

# Willingham Primary School



## End of Autumn Term Letter 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019



Dear Parents and Carers,

We come to the end of another calendar year, so it's time to take a moment, reflect back on what is always the longest term of the school year and highlight some of the fantastic things that have been going on. And what a term it has been!

The last few weeks of term provide the perfect examples of the types of successes that we've had. With art work from our pupils, on display and taking an entire wall at Fitzwilliam museum, being previewed the same weekend as our school choir's contribution to the single 'A place to call home' being released (which has hit the top 5 in the digital download chart), the school's ongoing commitment to the arts is a real defining feature of what we do and provides pupils with incredible opportunities to showcase their efforts.

We've had three fabulous theatrical performances this term, with the Y1/2 children's rendition of Columbus the Musical kicking the season off, being the culmination of their history unit comparing Columbus and Shackleton. This, in turn, is the beginning of a journey in history across the school that develops pupils understanding of 'Empire' and of the impact of colonialism over time.

Our oldest pupils put on a brilliant version of A Christmas Carol, again chosen to support the pupils' cultural capital and to give them an advantage at Cottenham Village College where they will go on to study Dickens' classic in Year 8.

Finally, the dramatic smorgasbord was brought to a close with the fabulous EYFS performance of 'Whoops-a-Daisy Angel' that warmed all our hearts and set us all up for the well-deserved break.

The school has also faced some great sadness over the recent weeks and it would be remiss of me not to, once again, send our messages of support and care, both now and in future, to all families who are going through difficult times and hope that you all have a peaceful and restful Christmas.

I wish you all a happy new year and look forward to seeing you in 2020, with Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January being the first day the children are back in school.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dave Morel', with a stylized, cursive script.

*Dave Morel*  
*Headteacher*

## This term we have...

We have welcomed our new reception children into school and have all been very proud of the way the children have settled into the daily routines.

We have also started to teach StoryTime phonics. Children are captivated by the phonics fairy and the secret fairy door she flies through at night.



After a long wait, the new house ties for Years 5/6 arrived. The addition of ties to the uniform has made them all look very smart!

Thanks to a portion of last year's Business Enterprise profits, the ties only cost £4 each.

We had our harvest assemblies in September. The children worked hard in their classes to learn poems and songs about harvest and performed them in front of the school, parents and carers. Thank you again for the amazing donations of food for the Ely Foodbank.

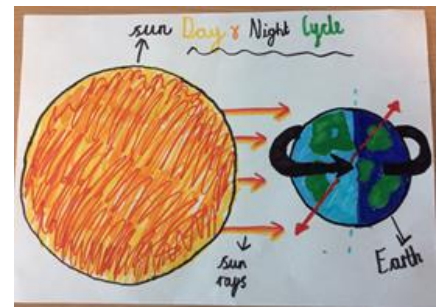
We also supported the Macmillan coffee morning. We raised an amazing £472! Our thanks again to Willingham Auctions Café, The Book Warren and Café, Bushel Box, Co-op, One Stop and Aspens for donations of cakes, raffle prizes, tea and coffee.



In Year 3, during their geography lessons, they learnt about volcanoes. The children found out about the build-up of pressure beneath the earth's surface and what happens throughout the process of a volcanic eruption. They talked about what happens to the magma as it reaches the surface through the vent of the volcano, linking it to the work they have been doing in science lessons on rocks and how they are formed and change over time. To demonstrate what happens when pressure builds up, they created a chemical reaction to imitate what it might look like when a volcano erupts.

Although this chemical reaction demonstrated clearly what happens when pressure builds, the children were taught explicitly that this isn't a true representation of what happens beneath the earth's surface.

In Years 5 and 6, they enjoyed learning about the Earth and other planets in our solar system. They found out that our solar system is full of relatively small and big planets and also how powerful the sun is; the sun is a 4.6 billion year old star which is 1.3 million times larger than our planet; the temperature of the sun is approximately 15 million degrees Celsius.



In October, the children in Years 1 and 2 wowed audiences with their performances of "Columbus: The Musical!" The children told the tale of Columbus and his dream of finding a faster route to the Indies but how he actually landed in America. The play was full of fantastic acting and enthusiastic singing which kept the audience entertained. This play really brought their Explorers topic to life and we are very proud of how the children performed.



In November Years 1 and 2 made a trip into Cambridge for a double dose of University excitement. One port of call was The Scott Polar Research Institute that has some astonishing

artefacts from Shackleton's actual exploration. These included: binoculars; a sextant; and packages of food such as chocolate and cocoa! Whilst in the museum, the children heard about the research going on now and the explorations of the past, as well as trying on some of the essential clothing for survival in the icy conditions of the Antarctic. After a short walk, the classes arrived at the Botanic gardens. The children tasted four different varieties of apple: Cox, Spartan, Honeycrisp and Crispin! Despite most being enjoyed by all, Honeycrisp was voted the most popular. After that, everyone got to explore the Botanic School's garden with a treasure hunt. The children investigated some of the different ways our food grows even at this time of year.

Also in November, Foundation Stage had a visit from The Raptor Foundation as they had been learning all about owls for their topic. The children were able to see a variety of birds and even saw some of the birds of prey in flight around the school hall. This was a really exciting afternoon and a great opportunity to ask the experts questions.







During this term, the Year 4 history topic has been the Ancient Greeks with the focus on answering the question of, 'How democratic were the Ancient Greeks?'. They learnt about the origins of the Olympics approximately 3000 years ago, and how they compare with today's modern day Olympic Games. Using their knowledge of the Hellenic city-states, they have learnt about the various wars which took place throughout these times, including how different democratic societies, such as Sparta and Athens, were run by those in charge.

At the end of November, all of the children in Years 5 and 6 performed a musical production of Scrooge. They worked extremely hard to remember their lines, to practise song lyrics, to learn dance moves, to remember stage directions and to hone their acting skills. They had a strong team of stage hands who have helped to create props. Together with brilliant sound and lighting technicians, the stage crew team helped to ensure that the play ran smoothly. We were so proud of all the pupils. This truly felt like a team effort and we were extremely impressed with the way the children worked together and were supportive of each other.



Last week saw our youngest children's performance of Whoops-a-Daisy Angel. Our Foundation Stage children, who have only been at school for one term, performed their nativity play superbly and amazed everyone with their singing, clear lines and flawless acting.

## Art

The children have been busy in the Art Studio this term. In the weeks before half-term, every child designed and made a Christmas card which parents and carers have been able to order or have reproduced on mugs and calendars. A group of 5/6 pupils designed a nativity scene which we unveiled on 6<sup>th</sup> December as part of the village advent window scheme.

We were also very excited to learn that several of the paintings created by the Year 5s and 6s, together with a clay figure, have become part of the Inspire exhibition in the Fitzwilliam. Please take time to visit the Fitzwilliam Museum if you can. The exhibition will be on display until March 2020.



### **Years 5 & 6**

It was in the first half-term of this year that the Year 5s and 6s took part in Inspire 2020, a project run by the Fitzwilliam Museum in collaboration with Access Art and based on the National Gallery's *Take one picture*. Pupils created artwork inspired by *Cupid and Psyche* by Jacopo del Sellaio, a painting in the museum's collection. They worked independently or in self-selected groups on a project which was entirely their own idea. In a single lesson, there were children printing, painting, sewing and using clay. The Art Studio was buzzing!



In the second half of the term, we have been studying abstract art. We began by creating art inspired by the work of Wassily Kandinsky and went on to look at Abstract Expressionism and the paintings of Gillian Ayres. The children are currently creating an abstract piece representing something of significance in their own lives using oil pastel





### Years 3 & 4

The Year 3s and 4s began the year by studying Japanese ukiyo-e. They looked in detail at Hokusai's *Under the Great Wave*, and at art by Utagawa Hiroshige and produced wave paintings of their own using pen and wash.



In the second half-term, we studied contemporary ceramics, in particular the art of Kate Malone, and went on to design and create clay pinch pots in the shape of monsters. Clay day is always greeted by great excitement in the art studio. The children have now painted and varnished their pots, which look amazing. Since then, they have been learning about pots from Ancient Greece.



### Years 1 & 2

In their first two lessons, the Year 1s and 2s created some wonderful robot pictures. We went on to learn all about Monet and the Impressionists. The children began by focusing on Monet's *Waterlilies* and *Japanese Bridge* (1897) and produced some beautiful versions of their own.



In the second half-term, they began by using oil pastel and watercolour to make weather pictures while learning about the colour wheel. They continued their study of Claude Monet, created a painting inspired by *Impression soleil levant* or *Impression, Sunrise* (1879). In the last few weeks, the children have painted flowers using the skills and techniques they learned from the Impressionists. They were very excited to see the monster pots that the older pupils had been making from clay so we made our own monster pictures on a black background.



If you would like to find out more about any of these projects, there are additional photographs and further details on the art blog.

## **Choir**

This term the choir have been so busy! In September we started learning our Young Voices songs, ready for our trip to perform at Wembley Stadium in February. In October some of the choir travelled to London to join 2300 other singers to record the charity single, "A Place

to Call Home". The recording took place at the London Coliseum Theatre - which was an awe-inspiring venue. It was also a real honour to sing with the English National Opera, their orchestra and the opera legends - Sir Bryn Terfel and Leslie Garrett. The single came out this month and we were thrilled to see 'A Place to Call Home' reach number two in the Amazon download chart. The choir also sang beautifully at the Christmas Fayre in November, as well as, the school carol service. Well done choir!





## **Sporting Achievements**

### **September**

- We hosted Hardwick Primary in our first football friendly of the year. The boys from Willingham played magnificently and produced a brilliant performance, winning the game 10-0! Five goals in each half capped off the perfect performance from all the players. Special mention to Ollie who bagged five of the goals and for Robert who also scored a hat trick! Well done to all the players.
- Sixteen year 5/6 children played a friendly game of cricket against Cottenham Primary School. The children were split into two teams of eight and played a version of kwik cricket. It was a stunning afternoon for cricket and the children played really well! Willingham won both games with some excellent bowling and fielding helping with the victories! We are very grateful to Cottenham for hosting a brilliant afternoon and well done to all the children for playing so well!

### **October**

- We hosted two Fen Drayton teams and played a round robin Netball Tournament
- Our Year 6 boys travelled to Fenstanton to play a football friendly, which they won 4-1.
- Our Year 5 boys hosted Cottenham Primary in another football friendly which was a very good and close game that Cottenham won 2-1.
- Twelve Year 3/4 children went to an Orienteering Event where they learnt a huge amount about the sport. One team from Willingham won the 'Spirit of the Games Award' for their passion!
- 13 boys took part in a football tournament at Impington VC. They all played really well and represented us brilliantly.
- Later that afternoon, our netball team took on Pathfinder and won comprehensively 8-2! This was fantastic preparation for the tournament after half term.
- 10 children took part in an archery event at Cottenham Primary which was a great experience.
- 7 children played in a girls' football tournament at Impington and showed a massive improvement from last year, scoring lots of goals and winning games.
- At the end of October, we officially launched the 'Daily Mile' with special guest, Marvin The Moose! Marvin came and celebrated the fact that we have children running every single day to help improve fitness, wellbeing and concentration in the classroom. The children were so excited to see Marvin and loved running around the playground with him and giving the 'Moose' a high five!
- We took two teams to a Netball Tournament at Cottenham Village College. This is a two-part tournament with the second part in the new year. Both teams played extremely well with lots of goals being scored and games won. The A and the B team are both currently sitting in second place in their tables.
- Our girls' football team welcomed Cottenham Primary School for a friendly match. The game was played with great attitude from both teams and it was a pleasure to watch. Cottenham won 4-1, so it was a big learning opportunity for our players.



## **November**

- 7 children from Willingham headed over to Cottenham to play a football friendly. This was a good opportunity for children to play who hadn't had that many competitive experiences this year. The game was played with a great attitude from both sets of players and it was an extremely close match with both sides cancelling each other out with excellent saves and defending. The match finished 0-0, but it was a very entertaining encounter.
- 15 boys from took part in the EFL Cup, hosted by Cambridge United at Bottisham Village College. The children were split into two teams, a Year 6 team and a Year 5 team. This was a Year 6 competition so it was fantastic to see the Year 5's battling against the older children. Both teams played really well and represented their school brilliantly. The Year 6 team narrowly missed out on the semi-finals and the Year 5's drew against the team that won the competition.

## **December**

- Willingham hosted a Girls' Football Tournament! However, due to a school pulling out and a number of children being unwell, it turned into a mixed friendly with Milton Primary School. This was an excellent match played with a fantastic spirit. Both teams were evenly matched and it finished in a 1-1 draw. The children then all had a chance to score in a penalty shoot-out. We look forward to hosting Milton again in the future.
- A reminder that the Cross Country at Wimpole has been rearranged for Tuesday 24th March 2020.

## **After School Club (WOOSC)**

What another busy term, we made the most of getting outside and enjoying the fresh air until the weather changed! Once the dark nights came we put our creative minds to work with some seasonal crafts to keep the room colourful and bright, look out for the snow globes coming home!



We continue offering varied activities and always welcome new ideas.

The ASC team wish you a Merry Christmas and send best wishes for the new year.

## **School Council**

The School Council elections took place just before half-term. We are very grateful to those amazing pupils who gave their time over the last year to represent the views of their peers and to make the school better for everyone. Thank you all!

The new members were keen to make a start with their responsibilities. So far, we have looked at the changes in routines and behavioural expectations brought in at the beginning of the year and have drawn up a questionnaire for pupils in order to assess the effect of these on learning and general well-being. We have also been involved in developing some wonderful graphic designs which we hope will make the new values and drivers clear to pupils and visitors alike and change the school environment in a positive way.

We are now looking at the possibility of making some exciting changes to the way in which we run dinner times and will be consulting the pupils more widely about our plans over the next term. Well done to all the representatives.



## Honeypot Pre- School



This term has followed a range of the children's interests, with a big focus on autumn following the return of autumn treasure hunt bags, that were sent home at half term. The children explored the items they found on the autumn

table, using magnifying glasses to see them in detail prompting lots of discussions on texture, as well as growth and decay. We took them for a walk around the school looking for leaves and naming trees.



The children also learnt about Divali and how it is the festival of light, they looked at all the patterns and recreated their own using powder paints and brushes and drawing around their hands to create the henna patterns they were shown.

We finished this term by joining in with the village advent event and created a scene for the bakery window, which the children really enjoyed and were proud of.



## Christmas Tree



A big thank you again to Jake Oldham of Newnham Christmas Trees, for the amazing Christmas tree that was delivered in time for the Winter Fayre and is now on display in the school hall.

## Things we have supported this term

- £472 raised from the coffee morning



- 206kg donated to Ely Foodbank



- 92 shoeboxes were donated to orphanages around the world



- We raised £338.35 for Children In Need



- We raised £235 for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal



- Bags2Schools Clothing Collection  
340kg collected raising £136

- £126 raised in donations during the Christmas carol services for Arthur Rank Hospice



## **WSA (Willingham School Association)**

The end of 2019 is almost here, and we are all looking forward to the Christmas celebrations and relaxing with family and friends! Here, we take a quick look back at the fundraising activities that we've been busy with since September...

We kicked off the start of term with tea and cakes during the AGM, a Friday Fun event with a BBQ, bar and inflatables and a Pamper Night – it was a busy first term! All were well attended and they raised over £1200.



The Winter Fayre proved to be a very well attended event with a lovely atmosphere. There were stalls, music, festive food and drink, Santa's Grotto, a storytelling room and even Alpacas this year. We hope everyone enjoyed the event. A profit of approximately £2,000 was made, so thank you for all the support with help, donations and attending!

Thank you to everyone who has contributed cakes for all the cake sales, and for all the bags of clothing, shoes, towels and cuddly toys for the Bags2School campaign.

We finished the year with two evenings of wreath making (which were both sold out events), and the children also designed their own Christmas cards which were sent home for parents to buy. The Christmas cards raised £321.



The WSA is proud to be able to fund the following already for the school:

- £5 for each pupil towards school trips
- A coach for the O2 choir trip
- Numbots App subscription for maths
- New midday equipment and games for the whole school
- Christmas crackers for the whole school for Christmas lunch
- Support for the swimming pool
- Long term fund raising for the running track

The pupils will also have the annual Pantomime to look forward to on their return to school in the New Year, which is funded by the WSA.

A huge thank you must go to Willingham Co-op who have once again provided us with huge monetary support with their Community Funding scheme. We have just received £4,347.97, which is to be used for IT resources and upgrading the ICT suite.

For anyone keen to get fit in the New Year, the Fen Gallop next year is on Sunday 5th July with the first 150 entries at early bird pricing at <https://www.evententry.co.uk/fen-gallop-2020>

Thank you to everyone who has supported the WSA this year. Any help is always greatly appreciated, and we always welcome new members and fundraising ideas. We look forward to seeing you for more fundraising in 2020!

Happy Christmas!  
From your WSA Committee



