will remain open for planned events such as parents' evenings and the uniform shop.
- Clear signage will be displayed at both gates to guide visitors on how to use the intercom system.

Thank you for your support as we continue to keep our school site safe and secure.

Jessica Griffiths, Estates Manager

SUNGLASSES FOUND

Has anyone misplaced a pair of Walter & Herbert sunglasses at the Spring Concerts? A pair was found at the Town Hall last week and they are now safely in the school office. Please do get in touch if they belong to you.





BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL



SPORTS REPORTS

FOOTBALL

U8 v The Richard Pate School

Before the U8 Bison's match at Richard Pate School on Friday I had a chat with the team. I said that as this was the last match of our football season and I wanted the team to finish on a high. I did not mind whether we won or lost, but I wanted us to play as a team and enjoy ourselves. I wanted to see the skills that we had practised in training sessions and try to get everyone involved. I was not disappointed.

Each of the boys played brilliantly in their given positions: keepers saved goals, defenders kept the opposition's shots to a minimum, midfield players aided in defence then got the ball moving forward to attack and upfront we had plenty of shots on goal.

Rufus, Daniel, Archer, Ollie, Peter, Frederick and Oscar all played brilliantly. (We managed to win as well).

Very well played boys. TM

