

## Newsletter February Half Term

In **Reception** children made a positive start to the Spring Term. They continued to build on the skills learnt so far, such as communication, listening, negotiation and respecting each other in play. In Phonics they have moved onto Phase 3 and have been using their phonic knowledge in CHIL to create some fun and interesting words and sentences. In Maths they have explored number and different ways to represent number with objects and have been looking closely at 'part, part, whole' numbers as well as learning the number bonds of ten. Children enjoyed finding out about Chinese New Year and spent time having a go at writing their names in Chinese lettering and learning about the Chinese New Year story. The children have been having lots of fun playing on the new upcycled cable drums which staff have created portraying various small world play areas, e.g. a superhero space scene, a knight's castle and an island in the sea. In PE they have been trying out lots of different stretches during their yoga sessions!

All **key stage one** classes have thoroughly enjoyed listening to lots of versions of Rapunzel and acting out and creating their own new stories. The children have continued to take part in outdoor learning activities linking their work to different areas in the curriculum. Please remember to continue sending boots or a change of shoes that can be worn in muddy areas of the school, every Friday. Many more children have taken part in the after school Gardening Club and lunchtime Games Club and these will be continuing after the half term holiday. In Science lessons the children have been sorting materials and experimenting with magnets. They have also been looking at the importance of recycling and trying to recycle more in school. They have used some recycled materials in their art lessons when making sculptures. This theme will continue into next half term when the World Book Day book is introduced to the whole school.

Our **Lower Key Stage 2** classes have been busy with a range of activities across the phase. In English they have looked at Alice in Wonderland, the Owl and the Pussy Cat and the story of The Adventures of the Dish and the Spoon using these to write in the structure of playscripts. In addition, Lower Key Stage 2 have also been investigating shape and angles, furthering their understanding of fractions and application of times tables and division. The children greatly enjoyed learning about different aspects of France during their Theme Day. They all created artwork depicting French landmarks, researched facts about France and planned a journey across France using different methods of transport. Tres bien!

Thematic work has included the exploration of how the Romans invaded Britain, the way of life of the Roman invaders and the changes that they made to England. In science lessons they have been looking at the topic of Light, including identifying sources of light and materials which reflect light. Many thanks to the parents who joined us during our two sessions on times tables and the 'Multiplication Tables Check' for year 4. The children were very happy and enthusiastic about sharing their learning and the different ways we teach and check their times table knowledge in class. Hopefully parents are still enjoying some of these ideas at home too! In PE lessons the children have been developing gymnastics and yoga skills.

Children in **year 5** have had an exciting half-term, as well as writing essays alongside the Year 6s, they have been taking part in a Mini Police Project with a team of PCSOs who have joined them each week to teach them about being safe and contributing to the community. The final project will involve the children in a community based activity after the half-term break.

Bell-boating and orienteering gave the Year 5 classes a great opportunity to discover a new sport. All the pupils thoroughly enjoyed the chance to be on the water and were very competitive during their orienteering activity at HYMB. Following on from a very successful day, we hope to be invited back to HYMB later in the season for their bell-boating regatta.

This half-term also saw a team of four Year 5 pupils take part in the County Maths Challenge: Samuel Stark, Jago Speck, Jessica Walker and Sophie Collier represented the school and worked really well as a team. Competition was tough and only the top team out of the twenty teams that took part made it through to the final. We did not place first but delivered a strong performance!

What a busy half term the **Year 6** pupils have had! Their learning in English and particularly their writing has been a pleasure to read. All pupils persevered when having to research and write an essay about what they want to be when they grow up and why. After much deliberation, Mary Peat, Daniel Farenden and Max Marino's essays were selected as the finalists and have been entered into the Hoddesdon Rotary competition – we look forward to seeing how they do in the final, in March. Well done to all of the other Year Sixes who took part – it was a real challenge to select just 3 and we know it made some of the pupils think an awful lot, as it's not always easy to know what you want to be at such a young age! Mrs Jones passes on a 'well done' to all of those pupils who continue to read regularly at home – *'It is fantastic to have such high level conversations about the wonderful stories they have been enjoying.'*

In Maths lessons, children have further consolidated their ability to use written methods of all four operations, as well as learning how to interpret pie charts. Using the 'bar model' as a way of solving problems involving percentages has been found to be extremely useful for some pupils and such a pictorial approach will continue to be developed during lessons next half term.

A visit to The John Warner School for a sporting morning was relished by all of our Year 6 pupils, who were very polite, integrated with Cranbourne pupils well and took part enthusiastically. It was an extremely well-organised morning, and we thank the PE department at JWS for hosting.

Our UKS2 pupils continue to help with many jobs around the school, including delivering registers, litter picking and being our 'librarians', who complete any book-related job, of which there are many. We appreciate the help from these committed pupils very much.

The **Book Fair** has been a great success once again and could not have happened without the support from our willing FORS volunteers. From the amazing total of £1150 takings the school will receive £600 commission to spend on books. We shall add to the quality reading material which will be shared throughout the school. The optional Home Learning Challenge was very well-received by many pupils and the children who won a voucher to spend at the Book Fair were: Oliver Keep-Waller, Vincenzo Green, Lennon Walker, Harriet Florence-Broughton, Paige Livermore, Freddie Bartrop and Liam Lancaster.

Following a selection session at the JWS pool our **swimming team** achieved some excellent personal successes at the area swimming gala where we achieved fourth place, with many impressive finalists.

Pupils in years 3 & 4 are making good progress with their weekly swimming sessions. Pupils in the netball and football clubs are training for the area tournaments that will take place before Easter. The teams will be announced soon and details will be sent home to families.

We are grateful to our local Councillor Tim Hutchings who funded the **Dance project** across our 3 Hoddesdon Trust Schools. At Roselands, following class lessons running throughout the whole day, we managed to have all our pupils and staff in the hall together for the final session, which was amazing !

We were pleased to welcome families into school to see how we link the phonic teaching to early stages of reading and discussed the phonics screening test for all pupils in year one. Following the interest shown in the Times Tables sessions we have planned an introduction to the '**Numbots**' program for families with children in Reception classes and Year one, in the first week back after half term.

Our **choir** are in the final stages of learning their music and words for the Royal Albert Hall Gala and recording their entry for the annual local choir competition. Further activities and trips are planned for the second half of the term to enrich our broad curriculum

Over the years our staff and pupils have valued the proximity and expertise from our local **LOWEWOOD** museum. We are saddened by the prospect of its closure and would like to pass on more information on the Lowewood campaign, including action points and template letters etc, which parents and families may want to visit: <http://www.thehoddesdonsociety.org.uk/Save-Lowewood-Museum/>.

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