



# St. Nicholas C of E Primary School

East Challow, Wantage, Oxon, OX12 9RY

*Life in all its fullness John 10:10*  
*Belonging, Compassion and Resilience*



Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

OFSTED report has finally arrived! It has been a long time waiting, but I'm sure you will feel as pleased as we are that it captures all that makes St Nics a very special place for our children. This is a real celebration of the hard work and dedication put in by the whole school team over the last few years especially, and I am very proud to be headteacher of such a wonderfully inclusive and nurturing school which brings out the best in everyone. Areas for development for us are a few of our wider curriculum subjects, which we have already started work on. Thank you all for your support over the last few years as we have made changes to the school, which have been recognised and celebrated in this report. It is appreciated.

## **Family Science Evening**

During the Family Science Evening, we invite you as a family to make a rocket which we will test using our air launchers. That week, all children will have the opportunity to also make a rocket in school to think about how they work and what the best designs are. As last year, there will be prizes for the best design and also for the rocket which travels the furthest.

## **Lent**

During Lent this year we will again be using resources from the Archbishops' Young People's Award to guide our Whole School Worship. This year, the title of the programme is 'Look In; Look Out'. Each week has a different theme related to one of the communities that our pupils belong to. The 'Look In' calls on the children to reflect. The 'Look Out' calls on them to give, speak out or act. The first week focuses on 'Family'.

Below is some of the text from this week's slide:

*Family is the first community we belong to. Families come in all shapes and sizes, they bring happiness and support but also sometimes challenges.*

Children have been encouraged to do something for their family community this week. Please let us know if your child has acted upon this, and made someone in your family's day!

## **Term Dates**

We have a very busy term ahead with lots of opportunities to get involved in school life. List of dates are below.

**Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March** – World Book Day celebration. Dress up as a book character if you would like, with the book the character is from.

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March 7.30pm** – Band Night (Legion, East Challow) organised by Friends of St Nics.

**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March 3pm – 5pm** – Netball tournament (netball club only)

**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March** – Tag Rugby final (PM)- time to be confirmed



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**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March** – OWLS CAKE SALE!  
**Thursday March 23<sup>rd</sup>** Family Science Evening 6pm  
**Monday 27<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March** – Parents Meetings.  
*Sign up sheets will go up the week before*

## What's going on around the school

### Wrens

The children have really been excited about our new 'dinosaur' topic. It has been a very noisy week, with lots of wondering 'ROARING' dinosaurs inside and out. We talked about why there were large dinosaur foot prints on the floor, when they arrived on Monday. The children concluded, that it must have been a T-Rex in the classroom and that he must have been looking for some food for when the babies hatch out of their eggs. We have had lots of fun in the role play area, where we were pretending to be Paleontologists. We have been camping out in the home corner with a sleeping bag, making camp fires and dinner, dressing up and digging up dinosaur fossils and bones.

We explored making dinosaurs with playdough and used dried pasta for their spikes. We also used pasta to glue onto paper to make dinosaur skeletons. The children have also used different shapes to make dinosaurs.

This week we have begun to select four words that have been our focus for the children to learn and talk about, these are; paleontologist, dinosaur, fossil and Tyrannosaurs Rex. For phonic we have thought of lots of words that begin with the letter 'p'. The children have been very good at finding words everywhere that they look, even on their food packets at lunch time. Every time, they find a word beginning with 'p' we write it on the board and I try to draw a picture to go with it.

On Tuesday the children enjoying eating pancakes for snack. On Wednesday we went on a Dinosaur hunt in Forest School, unfortunately we didn't find any but we did have lots of fun exploring.

Mrs Betts and the Early Years Team

### Kingfishers

We have introduced our new dinosaur topic this week which has been a huge hit. The children have learnt about fossils, created their own bones and came up with descriptive sentences to label a T- Rex. Following this the children drew their own dinosaurs and added labels, it was lovely to see how proud they were of their work! This term our key text is Ten Terrible Dinosaurs, which we will learn by heart and innovate.



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On the maths table, we have been using multi link blocks to measure height and length of different dinosaurs and compared which groups had the same/ different amounts of blocks.

Pancake day was enjoyed by all whilst role playing pancake making and flipping, writing what our favourite topping is and eating them for snack.

Mrs Merryweather has been looking at similarities and differences with the children to begin a sequence of lessons around 'understanding the world' which is one of the 7 areas of focus in early years. She was really impressed with what they noticed in similarities and different between people and places.

Outside we have been hunting dinosaurs, digging for bones in the sandpit and singing using the musical instruments!

Next week will be a mix of a dinosaur and world book day focus. We will be joining a few popular children's authors online, including Julia Donaldson and spend a day learning about the story 'The Leaf'. We welcome the children to come dressed as a character from their favourite book or if preferred, bring in a book to share that they enjoy.

Ms Dyet and the Kingfishers team

### Robins

This week, in history, Robin Class have been learning about some significant people in history who made a positive difference. We have undertaken drama around the life and actions of Florence Nightingale, re-creating the arduous journey to Turkey and exploring who she was and why she wanted to go to Scutari.

We also explored the picturebook, The Princess Who Hid in a Tree, which was about the life of Princess Frideswide, whose bravery led to the creation of a monastery in Oxford, now later developed into Christchurch Cathedral. She was made a saint for her work helping and healing people and is now the patron saint of Oxford. We looked at when she was born (around 650AD) and placed her on our class timeline.

In English, we have been looking at the role letters have played in communicating with people through the ages and how important letters were when there were very few other methods of communication. We looked at common features of letters, in preparation to planning a letter in role as Florence.

In music, we continued to work on pattern and tempo, copying and learning new refrains and matching our voices to a steady beat, whilst in PE we started to learn new playground games and work on football skills.

In maths, Year 1s have continued to work on their understanding of numbers to 100, playing games around ordering and explaining numbers. Year 2s have continued to work on their subtraction skills, subtracting from two digit numbers, using our number bonds within 10 to do this accurately.

Ms Winter and Ms Miller

## Owls



This week in Owls we have been focusing on our final outcome in History. This is a competition in teams based around research on Mary Anning. The children must then compose a poster in which they will present to the class. We have talked in depth about public speaking and how the more research they conduct, the more confident they will feel. Owls are proud of what they have created so far and will be brilliant at presenting their ideas to their peers.

In PE, now the children have harnessed all the skills needed for tag rugby we have begun to play matches. It is safe to say the children found this challenging, particularly the direction of throwing the ball. It has been lovely that the children have been so resilient and have not given up on succeeding in the game. Our assistant coaches in Owl class have been brilliant at supporting others with their prior knowledge of the game and have been encouraging to all.

In Geography we have been looking at the ring of fire and where the majority of volcanic eruptions and earth quakes take place. The children had the task of deciding where the ring of fire is near the Pacific Ocean. The amount of information they could recall about the locations and countries inside the ring of fire was outstanding. Owl class have been so passionate about our topic based around natural disasters and have been taking an active approach to learning in class and outside of class too.

Mrs Richards

## Red Kites

This term our Writing units focus on the poem 'The Highwayman' by Alfred Noyes. Next week we will be looking at the picture book version illustrated by Charles Keeping, but as the language in the poem is quite archaic, we have spent this week learning the plot so that we understand what is happening. On Tuesday, I witnessed some brilliant performances of the story and Wednesday and Thursday were spent investigating how to expand noun phrases/use specific sentence structures to develop our writing. I am looking forward to reading the retellings that they will have written today (Friday).

Our Project this term continues to be linked to exploration of the poles, but focusing more on the Arctic this time. Our enquiry question in History this term focuses on who the real heroes were when it came to the sinking of the Titanic. We will also be considering whether one factor was a greater cause of the sinking than any others. In Geography, we are learning about the difference between polar oceans and other oceans around the world. We have therefore planned an investigation this week into the factors that most affect the rate at which ice melts into salt water.

Year 5 have been working on becoming more fluent with the short division method, while Year 6 have been developing their understanding of how to subtract mixed numbers. The children in both year groups have shown determination and resilience in their approach to these topics. However, both year groups have realised that things are much easier if you are fluent with your times tables. We will continue to practise these in school, but any time spent on them at home won't be wasted!

Mrs Mallinson

## High 5's

### Wrens

Evie Marie for being very good with her phonics this week and finding lots of words beginning with 'p'

Stevie for doing lots of extra language work at home the week.

### Kingfishers

Beth for brilliant, independent sentence writing.

Jakub for sharing his knowledge on dinosaurs.

### Robins

Jamie for his good writing this week, applying his phonics and Roman and Violet for their great handwriting.

### Owls

Hayden for doing so incredibly well in Math's and having a can-do attitude.

Emily for trying so hard in her English writing and being a strong role model to others.



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## Red Kites

Stanley for his grit and determination in taking part in the mini-speaks competition on Wednesday night.

Joshua for going out of his way to help others around him.

Have a lovely weekend

Mrs Richards and the St Nics team



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