



Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

### **Shining Brightly:**

I love our school, we have had another couple of fabulous terms with so many shining moments.

### **Ofsted Report**

Our Ofsted report from our recent inspection (which I've sent to you all) has now been officially published and is on our website. This is what I wrote and the link to our brilliant report.

*I am absolutely delighted to share with you the Ofsted report from our recent inspection in January 2023. Our school has now achieved two areas of outstanding. This is a truly brilliant report and outcome for the school and a testament to the daily hard work of the wonderfully committed staff team and our brilliant pupils. I feel incredibly proud to be Headteacher of this brilliant school and it is fabulous to receive a report which acknowledges how well our school is doing. I feel the Ofsted report really captures what a thriving and happy school this is, we are feeling very proud.*

Mrs Saville

Headteacher

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/21/126297>

I am writing this end of term newsletter a little early due to my upcoming medical time off school. Please see below a summary of the shining highlights for each class for the past two terms:

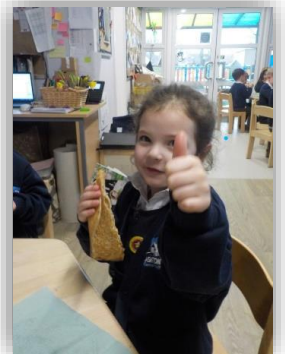
### **Class R**

We have had another eventful couple of terms starting with an exploration of ice, finding out about the coldest parts of our world, and learning about the animals that live in those harsh conditions.

Celebrating the Chinese and Lunar New Year was great fun with opportunities for dressing up, learning about the animals in the Great Race, and preparing and tasting Chinese style food at our banquet.



We have also celebrated and learnt about the meaning of Shrove Tuesday, enjoyed dressing up for World Book Day, had a fruity time during Fair trade fortnight and found out about the colourful Hindu festival called Holi. We wrote a class poem with a visiting poet and heard all about being a doctor from Harry and Lewis' Auntie...



And of course, we have been continuing to make great progress in learning to read and write. One way we do this is through our daily phonics lessons and this term we gave our parents the opportunity to join us for a taster lesson. It was lovely to share and celebrate our progress in reading with so many parents and carers.

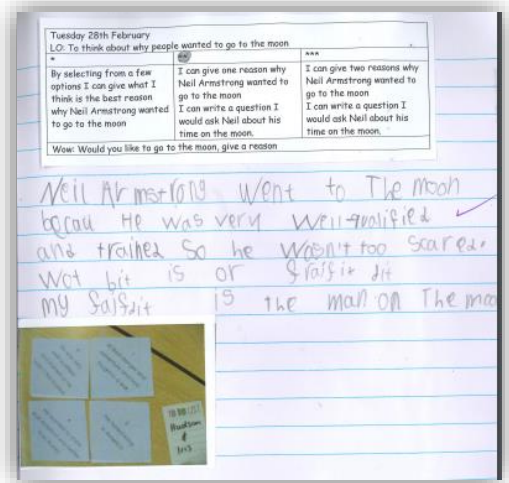
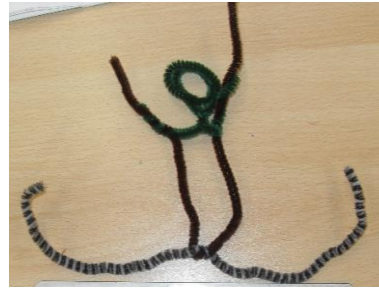




## SHINE BRIGHT ★ REACH FOR THE STARS

**Class 1** In class 1 we have looked at the 5 oceans, the creatures that live within them and why it is important that we look after our oceans. The children already had some amazing knowledge of ocean creatures and they were all very excited to get started! Within our learning we also looked at the depth of the ocean and how different creatures adapt to living in these different habitats. This linked to our learning in Science which was based on animals and living things.

Our English book 'The Storm Whale' linked to the ocean theme and allowed us to write some beautiful non-chronological reports on whales – the children were experts and had great fun finding out the most amazing facts! They knew so many by the end of the topic! One of our favourites was - a blue whale's heart weighs the same as a small car! The children have loved the sculpture work in our art lessons, we have used so many different materials and made some rather funny poses too!



We have since moved onto a space topic and again the children are loving it! They have gone away and found some super facts and many have brought in their favourite space books to share with the class. We have focused on the first moon landing with Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin. Quite a few children think they would like to become astronauts when they grow up. Our animal VR Workshop was so much fun, the children loved seeing the different animals appear in front of them!





## Class 2

Class 2 started the spring term reading ***The Storm Whale*** by Benji Davies. This linked with our learning in geography about the oceans and plastic pollution. The children wrote fantastic non-chronological reports about whales and also wrote persuasive letters to their local supermarket, encouraging them to use less plastic packaging. Music also had a sea theme as the children created their own stormy sea compositions. They selected instruments to best match a stormy sea and learned to draw graphic scores. In computing they developed their programming skills using Scratch Junior. They learned all about food groups in DT and were taught to use the bridge method to chop vegetables safely so they could prepare their own tasty wrap.

In Spring term 2, we moved from the earth's oceans to outer space and enjoyed the picture book ***Man on the Moon*** by Simon Bertram. This linked to our learning in history about the first moon landing in 1969. We also enjoyed a range of space themed stories including *Whatever Next!* and *The Way Back Home* and even enjoyed Wallace and Gromit's *a Grand Day Out* to help inspire us to write our own space themed stories. As we discovered through our reading - anything is possible in stories about space! We had space travelling slugs, hot dog rockets, friendly and not so friendly aliens!



In Design Technology we have constructed some pretty impressive Ferris wheels. The children worked very hard to build their wheels - although passengers would be advised to wear a seat belt to avoid falling from the pods!

On Friday we had enjoyed the sunshine walking to Holy Cross Church to spend time with Reverend Shirley learning more about Easter.

On our return to school Billy's Mum and Grandma had brought in one of their lambs which was a lovely surprise. The children enjoyed hearing Billy tell them more about their lambs and the lambing season, which is a very busy time for Billy's family.



In our final two weeks we will be making music using Chrome Music Lab and learning to read an analogue clock! We will definitely be ready for the Easter holiday!







## Class 3

Class 3 have continued to shine brightly during Spring term: wowing us all with their class assembly, becoming experts in multiplication and division, and producing some fantastic writing!

They particularly impressed me during their class assembly; speaking clearly, slowly and even understanding the jokes(?) I'd put in there! I wish I were able to attach a video to a word document so that we could all relive it again. Not only their speaking, but also their beautiful singing and recorder playing – absolute superstars!

This last half term, we've been working on both setting and character descriptions – both of which aren't easy. The amount of descriptive language that the children have used throughout has been incredible! I've seen similes, metaphors, personification, onomatopoeia, alliteration, the list goes on!

Here are just a couple for you to look at:

Laurie:

As Scramasque entered the burrow  
his vast hairy body roared the hippie  
hijris and made them ratel and chack.  
He was poshing past all the roadits with  
his strong arms. His sword in his sheath  
like he was like a galipult redy and  
to bid! whith his sword in his sheath and  
pursing arma.

Evie:

3+ success criteria	SA
Use at least two year 3/4 words – spelt correctly!	✓
Use paragraphs – they should be organised around a theme.	✓
To use subordinate clauses in varied positions – beginning/middle/end of sentences.	✓
Use direct speech, punctuating it correctly.	✓
Use con junctions, adverbs and prepositions to show time, place and cause.	✓

A Split Second later  
the barrel shook like and  
earthquake as Scramasque  
entered the cavern. Poldin  
froze in his tracks as he  
saw a vilen sinister shape  
walk into the room. His  
eyes were as red as rubies  
and a frightening set of armour  
surrounding his body like  
a cage. He held a nightmarish  
deathly sword still in stark still in his hand.

We've also heard from a lot of our geography experts. They have been researching exports, and we now have a new set who are researching volcanoes and earthquakes. We can't wait to hear what they have found out!

When a child is chosen for this, they have the choice of how to present their work: presentation, video, poster – whatever suits them best. I'm pleased to say that children have been so creative with this and we've had a real range of presentation ideas. Here are some photos from our latest expert presentations:





## Class 4

Class 4 have loved learning all about plate tectonics; they have learned all about the layer of the Earth, the movement of the plates and how this causes the natural disasters, volcanoes and earthquakes. The children have been fascinated by these phenomena and some have been investigation specific events ready to present their expert presentations to the class at the end of term and we can't wait to see them! Below is some of the fantastic work that they have produced so far.

In English, we have been reading *The Legend of Podkin One Ear* and writing fantastic retellings of the story including character and setting descriptions, showing off their knowledge of the Year 4 grammar features.

### Earthquakes

Earthquakes are measured using the moment magnitude scale. The moment means how much it moves and the force it moves with. The higher the number, the bigger the earthquake.

The mercalli measures how much damage is in the earthquake. A 4.5 earthquake was in a built up city is more dangerous than a 9.0 earthquake in a deserted desert because no one lives in the desert whereas the city has thousands of people living in it.

### Landslides

Landslides is where it rains so much and then there is a earthquake. Large sections sections of land slide down a hill, taking trees, cars and houses with it.

### Tsunamis

An earthquake happens under the sea, sending a wall of water in all directions. If it will start in the sea, then will hit the land, taking houses and trees with it.

### Liquification

Liquification is when all the water in the ground comes to the surface of the Earth. Then it collapses all the foundations which causes the buildings to collapse.

### Layers of the Earth

The crust is the outside layer of the earth and some places of the crust are only 10km thick. The crust is divided into plates. The plates only move 1cm on year on average. 35 plates are small but we don't even notice it.

The mantle is mostly solid but the upper mantle is like caramel at plate boundaries. The thickest layer of the mantle is 2800km and it's the distance between Russia and France. It's 2800km thick.

The outer core is liquid iron and nickel and the temperature is 4500°C to 5500°C.

The inner core is in the middle of the earth and solid iron nickel. It's 1200km thick.

### Podkin

Long ago, in a happy, peaceful kingdom, there was a king. His name was Podkin. He lived with his family, but his wife was always in a bad mood. One day, when he was in the garden, he saw a small, white, fluffy creature. It was so cute, he decided to keep it. He named it Podkin. Podkin was a very curious creature. It was always asking questions. One day, it asked, "Why is my name Podkin?" Podkin said, "Because you are so small and fluffy." Podkin was very happy. It was always with him. One day, it was in the garden, and it saw a small, white, fluffy creature. It was so cute, he decided to keep it. He named it Podkin. Podkin was a very curious creature. It was always asking questions. One day, it asked, "Why is my name Podkin?" Podkin said, "Because you are so small and fluffy." Podkin was very happy. It was always with him.

We were also very lucky to have a visit from Mr Barry and his team from Pinewood Academy for a STEM session. The children made connections between a range of things in nature which take flight as well as looking at aircraft before making their own paper gliders using the RAF glider kit. They then conducted 3 investigations in to what made their glider fly the furthest.

First, they tested the adding of weight to both the wings and the fuselage and investigated which weight distribution would give them the longest flight. Then, they investigated the thrust and experimented with how hard the glider was launched. Finally, they got to create ailerons and see whether them being placed up or down gave them more lift. The children thoroughly enjoyed this and some of them took home kits to continue exploring at home.



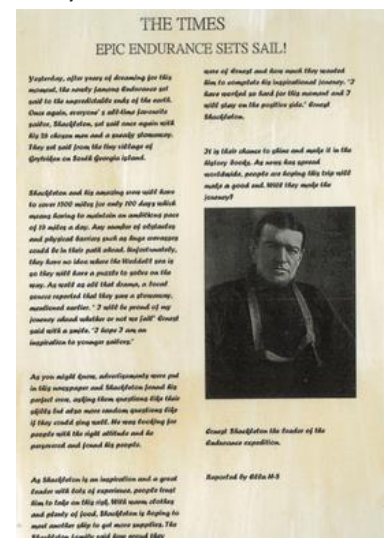
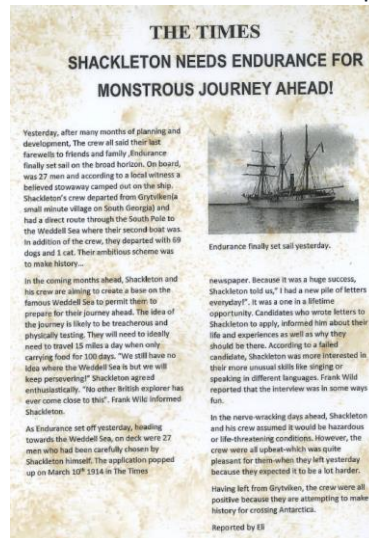




## SHINE BRIGHT ★ REACH FOR THE STARS

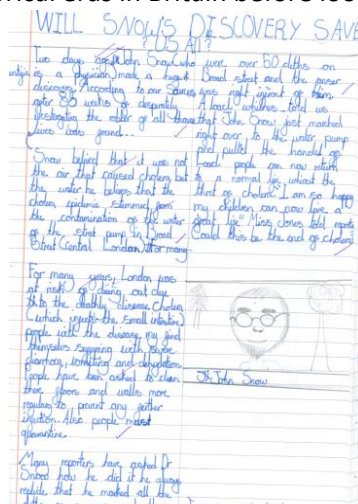
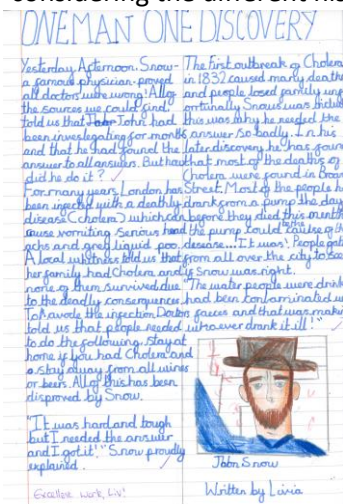
### Class 5

Class 5 have continued to be super busy this term and have worked exceptionally hard in all areas of their learning. In English, we have been reading Shackleton's Journey by William Grill. We have discovered how Shackleton advertised for crew members in The Times newspaper and how he was particularly interested in members' unusual talents, as well as their skills and previous expedition experiences. We researched members of Shackleton's crew and wrote fantastic newspaper reports describing Endurance setting sail from Grytviiken in 1914. Have a look at some of our newspaper reports!



In History this term, Class 5 have turned into Victorian experts! We began by considering the different historical eras in Britain before looking at Victorian school life and studying

making our own timeline



artefacts carefully. We then learnt about the impact of the Industrial Revolution and how it changed life in Britain, the introduction of railways, John Snow's discovery of cholera and crime and punishments in the Victorian times compared to modern day!

In Science, we have been investigating the human body. We have learnt about the circulatory system and investigated the impact of exercise (using the running



track!) on our heart rate and the time it takes to return back to resting rate. We have also learnt about the respiratory system and the impact that smoking can have on our bodies. Finally, we investigated the functions of the digestive system through making pool! We then wrote diary entries as pieces of food travelling through the digestive system. (An aside from Mrs Saville: No wonder Ofsted gave us outstanding for personal development with tasks like this!)







## Class 6

We have been loving our topics over the last two terms. Last term we explored the adventures of Ernest Shackleton in the Endurance Mission of 1914-1917. We were fascinated by the hardships he and his crew had to undergo in their quest to return home. We spent a lot of time researching different members of the crew before writing our own application letters asking to be a part of the expedition.



Following this we started a new topic based on the story of the Odysseus. We have loved learning about the story of Troy, his adventures with the cyclops not to mention his other exploits. In history we have looked at the life and times of the Great Greek ruler Alexander the Great. We were blown away by the speed and size of the empire he managed to create by the age of just 33!

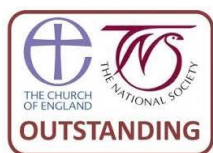


But in the middle of this we have had some other amazing experiences from Wellbeing week where we dressed to express to learning about the life cycles of animals through VR and an animatronic gorilla, our Where's Wally World Book day not to mention the Mock trials where we had to defend a case against another school acting as defence solicitors.



## Virtual Reality Wild Animal Science Experience day

As I entered into the hall to one of these workshops I was met with lots of 'Wow' 'Ohh' and squeals of delight as the children were taking part in their Science lesson using the virtual reality headsets with the visitor today. It was a brilliant way to bring this learning to life for the children and I was really impressed with how much they were able to recount and remember from the session. Moving ahead, I am planning for the school to have a set of these school level headsets as part of our STEM lab in the coming years so that we can use them more often in our lessons to access these harder to reach areas with more reality and engagement. I had a go and to see the tree frog so close up and moving and access all about its habitat and adaptation was incredible.





**Art competition ★ REACH FOR THE STARS**

Miss Usher, our Art lead is sending out a competition which your children can take part in.

parentmail about this but there is an art

*We are writing to inform you that the Young Artists Summer Show Competition is taking place this year, encouraging children to enter. Children have to be aged between 4-19.*

*The submission process is very simple and is all done online, with no fee involved. I have registered Ashton Keynes School as a school linked with the competition, so you will be able to find it on the dropdown menu on the website. Parents will have to complete the entry process for their children.*

*Each student can submit one piece of artwork and there is no theme. When you enter, they will ask for an image of the artwork plus some information about the piece such as title, size, and a little text about the artwork and why your child made it. The artwork will be seen by a panel of judges and the selected pieces will be shown in an online exhibition – the judging will take place in May. Some of the artworks will also be shown at the Royal Academy of Arts in London.*

*The closing date for this is 29<sup>th</sup> March, with entries to be submitted online at the following website:*

*<https://youngartists.royalacademy.org.uk/get-involved#entering> There, you will need to register, login and submit your child's work. I have included an image of the poster below in case you have any more questions. The website linked above will also give you full information of the competition.*

*Good luck and we hope that some of you are able to enter.*

*If anyone does so, I'd love to see what you've created – feel free to send a picture of your artwork to [s.usher@ashtonkeynes.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:s.usher@ashtonkeynes.wilts.sch.uk) for us to share at school.*

**Save the date: Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July 'Shine Fest' picnic and a celebration of the music**

This is so exciting and a fantastic opportunity for us all to celebrate our recent Ofsted and celebrate the musical talent of this school and community. I am booking the sunshine, Mrs. Crowley is organising the community and school musicians, FOAKS sorting refreshments so that leaves you to please save the date, bring a picnic and come along! It will be outdoors in the school grounds: bring a picnic rug/chairs and picnic from 4.30pm until about 9 with live music, tea and cake, a bar and other snacks and refreshments for sale, kindly provided by our wonderful FOAKS team. We will also send out invites to our neighbours on Gosditch to come and join us at their local school.

(Thanks to Emma Crawford for creating the poster for us)



**FOAKS**

Shortly our new FOAKS team will be writing to introduce themselves to you, but today I met with the new treasurer to discuss plans for funding moving forward and we were both very excited by the opportunities for all of our pupils. I have absolutely LOVED working with the previous FOAKS team who have been







incredible. They have done so much for the school, especially with the new build and all of the events they have provided, we are so thankful to them and all who have helped them. They have been an absolute pleasure to work with and although I sadly won't be there (due to my operation), there will be an official thank you to them on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March in Heroes and Heroines at 9am. Our school FOAKS team is so important to our school. It provides lots of fun events and opportunities for the school and community but raises many essential funds for the school to ensure that we are inclusive, can provide many exciting enrichment opportunities at no cost to parents and ensure the classes all have teaching artefacts and resources on loan each year from Wiltshire. They are discussing with school upcoming legacy projects with the funds raised from the previous team which will benefit everyone and we have together got some excellent ideas for this.

#### **Exciting future plans in action:**

##### **STEM LAB**

In school, we are working on designing and implementing our new STEM lab which will include: light tube lit area, bespoke built accessible STEM lab, green screen (already fitted), set of tablets, a green screen and laptop, 3D printer, data loggers and digital Science kit to really extend our STEM teaching opportunities. From this point we can look to add virtual headsets, more robotics and more tablets. It is just the beginning!

##### **OUTDOOR ACTIVE PLAY ZONE**

We are also working hard behind the scenes to design a new active play zone outdoors which is specifically designed in phases to be used by all pupils and keep them active and having fun at playtimes. If we do this in phases, we can take feedback from pupils and involve them in the design and monitor use and also fundraise to add the phases on- this is really exciting!

##### **FOREST SCHOOL AREA RENNOVATION**

We are also working to renovate our forest school area. We will be re-fencing the area, refurbishing the fire pit cooking area to include an accessible built up fire pit and suitable flooring area which does not require constant maintenance and carefully re-lining the pond which is leaking and ensure conservation of our protected newts. We will also be reinstating electricity to the new shed. These are just a few of the projects we are working on currently beyond our school improvement plan.

May I take this opportunity to in advance wish you all a Happy Easter. I look forward to being back fit and well with you after Easter for a very exciting final two terms of this academic year! With my very best wishes and thanks for your continued support and for your kind messages ahead of my operation.

Your very proud Headteacher,

Mrs. Saville x





Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> March	9am Heroes and Heroines Including presentation of our WIRE+ Gold Award from the Diocese
Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	3.15pm End of term 4
Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> April	Term 5 starts 8.45am

