

Friday 30th September

Dear Parents and Carers,

This week we saw the return of our much enjoyed 'Books and Bears' evening for KS1 and Early Years. During the session Ms Winter gave a presentation to parents on reading and phonics which was really well received. If you were unable to make the meeting, please do contact the office and we can provide copies of the presentation. Next term we will be doing a Books and Bears evening for the older children as I know they enjoy these evenings too.

We also had our McMillan coffee morning on Friday, run by some of our oldest children. I know that not everyone can make events during a working day but for those of you who could make it your support was appreciated.



### Parents Meetings

**Parents meeting** sign up sheets are now available for you to sign up to a parents evening slot. They will be held on **Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October (3.30-5.30pm)** and **Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October (3.30-6.30pm / Wrens and Kingfishers 5-6.30pm)**. You will find the sheets outside each classroom until the end of next week at the end of the day. Alternatively, if you give the office a call they will have the clipboards with them during the day and you can make your appointment that way. This is an opportunity for you to meet your child's teacher, find out how they have settled into their new class and find out how you can work with us to support your child's learning across the year. Mrs Merryweather, our SENDCo will also be available if you wish to talk with her too.

Introducing Mrs Merryweather....



*My name is Mrs Merryweather and I am the new SENCo at St Nics. I joined the team in September and have enjoyed spending time in classrooms getting to know all of the children and finding my feet as part of this lovely St Nics family. Thank you all for welcoming me so warmly.*

*My role at St Nics is to co-ordinate support for our pupils who may require additional support. I work alongside class teachers, parents and teaching assistants to ensure that all of our pupils are enabled to achieve their potential. I am looking forward to getting to know all of the pupils and their families.*

*My SENCo days are Tuesdays and Wednesdays and I can be contacted via the school office. I will also be teaching in Kingfishers on a Thursday.*

### Tok Tok and Internet Safety sessions

Next **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October**, Tik-Tok and Internet safety sessions will run at **3.15pm** and then again at **5.30pm** in the school hall. The content of the two sessions will be the same and is appropriate for parents of children in any class. The aim of the session is to help all parents understand a bit more about how such platforms work, how to ensure your child has adequate parental controls on any device they use and most of all help you understand how to keep them safe online.



# 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*



## Friends of St Nics

For those who don't know, 'Friends of St Nics' is the group of parents who raise money for the school. With the budget getting tighter every year, it's vitally important that we generate extra funds, to enable us to provide the best possible experience for the children. Monies raised by the Friends have paid for the setting up of the Forest School, as well as sports kits, software licences, IT equipment and much more. Most of the fundraising takes place at events spread across the school year, from after-school tuck shops, to film nights, Christmas fairs and summer fêtes.

We really need more volunteers, to help with the fundraising. At some events, like the summer fête, the amount of money we raise is directly related to the number of helpers that we have and so it's really important that we have as many as possible. There are two ways you can help out: You can join the committee, who meet about once a term (often over Zoom) to plan the fundraising events and allocate the money that is raised. Or you can join the group of helpers, who volunteer at some of the events when needed. Our current committee and helper groups are mostly made up of parents whose children are in the upper half of the school, so it would be brilliant to get some Kingfishers', Wrens' or Robins' parents to join.

There is a Facebook group for all parents and carers, not just the fundraisers. It's for sharing information about events and also just asking about what's happening in school or sometimes help in locating lost jumpers! Please all join, if you're on Facebook. You can find it by searching for 'Friends of St Nics', or using this link: [www.tinyurl.com/u7y8y](http://www.tinyurl.com/u7y8y). If you are able to help out, by joining either the committee or the wider helpers group, please post on the Facebook group, or message Tara Benbow, Emma Amor, Lucy Harbour or Chloë Heywood.

## Harvest Festival

On the **20<sup>th</sup> of October** we will have our Harvest Festival Church service. As we have done in previous years, we would like to collect donations for the food bank. If you would like to contribute, **please could you send in items with your child that morning**. Any items donated need to have at least one or more months to go. Below is a list of the items that are of most use (please note that they cannot take fresh or home-made food due to storage problems).

Tins or packets of soup  
Packets of rice  
Tins of fish  
Packets of pasta  
Tins of meat  
Jars of pasta sauce  
Tins of tomatoes  
Tins of fruit  
Tins of potatoes  
Tins of rice pudding  
Tins of baked beans/spaghetti  
Tins of custard (not needing milk added)  
Tins of other vegetables  
Jars of jam  
Packets of biscuits  
Packets of teabags  
Packets of breakfast cereal  
Packets/jars of hot chocolate (not needing milk added)  
UHT milk  
Packets of sugar  
Jars of coffee  
Large cartons of long-life fruit juice



Headteacher: Mrs H. Richards  
Telephone: 01235 763858  
Email: [officesn@stnicholasce.vale-academy.org](mailto:officesn@stnicholasce.vale-academy.org)  
Web: [www.st-nicholas-pri.oxon.sch.uk](http://www.st-nicholas-pri.oxon.sch.uk)



Packets of sweets  
Packets of treats

Last year some of our year 6's helped deliver and sort the food with a volunteer from the food bank which proved a real eye-opener. They were amazed at how well organised the food bank was and also how generously people donate. Thank you in advance for your support.

## Playleaders, Eco Council and School Council



This week, St Nics welcomed three new Playleaders- Josh, Phoenix and Stanley (Red Kites). Their job is to set up and run activities for the younger children at lunchtimes and even though they have just started they have already got some keen participants. This is also a fantastic opportunity for them to develop their leadership and communication skills as they teach children younger than them.

We also have a full School Council and Eco-council as voted on within classes. Our School council is: Ewan (Red Kites), Ellis and Jake(Owls), Grace and Roman (Robins). Eco Council are Zsombor (Red Kites), Josie and Joshua (Red Kites), Hayden and Harper (Owls), Jamie and Suzy (Robins). Kingfishers will also have a school council rep by the end of term too.

## What's been going on around the school

### Wrens

Another brilliant week as we get closer to Autumn. The children have been noticing changes in the environment such as finding conkers and leaves on the floor and that the temperature has suddenly dropped! Thank you to the parents for being prepared for all weathers, this makes our outdoor learning through play as enjoyable as possible. We explored how different natural resources feel and I was pleasantly surprised with the words the children used to describe the objects, as well as making comparisons. In the mornings, The Wrens are learning to look for their names as a form of self-registration and place them on the picture of a Wren, many are excellent at recognizing their names and look for the initial letter at the start. Following this, we participate in a daily 'wake up shake up' which the children love and can show of their best dance moves. I have noticed that many of the children take a keen interest in number and point it out within the environment. We have been practicing a lot of number recognition, using number books and interactive songs on the board. During learning through play there are constant opportunities that link to maths and counting, and we will be modelling mathematic language as we play. We read 'Maybe something beautiful' during carpet time and looked at how the houses that were originally grey and unexciting, were painted with a variety of colours and these were called 'murals'. Images from the story were added to the crafting table for inspiration and the children used water colours and oil pastels to explore colour whilst mark marking. Playdough has been introduced and the children manipulated rollers and cutters to make 'cookies' and other yummy delicacies. We used a timer to turn take which was extremely successful, and the children were happy to wait for their go, well done Wren's. Please can I remind parents to hang the children's belongings on the coat rack outside the main door, there is a shelf underneath to store lunchboxes, thank you!

Ms Dyet

## Kingfishers

This week, in Kingfishers, we have enjoyed using the newly installed play house in our garden. Lots of children have also been developing their balancing skills and cooperation making obstacle courses with our tyres and planks and the sandpit continues to be a firm favourite. We have been learning to read and write the letter sounds s and a and getting used to taking part in phonics lessons both altogether on the carpet and working in our booklets in small groups. I have been particularly impressed with the children's concentration and enthusiasm in phonics. In maths, we have been learning about different aspects of counting within 5 by counting pictures on space and superhero themed I spy sheets and counting actions such as jumps. We have shared the book *Maybe Something Beautiful* which is a true story about urban art seen through the eyes of a girl called Mira. The children have created water colour and oil pastel pictures inspired by the images in the book. Connected to our outdoor builders' role play, we have been enjoying builders inspired dance in PE over the past few weeks.



Mrs Thorpe

## Robins



This week, Robin Class have been busy learning about geography of the UK and learning its different countries and capitals. The children have also been exploring where we are positioned within in England. Within our mantle story, the team has been using mapping skills to track the elusive gruffalo, alongside setting some humane traps, which would allow the gruffalo to be caught but not harmed.

In art, they have made some fabulous clay images of the gruffalo's head, which we will paint later in the term. The children worked on making marks and changing the shape of the clay.

In science, we visited Forest School to look for signs of autumn and noticed how the leaves were changing. We identified horse chestnut, fir and sycamore trees and looked at how different horse chestnut and sycamore seeds were.

In English, in order to see if anyone could help us find the gruffalo, we have been creating Have You Seen A Gruffalo posters, with the inclusion of the children's watercolour gruffalo images. In our mantle story, we imagined displaying these on trees in Nut Wood and the team was pleased to receive a visit from a hedgehog (represented by Miss Winter), who had seen the gruffalo and was able to give some further details as to its possible whereabouts once the team asked some pertinent questions. More searching the woods in the story will be needed next week. In maths, we have continued working on our number bonds to 10 and 20, our understanding of the place value of numbers and recapping our odd and even numbers and doubles and near doubles of numbers. In RE, we have started to learn a harvest poem and in PE we have continued to work on ball skills, following instructions and cooperation. Its been a busy week!

Ms Winter and Mrs Miller

## Owls

This week in Owls, we have been innovating key scenes from our class text 'Arthur and the Golden Rope' We have been focusing on one of the main characters Fenrir. Describing the wolf using similes and powerful adjectives. The children blew me and Ms Palmer away with their writing and can't wait for you to see their work at parents evening! Almost the whole class wanted to read theirs out, showing us how proud they were.

In Art, we looking at paintings from famous artists such as Pablo Picasso. As a class we discussed the use of colour and what the purpose of the paintings might be. The children then picked a famous painting and sketched an outline of the painting. Once the children had completed their sketches they used acrylic paint to enhance the colours, using their colour wheels to guide them on warm and cool colours.

In Forest School the children were weaving with wool in the style of our topic the Anglo-Saxons. We then continued this in class to allow all the children to experience conducting weaving with a loom. Ms Palmer has been fantastic as supplying this and it has been lovely for the children to connect more to our History topic in such an active way.

Written by Miss Batty and Sebastian Z

## Red Kites

On Monday we wrote our final outcomes for our Traditional Tales unit in English. The adaptations and alterations to the story were all done in such a way that the plot was unchanged. Everybody showed progress in their writing between the first write in Week 1 and now. On Wednesday, we started to look at Guide Books in order to identify the key features and create a check list for our Guides to Ancient China, which we hope to publish at the end of this term.

We have also continued exploring light in Science. Working in small groups with Mrs Ambrose, the children were able to look at how light reflects off different surfaces in a darkened Owl and Feather room. Next week, we will be looking at the relationship between the angle the light hits a mirror and the angle it reflects at.

This week's history has been learning about the Shang gods and how people worshipped them. While everyone has learned about the similarities between the social hierarchy and the spiritual one, some children have begun to compare Shang beliefs to those of other ancient cultures we have studied.

Finally, we have begun to plan and create a relief design for a Taotie style creature that we can use to make a cast in a couple of weeks' time.

## High 5's

### Wrens

My high fives go to Chloe for showing resilience in the mornings and Stevie for engaging fantastically during learning through play in the garden.

### Kingfishers

In Kingfishers, this week's High Fives go to Beth for consistently Being the Best she can Be and to Fraiser for enthusiasm and concentration in phonics.

### Robins

This week, high fives go to Harley Smith and Harly Wilkins for being the best they can be in phonics and working very hard to recognise and use their sounds.

### Owls



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Lilly for her amazing English and all the powerful vocabulary she has applied.  
Matilda for being such a good friend to others and offering to guide those who may be struggling.

## Red Kites

Tommy for always being one of the first to show they are ready to learn.  
Lytcia for explaining her thinking clearly in maths.

Have a lovely weekend

Best Wishes  
Heather Richards and the St Nics Team



Headteacher: Mrs H. Richards  
Telephone: 01235 763858  
Email: [officesn@stnicholasce.vale-academy.org](mailto:officesn@stnicholasce.vale-academy.org)  
Web: [www.st-nicholas-pri.oxon.sch.uk](http://www.st-nicholas-pri.oxon.sch.uk)

