



Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

### **Shining Brightly:**

What a busy but super sparkly term this has been. We have had: fabulous learning, excellent opportunities for families to join us in Heroes and Heroines, Stay and Share, Nativities and Class Assemblies, charity work (supporting the local food bank, pyjama for local hospital appeal and our local church) and our fabulous iSing pop workshops among many other things. We have certainly made the most of every minute of these first two terms and given many opportunities for our school to shine (celebrate what we do well and shine a light on others in need).

### **Nativity**

Wowzers. We have been treated to sparkly and confident performances from both Class R (EYFS) and Classes 1 and 2 (KS1). All of the children have performed so well and sung their hearts out to entertain their audiences. They were just brilliant, they made us smile, laugh and have a few tears and we feel incredibly proud of them all. They were all incredible!

### **Pocket Money Stall Thank you**

A huge thank you to all parents and carers and FOAKS team involved with the pocket money stalls. There is a lot of work behind the scenes, sourcing gifts and wrapping them to enable all children to have brilliant affordable presents of their choice for their families. We really do appreciate this opportunity for the children. I hope you all love your chosen gifts on Christmas morning.

### **Fireworks**

The AKPS fireworks is our biggest fundraiser for our school. We are ever so thankful for all of the hard work that goes into this. This year the event raised an incredible £10,000. This is much needed funds with the cost of living rising and our efforts to be an affordable school and ensure we provide as much for our pupils with little additional charge for events. This will fund annual resources for our curriculum including specific books, items and artefacts used for our whole school. Each class has a set of boxes they order for each term to fit with their topics and areas covered, it is brilliant and this funding covers this much needed resource. We also use the money to fund visits from the Coram Life Education team for every class, life saving workshops for every class provided by Wiltshire Air Ambulance, sound system for the hall and outdoor speakers, special visitors such as the gorilla and dinosaurs who visited the school for Conservation and History learning, professional scooter teachers, Sports Week events and many other special events which we do not charge for but this FOAKs funding helps us provide to ensure that ALL children benefit and our personal development offer is exceptional and outstanding. Thank you so much. Also, the fireworks event is a fabulous community event which is truly valued by all who attend so there is so much to gain for the school and the local and wider community.

### **Pyjamas- we collected 63 pairs- Thank you**

A massive heartfelt thank you for supporting Olivia in Class R and her Mum in the pyjama appeal. I'm delighted that we managed to provide 63 pairs of new pjs for children who are in local hospitals over Christmas, thank you so very much.

### **Staffing exciting news**



I am absolutely delighted to share the wonderful news about two of our staff members who are both expecting babies! Miss Chomicz and Miss Igoe are both due in/around April and we are over the moon for them both. They will both be starting their maternity leave just after the Easter holidays and I've contacted their classes to inform and update. I wish them and their families congratulations from the whole AK family. That's three brand new staff babies in one academic year with Miss Usher having her beautiful baby boy in the Autumn term too!

## Classes Shining Brightly

Here are some highlights from each class from the past two terms.

### Class 6

Class 6 have once again been working incredibly hard this half-term in all areas of their learning – I am so proud of them all. In English, we have been reading the novel *Floodland* by Marcus Sedgwick. This is a story set in a dystopian world where global warming has caused the sea to rise until cities are turning into islands and civilization is crumbling. The city of Norwich has been consumed by flooding and new islands have appeared... Ten-year-old Zoe was left behind on Norwich by accident when her parents escaped in the last supply ship to visit the island. Zoe discovers a small rowboat and keeps it a secret until she can set out alone on the great sea to find her parents. She lands on tiny Eels Island, where she must survive in a nightmarish world run by wild children and their boy-leader, Dooby. Luckily, Zoe and a boy called Munchkin escape and cross the sea to the mainland, to find not only Zoe's parents but a new family and a new world.

**MISSING TEEN'S ORPHIC ADVENTURE COMES TO AN END!**

In the early hours of September the 3rd, Zoe Black, age 15, was successfully reunited with her parents after being held hostage as a local island. The young teen has been said to have been something for her heart-broken parents for over a year, having also been kept away from her own best friend, who she has been waiting for since they parted in the local evening. How did she survive the deadly sea of Wilkies?

**Her amazing journey...**

After months of searching for her parents, Zoe Black, age 15, was successfully reunited with her parents after being held hostage as a local island. The young teen has been said to have been something for her heart-broken parents for over a year, having also been kept away from her own best friend, who she has been waiting for since they parted in the local evening. How did she survive the deadly sea of Wilkies?

**With Mrs. Dixon, I can draft a newspaper report based on the 'discovery' of Eels Island.**

I can include:

- A catchy headline to grab the reader's attention
- An introductory paragraph which sets the scene
- Fast facts
- Chronological order
- Formal language
- Questions using direct speech
- Newspaper specific language e.g. According to witnesses... This was later confirmed... It is understood that...
- Use of speculation e.g. It is claimed that... It is understood that...
- Passive voice e.g. The island was first discovered...

I can use capital letters and full stops accurately. I can include a relative embedded clause.

I can include a semi-colon and at least one relative embedded clause.

**ORPHIC CIVILISATION DISCOVERED BY DROON**

Yesterday evening, at around 7pm an enigmatic discovery occurred. Billy Hoots, Droon expert from the company Droon Fly, was testing his company's new drone when his drone came across a secretive island in between Norwich and the Mainland. Based on the satellite, Riley suggests that living conditions for any inhabitants are **are awful**. When will we make contact with the inhabitants?

**The discovery**

When Riley first saw the island, he heard the following unmistakable outline of a horn before spotting many signs of an island. He knew this was no ordinary island, not been around here yet. He told us that the people are willing to believe, glow closer to have a better otherwise. I knew straight away. It was reported that the island had not been seen. Evidence of civilisation discovered yet? Hoots told us...

**huge discovery.**

**What we've found so far**

According to the drone footage, there have been sightings of more than buildings and even a dilapidated cathedral in which we believe the children live in. Based on the first search of the island, the island is very tiny and has a very small land mass due to the previous flooding events in the last couple of years. Unfortunately, there are jagged rocks surrounding the island which it hadn't been mapped means that it is very dangerous and only very skilled sailors could make it through the shoreline. According to the famous sailing company (Golden boots), even some of their workers admitted that only experienced sailors could make it through the rocks. There's no direct link to a broken cathedral... it was completely run down. Riley had com-

**How have people reacted?**

As reporters are utterly shocked! Even us (who are used to those events) were gobsmacked when these reports came in. We are all desperate to find out more. Many locals have reported that they wish to see the island for themselves and travel there by boat. Soon after this event, geographers have been doubting themselves and trying to figure out why the island which it hadn't been mapped yet. Historians have been tracking down if the island was mentioned at all in history. Detective Maria Robson soon wants to be taken to the island so she can inspect it. "I can't believe it! all these innocent children stranded here with no resources! Poor midgies... Ben Hills. Oh, it's gobsmacked and all right! I think just leave 'em. See to just deal







Have a look at some of our newspaper reports based on Floodland below. We focused on using newspaper specific language, advanced punctuation and shifts in formality.

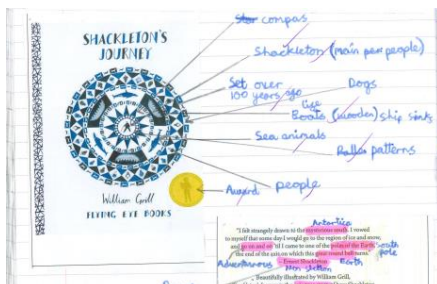
In Geography, we have been learning all about climate change and how we can all work as a team to reduce our own carbon footprints to help the environment. We have investigated how more economically developed countries contribute more to the climate crisis but also have more money to spend on pursuing new green initiatives such as electric cars and solar panels. We learnt about food miles and the distances food has to travel from



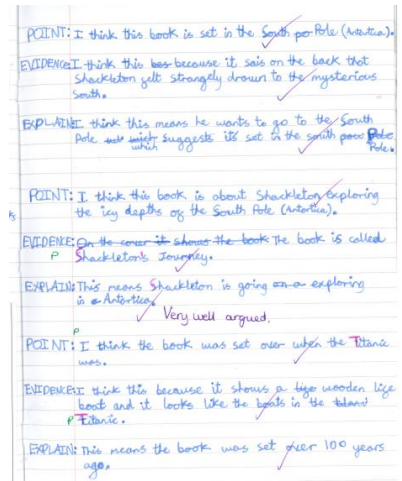
where it is produced to where it is sold. We used atlases and a food miles calculator to investigate the distances some of our favourite foods have to travel. We discussed the importance of growing our own produce and supporting local farmers.

In one of our Forest School sessions this term, we helped support our local environment by planting bluebells at Bradstone Field to help the community to create their own Bluebell Wood for many years to come. The children thoroughly enjoyed it and were a real credit to themselves and the school.

## Class 5



In Year 5 we have been learning all about Ernest Shackleton and his crew onboard the Endurance and their incredible story of survival. We've been reading the book Shackleton's journey. We started off using our inference skills to work out the theme of the book. Have a look at our ideas.

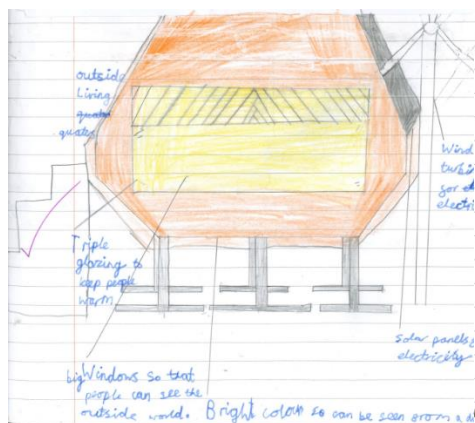


This has led us to learn all about the continent of Antarctica and the scientific stations down there.

We have been fascinated learning all about the UK's Halley ice station which is where many important scientific experiments take place. It is in fact Britain's sixth station as the first 5 have been destroyed either by being crushed or



eventually crumbling into the sea. We used the design of the new Halley station, which is on skis, to help us create our own science research stations.







In English we have been studying the life and times of Ernest Shackleton and using this information to write our own biographies. We've also been experimenting with semi colons!

Only 0.6% of Antarctica is free of ice; the rest is 100s of layers of snow and ice.

It is usually -60°C in Antarctica; cold enough for penguins to live in the South Pole.

There are no polar bears in Antarctica; penguins are scattered everywhere.

Each year, around 40,000 tourists travel there; they often go there to the icy continent by boat.

The Antarctic hasn't always been icy; it will sugared over the years.

Ernest Shackleton

Ernest Shackleton - who is an inspirational figure - led three British explorations to the freezing, beastly Antarctica. He was a brave explorer that is a world renowned for his survival tales across the world.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> February 1874, Ernest Shackleton was born in Kildare, Ireland. He was one of ten children to Henry and Henrietta Shackleton. They thought themselves as Anglo Irish. He was taught by a governess at home until the age of eleven. A year before, aged 10, they moved to London for his father's job.

Shackleton's dad wanted him to follow in his footsteps, but he had other ideas...

In 1887, he entered Dulwich College; a private

## Class 4

We have had a very exciting start to our year 4 journey. The children have already made excellent progress in their academic work from presentation to content of work and we are so proud of them. We began the year with our writing centred around the book 'Arthur and the Golden Rope' and tied our Geography learning to this, exploring the country of Iceland, where Arthur lives. Following this, the children delivered a class assembly to the whole school and some of their parents/carers showing off their fantastic learning and writing connected to this story. We have since moved on to Charlotte's Web and are building up our writing including plenty of year 4 writing features which the children are really taking on the challenge of doing. We are incredibly lucky to have Mrs Dyminski delivering fantastic Art lessons to the children where we focused our practice mainly on drawing, whilst delving into the work of Michael Craig Martin, and also some Minimalist work too. We have combined these elements with ourselves! Creating some fantastic self-portraits taking into consideration who we are, and what makes us, us! I am sure you will agree, the final pieces look fantastic and would not be out of place in an art gallery.







In Science, the children have found it fascinating to learn about the human body, how the bones and muscles make this up to allow movement and how we can best look after it. We also spent some time learning about being environmentally conscious when it comes to the food we waste and came up with some plans for how to reduce this. As well as this, we have been learning about and testing different types of rocks to help classify them by their properties.



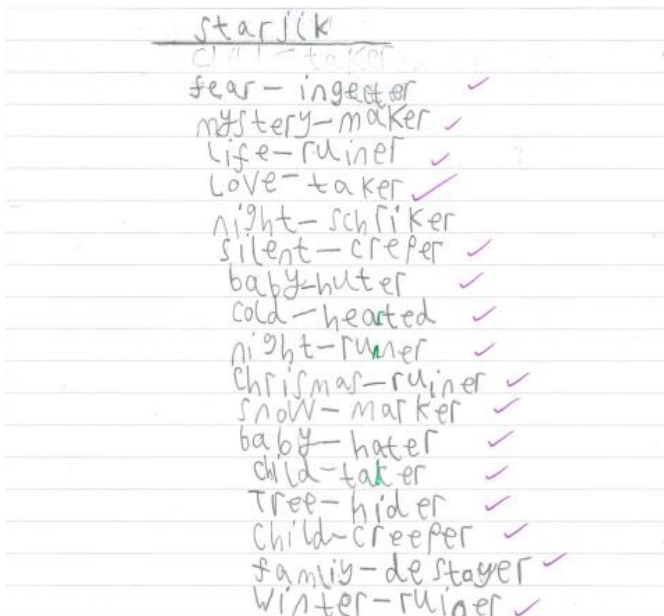
The biggest highlight of our year so far, however, has to be Viney Hill. We took the children to the Forest of Dean on a cold Thursday morning and the children did not hesitate to get stuck straight in to the activities – beginning with the making of the beds! There were some unique approaches to getting bedding on duvets but they were determined and showed excellent team work to get this completed. This determination and team work continued for the entirety of the stay – from climbing up the new high ropes course, completing team challenges in low ropes, crate stacking and orienteering, they battled through the cold weather and



kept smiling throughout. It was a delight to take them away and watch them thrive in a completely different environment to the classroom.

### Class 3

In Year 3, our text in focus this term has been the *Ice Palace*. The children have been fully engaged with this text. We have looked at the character, Starjik and we discovered he is the child-taker. We used the information to build a profile of the



character. They have been really enthused with this and using amazing descriptive language to produce Kenning poems.

What a fantastic term Class 3 have had. We had a lovely afternoon in forest school with Mrs Willis. We spent time learning about the make up of a bulb and how they have skins. We classified a variety of bulbs and compared the similarities and differences. The children were really engaged and enjoyed being hands on. The children have layered planters

with grape hyacinth, daffodil and tulip bulbs. It will be lovely to see these in bloom in Spring.



### Class 2

What a bumper packed term it has been in Class 2.

Fun, frolics and festivities all around. We have had a magnificently, movement-based term with forest school sessions, awesome PE and active Maths (where we take control





of our learning through obstacle courses and number hunts -we like to move it, move it!

Talking of travel, we have delved into the history books and found out lots of information about the Wright Brothers and how they were the first people to invent, build and fly the first motor operated aircraft. Luckily, planes have changed since these days and we even learned that Miss Jackson used to have her Pilots Licence! Chocks away!

We have been broadening our knowledge of hibernation through our English story this term, 'Winter Sleep'. We received a visit from a very special guest - Shelley the tortoise who we loved tickling with a toothbrush! She really fired up our imaginations when thinking about other creatures who hibernate.



Parents and carers have also had several opportunities to come along and step into the crazy world of Year 2 with our stay and share sessions; making a Christmas Wreath together using a willow base that the children wove in their forest school sessions.

How fandabeedozee were the children in Baubles?! Their confidence, perseverance and all-round brilliance shone, just as they shine each and every day. We are so, so proud of you Y2, YOU ROCK!



Have a safe, sparkly and stupendous festive time. We can't wait to see you back in the New Year.

Miss Jackson, Miss Voss, Mrs Clifton and Miss Davies.

**Class 1** What a busy 2 terms we have had! We have looked at 4 different books over the weeks and have written some lovely pieces, from diary entries, letters and even a story or two! The writing has been phenomenal!

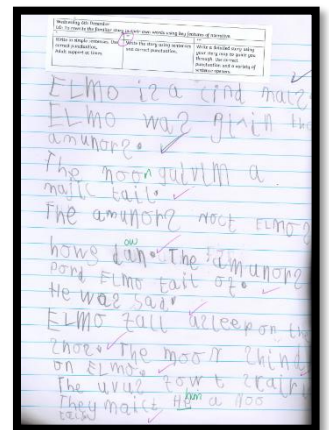
We had a fabulous stay and share session in Class. It was so lovely to see the children sharing their learning with their parents and carers. I know they found it very exciting and are already asking when we will have another one!



We were very lucky to have been joined by Rev Shirley and Mel Tim in class. They helped us to create a beautiful harvest loaf ready for the church service. The children loved rolling the dough and making the different parts for the loaf.

The Wiltshire Air Ambulance have also been in to school and talked to the children about important life-saving skills. We were asked if we knew our home address and number, lots of children did! The children then got to test out some rather exciting

gadgets and rescue one another from a choking incident. The children loved this and got very excited when their little piece of foam shot out of the jacket!





This term has been a sparkly one! We have had our marvelous Nativity and the children have also had 2 super art days with Mrs Dyminski. The work they have produced is incredible and they have had so much fun too! The Nativity was incredible, full of wonderful singing and super costumes! Well done Class 1.

**Class R** Class R have made a super start to the year with lots of fun packed learning. This term we enjoyed Class R's first bedtime story session. Children came back to school in their pyjamas as it was getting dark to listen to stories and have hot chocolate and cookies by the

fireside. Our favourite teddy bears came too. Not only did we listen to stories read by the teachers but we also had the chance to share books with our parents. Our themes this term have been autumn and festivals of night and light and we have fully immersed ourselves in both. We have had so much fun in forest school – a highlight was burying Mr. Jackson completely in leaves! We've learnt about the moon, stars and planets and how to be an astronaut. We also learnt about the importance of a healthy sleep routine with the help of Michelle the sleep expert. Of course, we have continued to learn lots of new phonemes and we are well on the way to becoming super readers.

A huge thanks to all families who donated towards the Hospital Pyjama Appeal. With the huge help of Olivia and her Mum Class R were able to support this fantastic charity. We were overwhelmed with the amount of donations received – thank you!

Our term has finished with a festive focus where we have learnt all about the nativity story. Our nativity show was a triumph, full of super singing, dancing and sparkle. Well done Class R!



## Music Mark



I am delighted to announce that we have been awarded the music mark to acknowledge all of the high-quality music we provide at AKPS. Mrs Crowley is an incredible music lead and she and I have been working with the Wiltshire Music hub on a project to help schools improve their music offer and make it more diverse which is really exciting.





It has been a brilliant two terms here at AKPS, thank you for your ongoing support. Don't forget Heroes and Heroines is Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December 9am in the hall, where we will treat you to a couple of Christmas iSing pop songs from our new workshops if you are able to join us.

Ahead of the end of term next Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> at 3.15pm, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a peaceful and Happy Christmas and New Year. Hopefully with some rest we can settle down all the coughs, colds and illness around school and I look forward to welcoming everyone back fit, well and raring to go at 8.45am on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024!

Your very proud and sparkly Headteacher,

*Mrs Saville*

Mrs Saville

Head Teacher

All dates for the year are on the calendar on the school website on [www.akps.org.uk](http://www.akps.org.uk) to help you plan ahead. All newsletters and annual overviews have been sent to parents and carers but can also be found on class pages of our website.

# ASHTON KEYNES

Church of England VC Primary School

SHINE BRIGHT ★ REACH FOR THE STARS



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