



"I came that you may have life, life in all its fullness" (John 10:10)

19th December 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Shining Brightly:

The term of sparkle has been upon us! With a wonderfully successful evening of fireworks with sparkles in the sky to incredibly beautiful nativities with children sparkling and shining their hearts out onstage to the day to day shine in school. An enormous thank you for today's Heroes and Heroines and my amazing, special Birthday surprise. I adore the brilliant song and rap written for me, the words broke my heart but also made me laugh at the same time, I really am so lucky- I feel very overwhelmed, it was just ace and I feel very loved! I cannot believe everyone in school kept that such a secret! Here are a few shine highlights from each class and the school for this term:

Year R

Class R's second term in school has been full of fun packed learning. We have enjoyed Class R's first stay and share story session where we were accompanied to school by our teddies. Not only did we listen to stories read by Mrs. Crowley but we also had the chance to share books with our parents.



Our learning this term has been all about autumn and festivals of night and light and we have fully immersed ourselves in both. We've learnt about the moon, stars and planets and how to be an astronaut. Of course, we have continued to learn lots of new phonemes and we are well on the way to becoming super readers.

We thoroughly enjoyed marking Children in Need by joining

together to cycle widths of the playground. In total we cycled 464m!



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!

Year 1

The first two terms in Class 1 have been a whirlwind! Making the change from EYFS to Year 1 has been met with enthusiasm and determination – both qualities that have been shown again and again in Class 1. Learning new routines, new expectations and above all getting to grips with lessons in all the National Curriculum subjects has been a positive experience with children being inspired to further their learning at home.





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In Science we have been learning about the human body; in particular the five senses. Smelling different foods with blindfolds on and tasting different foods was great fun. Lemons and vinegar were both either loved or hated! We have been testing and describing materials according to different properties. As I write we are planning to test a variety of materials for absorbency.

In DT we created moving pictures using pop up techniques that we had seen in storybooks. We enabled a character or object to move up and down or side to side.

Over the term Class 1 have enjoyed their Yoga sessions, the visit from the Life Education team, our Quidditch experience, Forest school, our celebrations in Church and of course our Nativity. Our term was finished off with our fantastic performance with Year 2 of 'Simply the Nativity' which gave us all the chance to shine so brightly especially those crazy party sheep!

Year 2

Forest School

Class 2 have loved their Forest School sessions as they have been so varied. So far, we have investigated what type of birds visit our local area. We made dens and used our bird spotting charts to see who came to see us. We invited our families in to make bird feeders with us. We have had a visit from James an ecologist from Lower Mill. James showed us a beaver skin, some duck skulls and bones and some owl pellets. We can't wait for his return visit!

Nativity

We could not be prouder of the children's performance in the nativity. It was just wonderful to see their confidence shine through and it seems we have some budding actors in the making. They learnt their lines, songs and stage directions in a very short amount of time. Well done Class 2!

Superstar writing

Class 2 have produced some amazing pieces of writing since starting in September. We looked at the book Wild by Emily Hughes and the children thoroughly enjoyed working out her story. As you can see their work was just incredible, here is a missing poster created to find 'the girl. Keep it up Class 2, this is just amazing!

Year 3

DT Collars

Class 3 made Ancient Egyptian collars in our DT lessons. This linked with our History topic and the class showed great perseverance and creativity when creating their collars. They practised skills such as appliqué and cross stitch. Thank you to the parents/carers who came in to support the children. The results were excellent!

Forest School



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Class 3 have enjoyed all of their Forest School sessions. Stand out moments include making wood whistles and creating Christmas wreaths from willow and dogwood found on our school playground. Our last forest school lesson this term will be linked to our Science topic of rocks, investigating rocks found on the school site.



Children in Need



We enjoyed cycling across the school playground to show our support to Paddy McGuinness who was cycling to raise money for Children in Need. Together we rode over 400 metres!

Open the Book

Class 3 have had a few opportunities to take part in Open the Book assemblies, which happen every Friday. The children are always eager to take part and enjoy performing Bible stories to the rest of the school.



Quidditch

Class 3 thoroughly enjoyed taking part in our Quidditch day. With one child from Class 3 winning the best chaser award, out of the whole school. The children worked well in their teams and showed lots of support to one another, in order to gain as many points as possible. The children even enjoyed chasing me for some bonus points...!

Yoga

We have been lucky enough to have Miss Jackson come back into school to provide Yoga sessions for each class to enjoy. My class particularly enjoyed catching up with her, as their previous teacher. They listened really closely and followed instructions well to provide a peaceful and calm environment, which they all enjoyed.

Year 4



Year 4 have had such a fantastic start to the year, with many fun activities already under their belts: their LifeBase visit, Quidditch (I know!), their (phenomenal) class assembly and even a residential trip to Viney Hill.

Quidditch was incredible – the children absolutely loved it! They were sorted into house teams and then played the game, a mix between tag rugby and dodgeball, with some Harry Potter magic sprinkled on top. They made me (Miss Usher) so proud in their class assembly – you could see how much they'd grown, even in a matter of weeks, and they had such an excellent time performing for everyone. They even played the ukuleles....in tune too! It really was lovely to watch and be a part of!



On their one night residential, they had the most wonderful time, learning new skills and even facing some fears. Activities included abseiling, crate stacking and even a late-night walk with hot chocolate. The staff commented on how well behaved they were, as well as how much they supported one another throughout – real assets to our school!





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Year 5 What a busy term Year 5 have had! We have been reading Shackleton's Journey as our class book and using it as a starting point in English. Shackleton's Journey looks at the real-life story of Shackleton and his crew onboard the Endurance in their 1914-1917 mission to Antarctica. Things didn't go according to plan and the Endurance- after months of battling the ice- was finally defeated by the elements and sank. Shackleton- along with his crew- then embarked on a mission to reach Elephant Island several hundred miles away before sailing over 800 miles in a lifeboat to South Georgia. We were inspired by this journey and the subsequent discovery of Endurance to write scene descriptions.

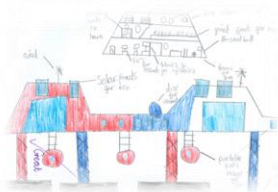
The overcast, bleak sky was oppressive on my slumped shoulders as I watched the ship that could have made our world ^{renewed} be devoured by the sadistic, storming waves. With tears in my eyes, I stared at the Endurance surrendered to life. Lachrymatically, I rotated my head to face the remaining debris of the dining hall. I had so many great memories there with my fellow crew members. Frightened, I realised that my hope of seeing my family again was ^{slim}. I am going to stay in this brutal place until my dying breath! The ropes were strung across the base, ^{glid} like snakes in the sun. You can taste the salty waves as it pushed the boat beneath the ocean's surface.

Shaking my body reached to the biting cold Antarctic air. The jigsaw puzzle of icebergs- which were infinite to the naked eye- felt ominous.

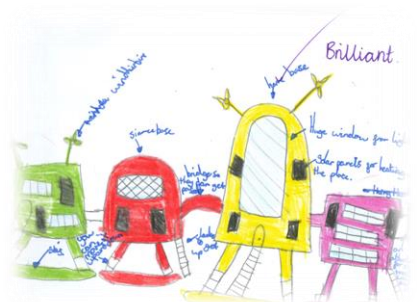
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"Why does this ^{always} happen to me?" As I ^{saw} the destroyed ship which used to be a powerful, unbroken ship steamer ^{which} plowed through the gigantic waves with ease to now a wrecked, smashed and unrecognisable pile of jagged metal and coiled ropes. I was heart broken to see the astonishing ship ^{which} I had spent all of my time on, ^{now} deep into the high gulf of the Atlantic ocean. The ^{junk} which used to be standing proudly at the front of the ship, is now dropping and no longer puffing ashore steam into the jagged sky.

I was ^{abagorated} to see behind me a purplish of ^{split} gelid ice barge reaching out in all directions.



We were so inspired by the British Antarctic Science Research station – Halley VII and its design that we created our own versions thinking about the features it would need to keep scientists safe and occupied as they carry out their research.



We have also been learning all about Space and our wonderful solar system. We have carried out scientific model activities on the school field where we have looked at how far the planets would be from each other based on scaled model. We couldn't believe how far out the gas giants were from the rocky planets especially Neptune! No wonder it takes so long to orbit the sun!

We loved sharing our ideas in our class assembly where we had a chance to show off our singing skills with the song from the Christian Aid about justice called Speak up! We were proud of our knowledge and enjoyed roles of the different planets in the solar system.



Year 6

Class 6 have been working incredibly hard this term. 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 and ten-year-old Zoe has been 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





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Y1 and YR Christmas afternoon of sparkly fun!



We had a super festive fun filled afternoon. Not only did we make some beautiful Christmas angels, we decorated and ate Christmassy biscuits which one child referred to as "the best biscuits ever!" Our party clothes sparkled and shone at Miss Noonan's disco and the afternoon was topped off by a very special visitor who brought us all a lovely gift.

TESCO festive singing success!

Our amazing choir went to Tesco to entertain the community with their wonderful Christmas singing. They were on a mission to raise some money to help with the cost of the coach to take their choir to Young Voices, national choir event in February to help keep costs down for families (as part of our affordable schools' work) whilst providing entertainment for Cirencester shoppers! They were delighted to make £180. Well done AKPS choir!



FOAKS Fireworks- What a success! What an incredible event, I received many compliments about the whole event. One person told me the fireworks display was like something they'd see in London- it went on and on! It really was an incredible display. A huge thanks to every one who came and to everyone who helped make this event possible. It provided an exceptional display for the community but also raised much needed funds for our school- thank you!

Breakfast club Party

We had a lovely breakfast club party and the children enjoyed a festive breakfast, some Christmas games and a gift from a very special visitor. We were jam packed with 67 children attending this year! Thanks to the staff team who volunteered their time to make it happen.



Affordable Schools
WILTSHIRE

Affordable school AKPS achieves - GOLD!

I am absolutely beyond delighted to share with you that we have been awarded the highest award for being an affordable school- GOLD. We have an ongoing commitment through all that we do to ensure our school is an affordable one to support all of our families: from uniform, to trips, food and nutrition, we review what we offer and ensure the best value we can and review ways we can help our families e.g. cost calendars- costs for each class trips etc. upfront at the start of the year and monthly payments. We organised all residential ourselves to keep costs as low as possible, ensure we don't drop sudden requirements for spending on parents. FOAKS support with our second-hand uniform sales and donations to support our families and there is so much more but most importantly we have this running through the culture of our school so that it is never far from our minds and is continually in review through all aspects of school life. We are delighted with our GOLD award and to be one of the first schools in Wiltshire to achieve it.

Quidditch

How cool to be a school which offers Quidditch as one of its sports! The children loved their immersion experience day in November and we now have all of the equipment and staff training booked in January so that we can start delivering this as part of our PE offer in the coming year. The children and staff are all VERY excited about this!



Affordable Schools
WILTSHIRE



MUSIC MARK
SCHOOL
2023 - 2024



Healthy School



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SIAMS INSPECTION Oh my goodness we are DELIGHTED with our incredible inspection report following our recent very rigorous SIAMS inspection. Please enjoy reading it [APKS shines in SIAMS inspection](#), it really does sum up what we strive to do every single day in our school to ensure all of the children and adults at AKPS flourish in our care. Also, a massive thank you for the feedback we received it was truly beautiful and we are so thankful.

Attendance - IMPORTANT –another reminder with start of a new year ahead

Please ensure you have read the Wiltshire letter (sent via ParentMail) about the new DFE Government guidance on attendance which started on 2nd September. We are bound by these national rules and regulations and therefore it is very important you read this document and ensure you understand the changes and consequences of term time absences as it is very different. Please continue to ensure that all holidays continue to be taken in non-term time to avoid fines which will now be out of our control and issued automatically. Any attendance falling below 90% is logged on the system as persistent absence and analysed and if no improvement shown it will be investigated by the Education Welfare officer. Understandably there has been a lot of winter illness around but with the new year, comes a new start and a chance to get back on track. I think beyond all these policies the simple fact is that every day lost is new learning missed and this does impact upon your child's progress in school. Thank you for your understanding.

May I take this opportunity, on behalf of the school, to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year. I hope you all find love, joy and peace in this holiday break with your families. We look forward to welcoming you all back to school on Tuesday 7th January 2025 at 8.45am.

Your incredibly proud Headteacher,

Mrs Saville

Mrs Saville

All dates for the year are on the calendar on the school website on 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.