

BERKHAMPTSTEAD
SCHOOL
MAGAZINE

SPRING TERM
2018

BLAZER

Stepping back in time
HISTORY AT BERKY



Spring Concert
WHAT A SENSATION!

Lessons for life
ENCOURAGING
RESPONSIBILITY

INSIDE: DAY NURSERY NEWS | BOYS' HOCKEY | SPOTLIGHT ON MRS RODDY-WATTS



Thoughts from THE HEAD

Glance through this edition of the Berky Blazer and you'll see evidence of creative teaching and a passion for learning... everywhere! The staff offer such a wide range of wonderful opportunities for the children... from the chicks in Kindergarten, to Dinosaurs in Reception, to Aliens and Space - I thoroughly enjoyed accompanying the Year 1 children and staff to the 'We the Curious' Planetarium in Bristol - the wonderful History Mystery Day in Year 2 with its code-breaking, research and sleuthing challenges (and allowing me to dress up as Sir Robert Peel). In Prep, the range of opportunities have included the annual 500-Word Story Competition, The Commandery History trip, the House Pancake Races, football, netball, cross-country fixtures - as well as the very successful chess fixtures and congress and the National Schools' Quiz Championships.

Inspection Schools Inspectorate (ISI) Report April 2017 *'Lively and enthusiastic teaching involves and engages pupils - staff are highly committed to providing stimulating experiences to support and challenge the pupils.'*

We teach creatively and it pays off - it's evident in our excellent results. **The 36 children in Year 6 won 23 Grammar school places and 15 scholarships to independent schools this year.** Our non-pressurised environment, our talented staff and Berkhamstead's positive ethos make it a great place to be. Berkhamstead children have an all-round experience in which the arts, sport, chess, and the academic are all prized. I am proud that they do so well and go on to thrive at senior school.

Music matters enormously. Our wonderful Spring Concerts, held at the Pittville Pump Room, once again showed that Music is at the heart of Berkhamstead. 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. The contribution of the Parents' Choir - singing 'Ahoy! Sing for the Mary Rose' alongside the children - added a great deal to the evening. It was wonderful to experience the strong feeling of community engendered by singing together with parents, staff, friends, alumni, and - most importantly - every child in Years 5 and 6. It certainly confirmed the most recent ISI report's findings that we have *'highly supportive parents'* and I'd add *'talented'* to that too!

Richard Cross

Richard Cross
Headmaster



Spotlight on HELEN RODDY-WATTS

Mrs Roddy-Watts is one of our Reception teachers, as well as being Head of the Early Years Department. She joined Berkhamstead in 2009 in Kindergarten with our current Year 6s.

What are your favourite childhood memories?

I used to visit the library each week, and was always excited about choosing new books. I read books in bed, under the covers by torchlight, and was always being told to 'Put that book down!' I used to get annoyed if a birthday passed without a new book! One of my favourite stories was 'Heidi,' and reading the book taught me that if I want a friend, I have to be a friend first.

If you hadn't been a teacher, what would you have liked to have been?

As I am an organised person, I think a librarian would have been an appealing career option. I love books and the logistics of running a library cover everything from organisation to being an informed resource to library customers.

What are your interests outside of work?

I enjoy spending time with my family and of course my cat Pierre. My children are grown up and live away from home but we always enjoy catching up and having 'Mama' days which usually involve shopping and food! I also still enjoy reading (no longer under the bed covers) and catching up with friends.

What were your first impressions of Berky?

I first visited Berky as a Local Authority Moderator, and I remember thinking I would love to teach here. Berky has that special 'magic formula' that you sense as soon as you step through the doors. The relationships between teacher and pupils are very positive, you sense that everyone wants to be here, and everyone is treated as an individual.

What is your approach to Early Years teaching?

I try to make learning fun and meaningful, and in addition, I try very hard to encourage each child to be the best person they can be. I care very much for each child, and I want to see them achieve their goals. I aim to give challenging and exciting lessons and utilise the child's most precious gift - their imagination!

Why do you love teaching this age group?

When you're educating young children you need to ensure they develop emotionally, socially as well as intellectually. Teaching is definitely a vocation, and to teach well and care for the children you're teaching, you've got to be really committed. I love watching the children learn and develop, knowing I have helped with this process. Teaching keeps you 'young at heart'!

What are your favourite things about Berky?

Goodness, there are too many to list! One of my favourite things about Berky is the unwavering belief that all children can learn, and we will find a way that suits each child. Staff and children enjoy each other's company and a day of teaching at Berky when you do not laugh at least a couple times will be very rare. Berky is a very special place.

The skill I would most like to learn

I would love to learn to play the piano and enjoy listening to others play. Perhaps when I retire from teaching I will learn and return to play in assembly!



MORE ABOUT GASES!

A very exciting start to the year for Year 5. The children were tasked with this energetic lesson one morning in January. Pupils were kitted out with parachutes to prove that air exists. They learnt all about air resistance, discovering that the parachute slowed them down. Learning brought to life for our inquisitive young scientists!

News

FROM AROUND THE SCHOOL



IN THE FRAME

Malvern St James School opened its doors one Saturday morning in March to showcase art from local primary schools at its annual Primary Schools' Art Exhibition. Twenty-two works of art created by Berky pupils - from Reception to Year 6 - were selected, ranging from Reception collage dinosaurs to a Year 6 Hundertwasser - inspired pen drawing to a Year 3 Egyptian-inspired coil ceramic pot. We were thrilled that Isi F - one of our Year 6 art scholars - India R and Lizzie H were Highly Commended by the judge. Michelle Bareham, Head of Art, commented, "I am very proud of all our exhibitors and the particularly high standard of this year's work."



PTA NEWS

Although the Spring term is a quieter term for the PTA, there have been some great events and there are several events in full planning mode for the Summer term to get excited about! The Annual Pancake Races saw the PTA volunteers dish out over 100 pancakes to hungry pancake eaters and raise an amazing £105 for the school charity Winston's Wish. Thank you to everyone involved. This term's Cake@Break was another success with over £170 being raised - a fantastic achievement.

We are now half way towards our target for the fabulous Wellbeing Pod and we still have some amazing events to come. In the 20th April we will hold our first Movie Night at school for the children; popcorn, onesies, cushions, teddies, what's not to love! Saturday 16th June sees the return of our fabulous Midsummer Ball, this year at the Queen's Hotel in Cheltenham. The Ball is a fabulous way for the parent community to come together and

celebrate another great Berky year. Our annual Summer Fete will be held on Saturday 23rd June - it is always a brilliant day for all the family!

We had an amazing response to our search for runners to join our 'Berky Team' for the Cheltenham Half Marathon, and are delighted to report that we have a team of 11 to run for Team Berky to raise funds for the Wellbeing Pod and Winston's Wish. We will be setting up a joint fundraising page for our runners and are asking the whole school community to get behind them with a donation and message of support, and to cheer them on during the day. This is a new event for the PTA and we hope it is one we can continue each year; if you would like to join the team, it's not too late to get involved. Email berkhampsteadpta@gmail.com

As always, we are extremely grateful for everyone's support; we couldn't do it without our fabulous volunteers. *Joey Bowden, PTA Chair.*

GAMELAN WORKSHOP

Early in the Spring term, the Prep Hall was filled with Indonesian instruments creating a magnificent Gamelan. All the pupils from Years 2 to 6 had a workshop session with the leader, who was dressed in the colourful, characteristic costume of an Indonesian Gentleman (including an ornate dagger!)

Everyone had an instrument to play and learnt the repeating patterns of notes for the melodic, or the punctuating sounds of the percussive gongs and 'kempul'.

The effect was mesmerising and, combined with the pervading aroma of incense, quite atmospheric.

We learnt about the story-telling traditions with masks and shadow puppets and everyone had to play the largest gong in the world!

The children asked interesting questions and were very attentive throughout. PM



Once upon a time



Our wonderful children enjoyed a week celebrating the joy of storytelling as part of National Storytelling Week; the children and staff had great fun dressing up as their favourite characters. Children turned up as Nursery dressed up as characters such as Stick Man, Willy Wonka and Elsa, and Maria from the Cuddly Bear room came to work sporting a rather fine Very Hungry Caterpillar costume. Who can forget Teddy Bear's Katie - who pulled out all the stops - reinventing herself as a different character each day. Costumes ranged from the witch in Room on the Broom to the tiger from The Tiger Who Came to Tea. The staff lined up plenty of imaginative book-inspired activities: the Teddy Bears made their own snakes having been inspired by 'Rumble in the Jungle' and the Wise Bears who focussed on number recognition as they identified numbers in the Fat Controller book. Our oldest children were treated to the hilarious 'Oi Frog!' story read by Mr Tittley, one of the Prep School's finest and most animated storytellers.

Healthy Eating Week was another memorable few days. Monday lunchtime kicked off proceedings with a delicious vegetarian lunch of roasted vegetable curry, served with tomato, cucumber and coriander salad, pilau rice and mango chutney, and there followed a week which was jam-packed with activities.

The Wise Bears enjoyed cutting fruit, the Teddies grew cress, the Fuzzy Bears and Cuddly Bears painted with fruit and vegetables, and our youngest children enjoyed feeling fruit and vegetables! There is always plenty to stimulate the children here at the Day Nursery.



CHARITY NEWS

Brave Year 4 pupil Phoebe spoke in assembly one morning in February about her 2 year old cousin Jonah who died suddenly and unexpectedly. Her wish was to raise money for Winston's Wish and Edward's Trust who supported her and her family through this traumatic time. 'Playathon' was a sponsored music practice for Prep children and - together with a collection from the Springtime recital - she raised an amazing £912.50 to be shared between the two charities.

To the delight of the Prep children, Phoebe also brought in an enormous teddy for a 'Name the Bear' competition - pounds were still being collected for this at the time of going to press.

Well done, Phoebe - we are very proud of you.



FROM COLD LANDS TO SPRING LIFE - THERE'S BEEN PLENTY TO INSPIRE OUR KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN THIS TERM

At the start of term, we played games to remember the Kindergarten rules of kind hands, kind feet and using our kind words to show respect for others and to make everyone feel valued. The children have talked about how they love their friends, and how they like to look after someone when they are hurt.

The topic 'Cold Lands' inspired plenty of creativity, and we made penguins, polar bears, arctic foxes and snowy owls to go on our arctic landscape. The children used their senses to experiment with ice, and they discovered that as ice melts, it creates different effects and patterns. Using tools we cracked open balls of ice to find creatures hiding inside, and we also found Polar Regions on a world map. Investigating different animal habitats was great fun. Our role play area turned into an explorer's hut and the children enjoyed putting on hats, gloves and scarves and packing a suitcase ready to go on an Arctic adventure! In the construction area we built an igloo with blocks of ice.

Our next topic 'Spring into life' involved caring for eggs in an incubator; watching them hatch, and feeding the chicks! We planted seeds and bulbs and looked at changes that take place during spring time. We enjoyed the story of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' and we thought about different foods that keep us healthy. We enjoyed fruit tasting, making caterpillars from dried pasta and dressing up as caterpillars and butterflies. M M



FROM LEARNING ALL ABOUT SCARY DINOSAURS TO STUDYING PRETTY SECRET GARDENS, THERE WAS SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE THIS TERM IN RECEPTION!

Reception's topic 'GIGANTIC footprints from the past' started with a visit to the Oxford Museum to see the DINOSAURS! Excitement began outside the museum, where there was chance to examine casts of massive dinosaur footprints set into the lawn. We walked in real dinosaur footsteps, saw real skeletons of a T-Rex, and sat next to a Triceratops. We also studied a variety of other skeletons, fossils and all creatures that walk, fly, and swim. Throughout the term there was a lot of roaring and exploring going on in the Reception classrooms! The children learnt how dinosaurs lived and discussed the many theories which scientists have put forward as to how the dinosaurs became extinct. There was a lot of stomping and roaring when the children created their own dinosaur dance, information posters were created; the children practised asking questions and learnt how to find out the answers from people, books and, of course, Google!

Our topic 'The Secret Garden' led Reception children down the path to discover the magic and wonder of gardening, designing, and painting amongst many other things. Throughout the term the children became expert gardeners, designers and artists. After reading 'Jack and The Beanstalk', they planted beans, observed changes and learnt how to care for them. Using Monet's paintings of his gardens as inspiration the children became artists creating their own 'Monet style' pictures using pastels. The children loved our 'Secret Garden' role play so much that they became garden designers by designing and creating their very own miniature Secret Garden.

Early Years couldn't end the Spring Term without a party. All the children participated in a variety of Easter games and had an 'egg-cellent time'. H R-W





Step back in time

'WE ARE NOT MAKERS OF HISTORY.
WE ARE MADE BY HISTORY.' MARTIN LUTHER KING

History thrives at Berkhamstead and throughout the school we aim to encourage a passion for the subject that will remain with the children forever. We cover an extensive range of interesting topics and develop the children's investigative skills throughout their time here.

Their enthusiasm for the subject is enhanced by trips to a variety of historic sites such as Goodrich Castle, Swindon's Steam Museum and the Black Country Living Museum.

The Early Years adopt a 'cross-curricular' approach to teaching history to our youngest children, and it makes up part of the broader subject of 'Understanding the World'. The Pre-Prep continue with this effective cross-curricular method of teaching, and the history learning is very much hands-on, and is always great fun. One of the highlights of Year 2, for instance, is the now famous themed 'History Mystery' day, when everyone dresses up, and the children work together to tackle a series of puzzles to work out 'whodunnit!' Now in its eighth year, the current Year 2 were treated to a very imaginative Victorian day, and as usual the day was memorable and exciting!

When the children enter the Prep School, History is taught by subject-specialist teachers. Year 3s start by learning about the Egyptians and Romans, and by the time the children have reached Year 6, they team with knowledge of Medieval History, the Tudors, Stuarts and Victorians. Finally in Year 6 the children don their evacuee labels and embrace WWII and beyond.

YEAR 2

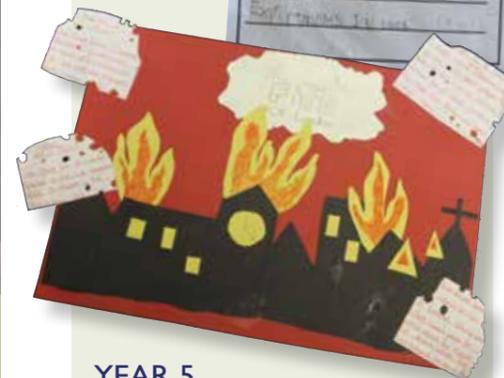
The villainous Moriarty - arch-enemy of Sherlock Holmes - visited the Year 2 children on their History Mystery Day and stole the plans for installing electric street lighting in London from under the very nose of Sir Robert Peel and various other Victorian celebrities. It was lucky that Mr Holmes had the help of the resourceful street urchins known as the 'Baker Street Irregulars' to help solve this tricky case. The Irregulars met many challenges and worked hard to find out the answers to a quiz, memorise a table full of Victorian artefacts, decipher clues and maps, repair Mr Brunel's bridge (which Moriarty had blown up) and solve some tricky Maths problems, all of which led them to the final prize: the secret location of the plans and a handsome reward presented by Sir Robert himself.

"It was so much fun dressing up as Victorian children for History Mystery day. My favourite part of the day was when we built bridges on the MUGA - it was fun working together as a team!"

YEAR 1

Year 1 zoomed back in time to the 1960s and found out all about Neil Armstrong and the first moon landings. They created timelines of Neil's life and wrote their own newspaper articles, reporting on the historic event.

"Neil Armstrong stepped on the moon in 1969 which was a really long time ago. I loved pretending to be a newspaper writer."



YEAR 5

As part of their work on the Stuarts, the Year 5s spent some time looking at the Great Fire of London. Looking at a variety of sources, they established both the causes and the impact it had on London. They then designed their own posters to display their findings.

"History is fun and interesting, and Mr McCreanor acts events out and his expressions are funny!"

YEAR 3

The children spent a term and a half learning about the Ancient Egyptians. They looked at the importance of the River Nile, the lives of the Pharaohs, Egyptian gods and what life was like for ordinary citizens. Latterly, the children examined hieroglyphics and composed and decoded messages of their own.

"I enjoy learning about History because it is fascinating what people believed in the past. Mr Cole is funny and interesting, and I like all that we have learnt so far. Cracking codes has been brilliant!"



YEAR 4

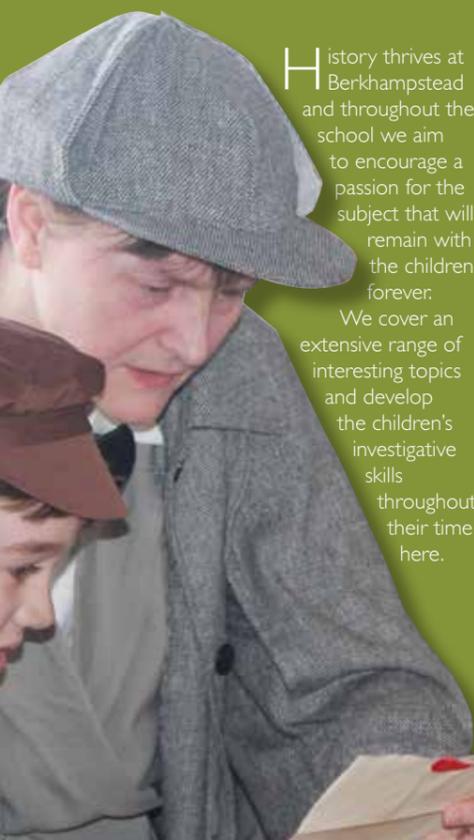
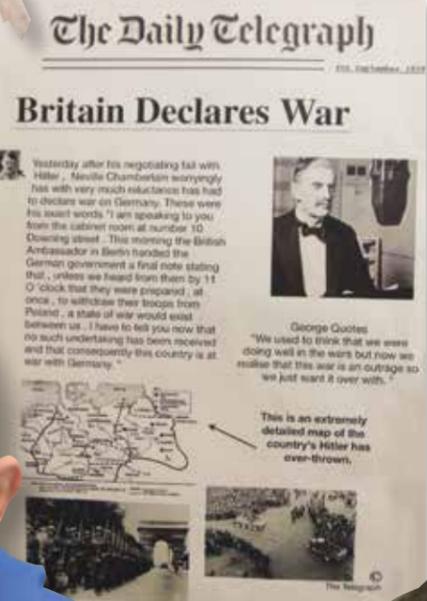
Year 4 had looked at part of the Bayeux Tapestry to discover the Norman Invasion. The children then designed their own modern version of the tapestry.

"It is very interesting to learn about events in the past that I didn't know had happened, and the impact on life nowadays. Our trip to Goodrich castle was really good. Our guide was funny and interesting."

YEAR 6

Year 6 used iPads to research where in Normandy the D-day landings took place and why the Allies attacked Normandy rather than the closer ports. We also discovered how many soldiers were killed on the first day and looked at pictures of the British, American and German cemeteries.

"I love History. Mr McCreanor brings the subject to life and explains it in an interesting way. Learning about the concentration camps was gruesome, but fascinating."





YEAR 1'S TERM IS OUT OF THIS WORLD!

In a galaxy far, far away a group of Year 1 children embarked on an exciting journey into space to find out all about our solar system and any possible alien life that might be out there... Our voyage of discovery started with the creation of our own alien characters and then the reading and retelling of lots of fantastic alien stories. This was the starting point for building junk model aliens and writing out of this world creative writing. The next stage of Year 1's mission was to investigate the first moon landing and research the planets in our solar system. The children really enjoyed watching Tim Peake's vlogs and visiting 'We the Curious' to experience what life on the International Space Station was really like. Tasting astronaut food and dressing up in costumes for our alien party day were the highlights of a very exciting and informative topic. The debate about alien life is bound to continue in Year 1 but, as they say, the truth is out there. L L-K



THE MAGNIFICENT VICTORIANS! YEAR 2 TRAVEL BACK ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS TO IMMERSE THEMSELVES IN EVERYTHING VICTORIAN

This term Year 2 have immersed themselves in historical knowledge. Visiting the Dean Heritage Centre enabled the children to understand timelines and how long it took for humans to leave hunting and gathering to become farmers. With an overview of history, we turned the clock back to Victorian Times. The children experienced life as a poor Victorian child with a Washing Day and a visit to a Victorian School; here the children were transported back to 1850. As Year 2 entered the school, knees shook, hoping that they would escape the teacher's attention; luckily they returned to 2018 in time for the end of the school day.

A highlight of Year 2 the History Mystery, this year focused on famous Victorians.

One Friday in March many Victorian urchins arrived to help Robert Peel solve the mystery which involved good detective skills, problem solving and code cracking. (See page 8 for further details). Many thanks to Mrs Taylor, Mr Taylor and Mrs John for their amazing efforts with this and for the help given by Mr Billings.

After a workshop on Florence Nightingale the term ended with The Berkhamstead Great Exhibition; inventions such as x-rays, telephones and Easter eggs were displayed and explained to the visitors and services were offered including portraits in photo booths and shoe shining. Can you name 44 inventions from Victorian Times? If not speak to Year 2 - they can! SO





Ahoy there, me hearties!



Our Spring Concerts this year had a certain nautical flavour with thrilling performances of well-known sea shanties from many of our groups.

To begin our concerts in the afternoon we heard an Indonesian Gamelan by Y3 and Y4. This music is usually gentle and hypnotic in style with repeated patterns of melody punctuated by pulsing beats on cymbals, gongs and hand drums. Their enthusiasm ensured that this performance was more powerful and less meditational than usual, but their skills in listening and playing together were still very evident. Y2 gave us a wonderfully creative composition based on a poem 'Boris and his Stork-Scaring Game' with all of them playing instruments and holding puppets.

Then it was the turn of Berkys Bows who played some very expressively-shaped pieces. Suddenly the Pump Rooms were resounding with the terrific sounds of brass, wind and rhythm sections as the Jazz Band marched through the audience and onto the stage whilst playing a gospel medley from memory. Junior Choir entertained with two action songs, complete with a Big Hole Gang in hard hats and hi-vis jackets. Finally Jigsaw took their place with all pupils in Y2,3 and 4 for an exciting version of 'Drunken Sailor'.

The evening concert featured more items from Y5 and Y6 with jazz combo casting off with their fluent jazz solos. Hoisting the mainsail we had the Chamber Ensemble performing a terrific piece about the tragedy of the

Mary Rose with wonderful 'cannon' and 'sinking' sound effects from the sliding strings. The delicate sounds of the Berkys Blowers in their rhythmic renditions of 'Rock around the Clock' and 'Grandfather's Clock' followed. Firing an acoustic broadside, we were transported for the next 5 minutes or so in the Tardis! A radiophonic symphony of Dr. Who themes by the Keyboard Orchestra was a dramatic tack before we were getting under way again with VoxBox and 'I'm gonna Sing'.

Then it was full steam ahead for the grand finale of 'Ahoy! Sing for the Mary Rose!' by composer Alexander L'Estrange. He has fused sea shanties with Tudor songs, arranged for two choirs, accompanied by a

jazz group including an accordion and solo violin. The resulting medley of songs, music and narration was by turns, fast and exciting, gentle and lyrical, sad and wistful with a terrific arrangement of 'The Water is Wide' for audience participation to bring us safely into harbour. The Berkys Parents and Friends' Choir worked hard to remain ship-shape and not rock the boat and made a tremendous sound. In their striped t-shirts, Y5 and Y6 looked and sounded very impressive, especially as they demonstrated great coordination and naval discipline in the hornpipes. Wahey! PM



MUSIC EXAM RESULTS

Congratulations to all the following pupils, who took these exams last Summer. Apologies for omitting them from the previous issue of the Blazer:

- Debut Grade** (Rockschool Rock and Pop exams), Will S (Guitar*), Will J (Guitar*), Freddie B (Guitar*), Henry T (Guitar*), Associated Board Prep Test Piano Simran D, Anna T.
- Grade 1** Jack E (Saxophone), India R (Piano**), Eliot A (Piano**), Alexa E (Saxophone**), Emily Wragg (Saxophone**)
- Grade 2** George R (Violin*), Rosannah M (Viola**), Jonathan B (Recorder**), Andrew P (Cello*)
- Grade 3** Jack P (Cello*), Emily W (Piano*), Phoebe M (Piano*)
- Grade 6** Rhys L (Bassoon*)

SPRING TERM RESULTS

- Prep Test** Cressida F (Violin), Isabel K (Piano)
- Grade 1** Emily G (Violin*), Hazel C (Viola**), Rosemary B (Piano**), Eleri W (Piano*), (Rockschool Guitar) Will C*, William S*
- Grade 2** George L (Clarinet), Kyla C (Flute), Alexa E (Saxophone**), Emily W (Saxophone**), Georgina J (Cornet**)
- Grade 3** Andrew P (Cello), William P (Flute), George de B-T (Cello), Sarah D (Saxophone*), Griff L (Piano*), Jack E (Saxophone*)
- Grade 4** Jonathan B (Recorder*)
- Grade 7** Rhys L (Bassoon*)

* Denotes pass with merit
** Denotes pass with distinction



News

FROM PREP



500 WORD WINNERS

Once again, one of our favourite times of year rolled around: The 500 Word Story Competition. Imaginations were let loose, thesauruses were at the ready and the children were equipped to delve into worlds of their own.

The children, as always, threw themselves completely into the challenge, creating some truly beautiful, gripping and exciting pieces of work. The vocabulary being used and the character, settings and action created demonstrated not only the children's developing knowledge of grammar and language, but also their confidence in their own thoughts and ideas. As teachers, we wholly look forward to this time of year and feel privileged to be able to read the stories

created. The children should be incredibly proud of the work they created and the effort every single one of them put in. Well done! BE

Winners: Y6: Alexa E. Y5: Oscar A. Y4: Dulcie B. Y3: Lottie A.

Runners Up: Y6: James S. Y5: Sophie G. Y4: Alex S. Y3: William J. **Third Place:** Y6: Chiara O. Y5: India R. Y4: William B. Y3: Aurielle Mc.

Highly Commended: Leslie M, Charlton VS, Florrie H, Andrew P, Millie W, Simran D, Alex D, Viera M, Seb L, Rosemary B, Harry M, Henry R and Isabella E.



PREP RACK THEIR BRAINS

How far is the sun from Earth? What fast food is named after a German city? In which year was Martin Luther King assassinated? Where is the Mojave Desert? How many stars are on the Australian flag? During which conflict was the tank first used?

All these questions were answered successfully by Berky children in this term's area heat of the National Schools' Quiz Championships. After qualifying quizzes at school earlier this term, our teams were selected and comprised – according to the rules – one child from each of the Prep year groups. It proved such an exciting occasion! Facing stiff competition from five other teams, the Berkhamstead teams ended in first and second place. With forty questions in total, our main rivals from Wycliffe led with only a handful of questions remaining. However, a final push from our young quizzers saw us home and the Area Heat Winners trophy now sits proudly in the Berky cabinet.

Congratulations to both Berkhamstead teams. Team 1 (Darcy Y6, Luke Y5, Charlotte Y4, Uma Y3) came second while Team 2 (Leslie Y6, Oscar Y5, Jonathan Y4, Lucy Y3) pipped all-comers to clinch top spot and qualify for the National Semi-Final which takes place in the Summer Term. The National Final is hosted by the Houses of Parliament and we are now one tantalising step away. The children behaved impeccably and showed a truly tremendous range of general knowledge and an ability to think calmly under pressure. Well done to all concerned! MC



TRIPS AND VISITS

Trips and visits offered to Prep pupils this term have - as ever - truly enriched the children's learning. Year 5 had a wonderful day in Worcester experiencing life in Stuart times. Everyone enjoyed handling muskets and pikes, and dressing up as soldiers. Beeswax candle making was also fun. Year 5 also visited St Mary's and St. Matthew's Church to support their RE learning. SkillZONE in Gloucester is a brilliant purpose-built environment for learning about everyday safety - Years 4 and 6 enjoyed very informative days there. The Prep school have also welcomed visits from local heads, including Dean Close's Mr Salisbury and Mrs Oosthuizen from Cheltenham Ladies' College. Both gave most informative and enjoyable assemblies and stayed to chat to parents afterwards. There are plenty more trips and visits to look forward to in the Summer term.

RUNNING ON TIME

The venues for the cross country runs this year were at Newlands and twice at St Edward's with the College run being abandoned due to poor weather. This is mainly a Year 5 and 6 event as the standard is so high and for the first time we gave everyone in these years the option of whether they wanted to be included in at least one race; there were lots of takers! George L, Charlton and Benji performed consistently well in the boys' races and Florrie and Rosannah in the girls'. Colours are already held by George L and George de B-T, Florrie and Rosannah and this year are awarded to: E Atkinson, R Loffhagen, B McInnes, J Shaw, C van Staden and E Vintcent.

HOUSE CROSS COUNTRY

What a great sight - the whole Prep School down at the Victoria Ground for the House Cross Country. The Berky spirit and motto

are to the fore in this event which requires stamina and determination to complete the course. 2 laps for Years 3 and 4 and 3 laps for Years 5 and 6. The winners this year were: Year 3 P Dadson* and R Barron. Year 4 M Cleland and R Fenton.* Year 5 J Ayland and A Thomas. Year 6 G Lockwood* and F Hampton.

*New school record

Well done to all the prep children!



CHESS SUCCESS

The Spring Term is traditionally a busy one for Berkhamstead's young chess players although this year snowy weather led to the postponement of the annual District Primary Schools' Chess Congress. The Berky Congress went ahead as normal and a packed school hall in February witnessed plenty of fine matchplay. The year group winners were Beatrice N and Isabella E (Y3 Girls), Harry A, Henry R and Hugo W (Y3 Boys), Charlotte B (Y4 Girls), Griff L (Y4 Boys), Edith H (Y5 Girls), Finian C and Noah W (Y5 Boys), Leslie M (Y6 Girls) and George de B-T (Y6 Boys). As ever, there were prizes galore.

The chess team has continued its good form. Despite a blip against the Richard Pate School, a third consecutive District League Championship has been claimed.

Victory over Holy Apostles in the District Knock-Out Cup semi-final has booked a cup final berth against Richard Pate's after Easter. Congratulations to Jack P, James S, George de B-T, Edith H, Olly W and Rhys L on their tremendous and mature play.

The Y3 chess tournament concluded with the following champions: Uma C (Division 1), Hugo W and Aurielle Mc (Division 2), Isabella E (Division 3) and Lilah C (Division 4). Well played all.

During the summer term we have the rearranged congress, a cup final, House Chess, the tying up of loose ends in the school chess club competitions, Y2 chess club and, of course, the staff versus pupils match to look forward to. MC

TABLET TALES

Year 6 used 'Brushes' and 'Book Creator' in their Computing lessons to write and illustrate a picture book for their young pals in the Early Years department. Our oldest children visited Reception and, in small groups, read their stories to a delighted audience. Mrs Roddy-Watts, Head of Early Years commented, "It was wonderful to see the interaction of Year 6 with our young children here in Reception. They were caring and nurturing, and the Reception children loved their stories!" The stories will be put onto the iPads in Early Years so they can access them anytime they want to.





Clockwise: Year 6 Reading Buddy system, House Captains on Sports Day, School Council meeting, Reading Buddies and Berky's Got Talent, auditions.

Learning for life

GONE ARE THE DAYS WHEN SCHOOL WAS USED AS A MEANS FOR PERPETUATING THE ESTABLISHED SYSTEM – WHEN CHILDREN SAT AT THEIR DESKS, MUTE AND MEEK, PASSIVELY RECEIVING AN EDUCATION, SAYS DEPUTY HEAD GILL AGG

One are the days when school was used as a means for perpetuating the established system – when children sat at their desks, mute and meek, passively receiving an education; these methods left the then adults of the future feeling that they were not in control of their own destinies, that they had constantly to look to their elders and betters for decisions and advice. Here at Berky, we seek to empower our pupils, to make them feel confident to make decisions about their own lives; the voice of the child is very much heard!

The opportunities for leadership and decision-making are many, some obvious and some more subtle. From the very beginning in Early Years, the children talk together with their teachers about potential projects, asking the questions they would like answered during their studies. Much of their learning is child-initiated, the teacher acting as a guiding and protective resource as opposed to a dictator.

The Year 2 children are the oldest in Pre-Prep and, as such, act as role models for, and guardians of, the younger children. At breaktime, they take it in turns to be play leaders, taking responsibility for organising equipment in the playground and ensuring that any children coming to use it do so cooperatively and sensibly. They also check that all the equipment is safely packed away.

There is also a child from each class from Reception to Year 2 on the recently-formed Pre-Prep School Council.

The Year 2 representatives also join the long-established Prep School Council. There is a democratically elected representative from each class and staff are always amazed by the wisdom and perspicacity of the voters! The School Council discusses many issues such as the school's chosen charity, school food, our carbon 'footprint' and all sorts of issues raised by their peers. The Council is led by a small group of Year 6 children who take minutes and organise the various projects, the most high-profile of which has to be the annual 'Berky's Got Talent' competition, for which they act as judges.

Once in the Prep, the children have much greater independence, and

greater decision-making and self-reliance are encouraged; senior schools frequently comment to us on the confidence and independence they witness in their Berky children. All the Year 6 children have special monitor jobs to do: break duty, the playground blackboard, the library, lost property and sorting the equipment for Assemblies. We also have four houses, each led by two House Captains.

Perhaps most successful are the various 'buddy' systems operating in the Prep department. At the end of the Summer term, each Year 5 pupil is allocated a Year 2 buddy for whom they will be responsible the following September. The children take this job very seriously and provide much pastoral support to the younger ones. Year 6 children also have the opportunity to be 'reading buddies' with the Year 3 children.

SENIOR SCHOOLS
FREQUENTLY
COMMENT
TO US ON THE
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IN THEIR BERKY
CHILDREN

Year 5 and Year 6 have the option of undertaking the school's junior equivalent to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award - the Platinum Award. This encourages independent learning and decision-making and is done in the children's own time. It also requires great tenacity as it takes two whole years to complete!

It is often the case that the children themselves come up with marvellous ideas which school is glad to support. Three Year 6 boys wanted to organise and run a Christmas Grotto for the younger Prep children in order to raise money for our chosen charity and this they did quite independently; there was a good deal of learning involved, as well as much fun and excitement. The Year 6 children also run stalls of their own devising at the Summer Fete.

Above all, here at Berkhamstead there is a culture of listening to, and respecting, the thoughts, ideas and opinions of our children, not only through such formal mediums as the biennial Online Pupil Survey - Years 4, 5 and 6 - but on an everyday basis. Throughout the school, we are committed to promoting self-esteem and developing pupils' skills as leaders so that they can take their place as responsible and useful citizens in tomorrow's society with assuredness and confidence.

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U8 | FOOTBALL

Unfortunately three of the six matches for the Year 3 boys were cancelled this year due to poor weather or the Races. In the matches that we did have the boys played with great Berky spirit. In one match we might have been the dominant team but in another we may have struggled a little, but the common theme was that we never gave up and never stopped trying our best. Well played to all the boys and hopefully next season the weather will be on our side and we'll get more matches. TM

Bisons: Albie B-C, Will C, Harry M, Oliver M, Henry R, Leon R W, Luke R, William S, Hugo W
Buffaloes: Harry A, Robert A, Michael C, Freddie B, Albie B, Patrick D, Will J, Henry T.



U9A | FOOTBALL

The U9 boys have once again shown a very enthusiastic approach to their training sessions and have grown steadily in confidence and skill. There has been a great team spirit, with the boys captained superbly by Lincoln and Otto.

The U9As had an almost faultless season with just one unfortunate loss in a tournament game at Hatherop. Our two goalkeepers Alex and Alessio were seamless in their half time changes and made some outstanding saves. They were ably supported by our defence of Seb, Max and Jack who often left the goalkeepers as mere spectators for long periods of time. In attack William, Lincoln and Jonny amassed a total of 35 goals in 13 games leading to convincing wins against Hatherop, Beaudesert, RPS and King's. SM

Team: William B, Max C, Alex D, Jack E, Lincoln H (capt), Sebastien L, Alessio T, & Jonny W.

U9B | FOOTBALL

The U9Bs had a similarly successful season with an excellent display at the Hatherop Castle Festival and a great win against Rendcomb. Goalkeepers were swapped on a regular basis with Harry showing the safest pair of hands. Griff, as sweeper, played a very large part in nullifying attacks and allowing our midfield of Archie, Oli and Jonathan and attack of Alex, Otto and Rupert to gain possession and make shots on goal. Just two losses out of the eight

games this season proved that this spirited and enthusiastic group were a hard team to beat. Well done to the boys. SM

Team: Jonathan B, Otto B (capt), Rupert G, Archie L-B, Griff L, Oliver S, Alex S and Harry W.



U10 | FOOTBALL

The U10 boys have had a good season of football. They have played well together and created some great pieces of play.

The first match of the season was against Bowbrook which was a difficult match to start with and unfortunately it was a loss. The next match was against Rendcomb which was a very good win. The first home match was against King's Gloucester where the boys managed to secure a draw. This was a great game to watch. Hatherop came to the Victoria Ground next and the boys achieved their first win with a clean sheet too. We travelled to Wycliffe for the next match which was a good win with a final score of 5-2. After this, the boys played King's Worcester and unfortunately lost before travelling to Beaudesert for the final match of the season which was a narrow loss.

All the boys have worked hard this season. George has had some excellent performances in goal and out on the pitch. Ed and Andrew have been solid in defence, confidently clearing balls out of the goal area. Oscar H and Jensen have played well on the wings with Jensen making some superb crosses into the box. Noah has worked tirelessly across the pitch and made some crucial tackles. Finian and Luke have played well as strikers and midfielders with shots bouncing off the crossbar at times and Oscar A has played in various positions and each time he has tried hard and given it his all.

Well done boys - a good season, I've been pleased with the progress that you've made. DB

Team: Oscar A, Jensen A, Finian C, Oscar H, Luke F, Andrew P, George R, Edward S, Noah W.



U11A | FOOTBALL

This has been an excellent season for the U11A team. They improved considerably from the opening draw against Bowbrook House and have played an entertaining brand of football. A solid defensive line up of Jack, George de B-T and James S made life difficult for our opponents. In midfield Rhys, James E, Adam, Charlton, Finian and Benji worked tirelessly in every game. They played with attacking intent and we showed that we were always capable of scoring. Rumhann was the appreciative recipient of this industry and top scored with eight goals. He showed good composure in front of goal and his header against King's Worcester was one of the highlights of the season. Adam and Benji also stood out. Their combination of skill and determination made them key players in the team.

The boys gained victories against Rendcomb, Hatherop, Kitebrook, King's Worcester and Beaudesert. Well done, boys for a thoroughly enjoyable season! PMc

Team (all awarded colours): Rumhann C, F Cooper, George de B-T, James E, Rhys L, Benji M, Jack P, Adam R, James S, Charlton vS.

Outstanding Awards: Rumhann C, Benji M, Adam R.

U11B | FOOTBALL

In the first game of the season we were soundly beaten but we learnt lessons from that defeat and won 5 games subsequently.

The attack was always dangerous, managing constantly to get behind the opposing defenders. The midfield made good runs and great passes. The defenders held their position well and cleared the ball effectively. Apart from the first game of the season, only one goal was conceded by the goalies. MT

Team: Eliot A, James C G, Benjamin J, George L, Charlie M, Archie M, William P, Olly W.

| | PLAYED | WON | LOST | DRAWN |
|--------------|--------|-----|------|-------|
| U8 Bisons | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| U8 Buffaloes | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| U9A | 13 | 9 | 1 | 3 |
| U9B | 8 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| U10 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| U11A | 8 | 5 | 2 | 1 |
| U11B | 6 | 5 | 1 | 0 |



U8 | NETBALL

The U8s are already completely natural netball players! Their play during their first netball season has been somewhat impressive! All girls should be very proud of their abilities and their commendable team spirit. There were no losses throughout the season for both the A and B teams. The A team played with such confidence, drawing in their first match against Dean Close and staggering wins against CCPS and St Edward's at 9-1 and 7-0 respectively. Coincidentally, the B team scores were similar at 9-0 against CCPS and 7-0 against St Edward's. Well done to the U8 squad; you have worked so hard this season, and it certainly paid off! KJ

Team: M Albuquerque, A Anderson, C Atkinson, J Ayland, R Barron, L Cooper, U Cush, I Edwards, M Evans, H Hartman, H Hartman, B Myers-Dickinson, B Norbury, E Oakley, L Parkin, A McManus.



U9 | NETBALL

Once again, I have been thoroughly impressed by the attitude and the sporting behaviour of the Under 9s at netball this term. The U9As have had a great season, despite some of the results, with some pretty close matches and a super win against St Edward's. Over the season, their skills have developed tremendously and the girls have become more confident at creating space and passing effectively between the players.

The U9Bs had a superb netball season, playing 8 matches, losing 4 and winning 4 (notably against King's Gloucester, Dean Close and Malvern St James). Scoring was a very regular occurrence with 35 goals; an average of 4.3 per match. Again, it was wonderful to see the girls develop over the season and the enjoyment they clearly had when playing netball. Well done, girls! CMC

Team A: Isla A, Dulcie B, Joy C, Rebecca F, Phoebe M, Viera M, Jasmine M, Isabel K, Grace W.
Team B: Daisy B, Poppy B, Charlotte B, Darcey C, Hazel C, Cressie F, Kimora P, Eleanor T, Eleri W, Arabella W, Amelia W.



U10 | NETBALL

The 'A' team have had a successful season. They enjoyed wins against Malvern St James, King's, Gloucester and Hatherop Castle. The losses were narrow and the girls battled hard until the final whistle was blown in both of these matches. The 'B' team's season was mixed as we struggled initially to find our shooters. However, they ended the season with an excellent win against St Edward's, demonstrating great team spirit. All the girls worked hard in training sessions, improving their footwork skills, pace and accuracy of passing. Well done to all the U10 girls - you have worked really hard this season and will go from strength to strength next year! JH

Team A: V. Boddana, S. Dubb, B. Dunning, D. Oakley, I. Rutherford, H. Sampson, A. Thomas, M. Wrathmell.
Team B: E. Godding, S. Griffiths, E. Howlett, L. Hurcombe, G. Johnson, E. Methven, F. Rayner, L. Sherborne, E. Sissons.



U11 | NETBALL

The season was marked by poor weather and long-term injuries to both teams which obviously affected the final statistics. I was, however, very impressed by the girls who played in enforced positional changes without any fuss and gave it their all. The A team had some extremely close matches and really had to fight hard for their draws and the narrowest of wins against Malvern St James. Their team spirit and energy were fantastic, and they supported each other very well when the going was tough. Their best result was a 10-2 win against Richard Pate. The B team had a superb season winning 5 of their 6 matches. They beat Thorngrove school, Richard Pate, St Edward's, the College and Hatherop Castle. Here, the squad of 10 became very versatile and several girls found new positions in which they performed very well. Well done to the whole of the Under 11 squad. LW

Team A all receive their colours: S Doughty, A Ellison, F Hampton, A Holder, R Madden, L More, J Rayner, E Vintcent, M Ward, E Wragg.
Team B: Z Cleland, K Crichard, H de Wit,

E Emberson, I Freeman, R Madden, C O'Connor, G Pierce, C Whistler, D White.

Outstanding Awards: S Doughty, A Ellison, F Hampton, A Holder, E Vintcent, M Ward.

| | PLAYED | WON | LOST | DRAWN |
|------|--------|-----|------|-------|
| U8A | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| U8B | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| U9A | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| U9B | 8 | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| U10A | 6 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| U10B | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| U11A | 6 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| U11B | 6 | 5 | 1 | 0 |

Winners of House Netball overall: St George's.

Winners of House Football:

U9 St David's

U11 St Andrew's



Perfect Grounding!


BERKHAMPSTEAD
SCHOOL


BERKHAMPSTEAD
DAY NURSERY

OUR BOYS ARE AHEAD OF THE GAME

Hockey has always been the girls' Winter sport here at Berky, and due to popular demand, we introduced a boys' hockey club for pupils in Years 5 and 6 in the Spring term. Focused on developing core skills through match play and small-sided games, the aim was to develop basic skills that can be transferred into games situations: close stick skills, moving with the ball, passing, receiving and tackling.

Most of the boys were new to hockey, and all clearly loved the weekly lunchtime club; its introduction gave them a taste of another sport which some may choose to develop at a local club or at their next school. Mr Mildren - who runs the club and has coached sport in prep schools for over thirty years - commented, "I intended to make sessions structured but always fun, and I hoped that an introduction of another sport would give the boys more choice in finding a sport they might wish to pursue."

Rugby, football and cricket are played competitively by the boys in the Prep School.



BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL AND DAY NURSERY

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