

News from St Mary's Primary School Hadleigh



The autumn term has flown by! Outside, the old ball boards have been replaced by a splendid set of outdoor fitness equipment, which is getting lots of use before and after school and during break times. The children are enjoying this opportunity to be active and have fun, and are putting into practice what they have learned about taking turns and being kind! Fitness is high on the agenda, with the older children relishing their badminton taster session and the whole school taking part in regular active maths lessons. Also, we are delighted to have formed a partnership with Northampton Saints Rugby club and the children have been enjoying expert rugby coaching this term. The children have put their skills into practice at a rugby festival at Hadleigh High School. On Life Suffolk have delivered a sequence of lessons to two classes to promote healthy lifestyles; they have also provided a workshop on good sleeping habits to children and their parents.



Our Nursery now offers morning and afternoon sessions, which are proving to be very successful. The cabin in the courtyard has been transformed into a sensory space – it is now a peaceful place to relax, with music, story CDs, gentle activities, fairy lights, a lava lamp and disco ball, and a giant beanbag sofa. It is available for all children as a reward or calming place.

Year 3 have been out on a trip to Ipswich Museum to link in with their Ancient Egyptian topic. The children took part in a question and answer trail, held Egyptian artefacts, looked at stuffed animals and shabattis, clay slaves buried with the Pharaohs. Back in class, they have made and painted mud-rock death masks, which look very dramatic!



We have been glad to welcome lots of visitors to our Collective Worship, such as Father Jo, with his lively stories, and Keith Brisland, former deputy head, and Trish Pitt, to help the children focus on this term's Christian values of Thankfulness and Trust. Towards the end of term, Reverend Bryn has introduced Advent, Janice White visited to talk about Christingle and David and Wendy Atkins shared the nativity story, bringing in lots of lovely resources to engage the children.



How proud we were of the children who participated in Harvest Festival at St Mary's Church, by carrying candles in the opening procession, doing the readings and prayers, and acting in Father Jo's talk! Pastor Chris has also visited Worship to talk to the children about renewing the school's Christian vision and we were inspired by the President Kennedy's and Martin Luther King's visions of the future.



Anglian Water gave a presentation to the whole school, and then a workshop in year 4 about water conservation and cleaning, and sewage disposal. The children learned that to fill up their own water bottles, rather than buying them in the supermarket, cost 0.001p!



Sian Bendall from Hollow Trees Farm visited the school to tell the children all about 'Farmer Christmas' and in a very engaging presentation described the preparation and planning that has to take place long in advance of the Christmas season in order to have enough sprout sticks and other vegetables to go round, not to mention the all-important Christmas tree!



Year 6 have produced lots of work after their wet but wonderful week away at Aylmerton Field Studies Centre. They studied coastal erosion and sea defences, took part in team building exercises and were taken out of their comfort zone by a twilight safari! Year 5 have looked into e-safety, creating a presentation for their parents. Some of them enjoyed a day at BT Adastral Park with children from other local schools, programming bots to light up, stop, go and turn and follow tracks, with a race at the end. Alfie said, 'I enjoyed making the bot do what I told it to do!'



Year 2 have been busy writing fantasy stories involving dragons, working hard at extending their sentences using adjectives and varying their sentence openers. In Science they have been investigating the absorbency of materials, devising their own investigations. Dinosaurs have been spotted in year 1, with eggs being taken home to hatch! The children have practised their IT skills by writing a non-fiction article about dinosaurs on the laptops. In RE they have looked at christenings and baptisms, and had fun acting out a baptism service complete with pretend parents, godparents and a baby! Reception children have been experiencing the colours and textures of the autumn season by going on an autumn walk and exploring various autumn objects. They have listened to the book, 'All Kinds of People', and have painted self-portraits, mixing paints to create the right skin colour.

The whole school enjoyed a funny and exciting production of 'Alice in Wonderland' by M&M Theatre Company which inspired some great story, letter and diary writing. Year 6 took part in a workshop after the performance, learning about lighting, the sound system and scenery – in fact the whole sequence of production, from casting and rehearsal to performance on stage.



Just before the half term break, everyone spent a day looking at and discussing positive role models – people who have succeeded in achieving their goals after overcoming obstacles relating to race, gender stereotyping, disability or ill-health. The children talked about the people at home and in public life who have inspired them. They shared their ideas in a final assembly and took away Poppy’s uplifting thought: ‘look beyond what you can see’.



Recently, we have enjoyed an art theme week; parents came in to support their children and watch the work in progress and then the week culminated in a wonderful art show. Parents and friends were invited to view and were suitably impressed!



Remembrance has been at the forefront this term: Year 5 walked to the cemetery to hear Mark Brennan talk about the soldiers from the First and Second World Wars who had sacrificed their lives for their country. Later, in class, the children found out about soldiers from the Caribbean, who also served in the Second World War. Our new Worship Council led an assembly about Remembrance so that all the children could reflect on service and sacrifice.

It was lovely to see all the musical talent on show for a special music assembly to finish the term. Different classes showcased their learning from music lessons, singing songs and entertaining the audience. Parents were also treated to a performance from our violin group and a piano solo.

Christmas isn't Christmas without a re-telling of the Nativity story and we enjoyed two of them. The Early Years performed 'The Sleepy Shepherd' and Years 1 and 2 gave us 'It's a Cracker!'. In both cases, the audiences were held spellbound by the excellent singing, dancing and costumes, and some impressive acting and line-learning from the KS1 children.



Many thanks to the Friends of St Mary's, who organised the popular Christmas Disco and our annual Christmas Fete to raise funds for the school. We are really grateful for all the time and effort put in by so many people to make these events successful. As always, the Christmas Fete was well-attended and full of fun. There were real reindeer for the children to see and lots of children queued up to visit Santa! The children really enjoyed the games and Christmas crafts.

During the last week of term, the whole school took part in a Design Technology day, which involved designing, making and evaluating projects as diverse as pompoms and bread. We were impressed by the productivity and ingenuity of the children.

A big thank you is due to our hard-working kitchen staff who prepared, cooked and served a fantastic Christmas lunch for everyone. It was a festive and colourful occasion, with some hilarious hats and jolly jumpers on show!



Year 6, after working very hard in their first term, let off steam on the last morning at a trampolining event at Hadleigh High School. Then they came down to earth again as they joined the rest of the school, together with parents, grandparents and friends, at the Christmas service at St Mary's church. Such a lovely way to end a busy term!