



LONG CLOSE SCHOOL

PEGASUS NEWS

SPRING TERM

ISSUE 4

FRIDAY 27 JANUARY 2017

The Headmaster writes...



On Tuesday of this week, I was privileged to be invited up to lunch to meet with Ruth Miskin whose name many of you will know from the phonics programme, 'Read, Write, Inc' (RWI). Her reason for wanting to meet with me was as a result of the phonics data that she had seen on our children, which showed the remarkable progress that they are making on this programme. I did feel somewhat fraudulent as I have never once delivered a phonics lesson in my life but it was a good opportunity for me to meet with her and discuss the broader educational landscape in which our children find themselves. We were joined by Danuta Tomasz, Cognita Assistant Director of Education, and what had been billed as a 45 minute lunch meeting ended up being over two hours of fascinating discussion around what makes good teaching and learning. Ruth has had a wide and varied career and her programme has been borne out of very strong beliefs about what makes good teaching and learning. Many of the techniques that the teachers use in the RWI scheme are simply good teaching and learning strategies that could be adopted in other areas of the school. In my Year 7 lesson that morning I had, almost accidentally, used the 'turn to your talk partner' symbol with my hands. Year 7 do not know what that symbol means but it would not take too much for all pupils to know it and for instructions in my class to be quick and automatic, allowing for an increased pace of teaching in the classroom with less need for verbal direction by the teacher. I know for a fact that this has already started to filter into the Year 2 lessons and reading through the observation notes of one teacher this week, I noticed that RWI techniques are being successfully adopted in other subject areas as well. But whilst this all sounds sensible, it also goes against one of my principles of leading great teaching and learning. If I tell every teacher how they should be delivering their lessons and exactly what methods they should be using, then they lose a certain amount of autonomy and may end up feeling disempowered, micromanaged, and lacking ownership of the teaching and learning that takes place in the classroom. I certainly don't want this. But at the same time, the RWI programme does stipulate how things are going to be done, how they are going to be pronounced and how they are going to be taught. The trainer who comes in trains the teachers to deliver the sessions in exactly the same way. On learning walks around the school she will look for things that are happening and show the teachers how they should be done if she does not see things that she likes. And this has brought about the great results that meant I was up in London in the first place! But the key thing is that the RWI programme, as important as it is, is only part of what we do. The teachers who work with it enjoy how it works and appreciate the structure that it brings and the results that it has helped them to produce with the children. But it does not take over their day and their creativity and independence in the classroom is not overly affected as a result. When I think back to my own teacher training I remember feeling aggrieved at the formulaic way in which my trainer believed I should be starting every lesson, but this did not stop there being merit in many of the things he was trying to teach me. And so the conversation continued, and could have continued for a lot longer with Ruth and Danuta. At Long Close School we are developing a culture where all the teachers are involved in these discussions. This week the topic has been 'questioning' and we have surveyed all the staff for this research. We will continue to keep it at the forefront of our practice to ensure that your children are taught by informed, skilled, autonomous, professional and passionate teachers. You should expect nothing less!

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AFTER SCHOOL CARE MOBILE NUMBERS

ASC team members can be contacted on the following numbers between 3.30pm and 6.00pm each day.

If you are running late to collect your child from ASC, please give the staff on duty a quick call to let them know. Thank you!

***Yellow, Red, Blue Room & Reception:
07783 198998
Years 1-11 (Mrs Bahri):
07986 316132***

EARLY YEARS UPDATE BY MRS HARRIS

We have been celebrating Chinese New Year this week, which has brought great excitement and cheer. The children have had a super time learning whilst creating with some fun and engaging activities. Chinese New Year is a celebration marking the end of the winter season and the beginning of spring. The Reception children decorated some beautiful cherry blossom branches using their finger prints as blossom this week. They learnt that the cherry and plum blossoms are the first to bloom even as snow is melting after a harsh winter. Apparently they represent the promise of spring and renewal of life - I learn more from the children every day!

I have to say that I am starting to get excited about seeing some spring flowers, blossom on our trees and slightly warmer weather!

YELLOW ROOM

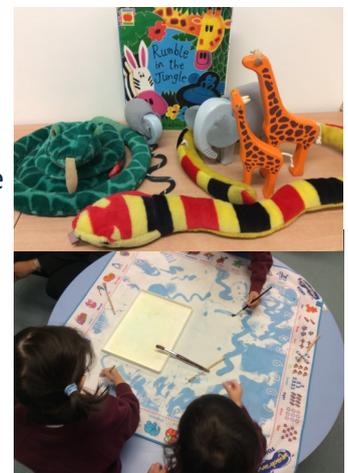
The children in Yellow Room have had some new peers join this week so we have been singing some familiar nursery rhymes to make them feel welcome.

We have listened to the story 'Rumble in the Jungle' this week, naming the animals in the book and encouraging the children to use the language of size when playing with our jungle animals.

The children have been practising their mark making skills using thick and thin brushes at the aqua draw activity. Some of the children drew "long" snakes and "wiggly worms!"



Mrs Palmer decided to make a height chart to show the children how tall they all are so we marked the children's height with a photograph. This encouraged everyone to look at each other's picture to see if they are taller or shorter than their friends. We then asked some of the staff in the nursery to be measured as they came into the Yellow Room. So far Mrs Palmer is the tallest although we haven't measured Mrs Harris or Mr Pavey yet!



GREEN ROOM

This week the children have been learning about emotions. The children started their week by bringing in a toy from home to share with their peers. During carpet time the children had the opportunity to show everybody their toy and then passed it around the circle to allow their peers to play with it. We discussed the importance of sharing and how this makes us feel. Everybody has been doing an amazing job demonstrating their learning through play!



We then went on to explore facial expressions; the children looked at a variety of 'feeling faces' and thought about what emotion they could be. The children then looked in the mirror and tried to imitate the faces; this then developed into a game. Each child pulled a face and waited for their peer to guess which emotion they were showing.

To celebrate Chinese New Year the children created a Chinese dragon. They painted a variety of boxes red and decorated them with vibrant coloured hand prints. The children joined the Red and Blue Rooms and participated in a dragon dance to celebrate the year of the Rooster. Happy Chinese New Year!

THIS WEEK IN EARLY YEARS

RED AND BLUE ROOMS



The children in Red and Blue Room have embraced the topic of Chinese New Year with much curiosity, questioning and excitement this week. They have participated in some fun and thought-provoking activities including making their own Chinese lanterns, exploring Chinese food with chopsticks, role-playing in our Chinese restaurant and making their own paper dragon.

The children have been particularly fascinated by the Chinese writing they saw and had lots of fun exploring how Chinese characters are formed, tracing them in salt and in red paint. The children have also enjoyed finding out how Chinese children celebrate their New Year. They made their own mask to celebrate the year of the Rooster before taking part in their very own Dragon Dance parade on the main playground.



RECEPTION

This week Reception have been transported to China, learning all about Chinese New Year. The children have found out about how this special time is celebrated, with lots of dragon and lion dancing, eating delicious food and watching fireworks. So we thought we would also join in the fun and experience some of these traditions for ourselves. We began the week by making fortune cookies, using our origami skills and writing a special message inside for our friends. We used finger paints to decorate blossom tree lanterns, made our own Chinese dragon puppets and, best of all, chopped up lots of yummy vegetables to make 'stir fried noodles'. The children particularly enjoyed learning about the story behind the Zodiac. They were fascinated by the order in which the animals came in the race and felt sorry for the poor cat who was pushed into the river by the rat! We discovered that most of the children in Reception were born either in the year of the rabbit or the dragon. The children have been busy mark making and improving fine motor control with the use of 'chopsticks', which we have found really tricky to use. Reception have loved looking into this cultural celebration from the Far East, wanting to visit China in the hope of meeting dragons! Happy Chinese New Year from Reception to our families celebrating this weekend.



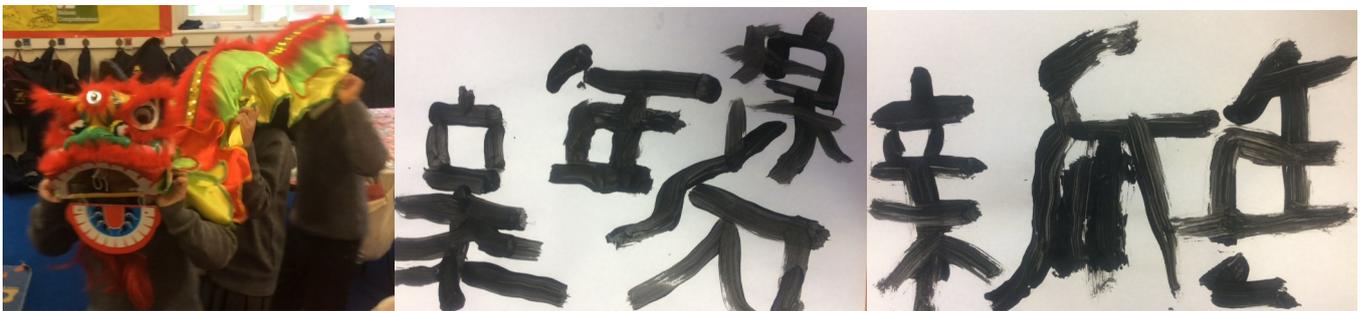
PREP SCHOOL UPDATE BY MS FIELD

KEY STAGE 1:

Year 1

This week in RS, Year 1 learnt about how people celebrate Chinese New Year. They found out about the story of the animals and how they raced across the river to reach the other side.

2017 is the year of the rooster and to celebrate, Year 1 had a go at painting 'Happy New Year' in Chinese writing. All the children concentrated hard and tried their very best to copy and form the writing correctly. I am sure you would agree that they came out very well! To end the lesson the children watched a video clip of dragon dancing in Chinatown on the internet before having a go at creating their own dragon dances to music around the classrooms, which was great fun!



Year 2

London's burning, London's burning, fetch the engines, fetch the engines, fire, fire! What fabulous historians we have in Year 2! The children have been looking closely at how the Great Fire of London spread so quickly. They have created amazing fire scenes using hot colours to represent the flames, mixing the colours together to achieve the right shades. Afterwards they put much thought into how dark and smoky the air must have been, carefully cutting out black silhouettes to show the buildings against the burning fire.

Money, money, money! In maths this week, the children have been investigating different coin values and using this knowledge to add different amounts together. In small groups, the children then took this newly learnt knowledge further by playing shop keepers and customers. Well done Year 2 maths cadets!



PEGASUS CERTIFICATES

Congratulations to the most recent Pegasus certificate winners:

- 1H Ben Simpson
- 1S Rania Adeel
- 2M Krishav Sundar
- 2W Eshan Mehra
- 3I Ramini Choudhary
- 3R Reedh Schroff
- 4M Manas Pallemptati
- 4R Jeevan Pangali
- 5C Harris Khushi
- 5B Parri Gohil
- 6F Iseoluwa Shittu
- 6O Layla Suleiman



PREP SCHOOL UPDATE BY MS FIELD

KEY STAGE 2:

Year 3

The pinnacle of Year 3's week has to have been our Ancient Egyptian workshop day on Tuesday! The day went in the blink of an eye, and the children were put to work right from the start, thinking about the huge amount of maths involved in designing and creating a pyramid. At the four workstations around the hall, children were able to re-enact some of the Ancient Egyptian skills. One of these was the process of mummification, where the children had to dismantle all the organs from a plastic dummy body and put them into the correct canopic jar, and later try to remember the exact positions to replace the organs...quite an awesome biology lesson for us all! Then they learnt the art of wrapping the bodies carefully. At another station, the children learnt the skill of making papyrus; the process of creating writing paper. The children learnt how to carefully lay the flattened reeds on top of each other and then rub them thoroughly to fuse them together, using sap as an adhesive. They were very proud of their results! Next, they learnt how the Egyptian workers chiselled limestone into the correct shapes for the pyramids, and how they polished the outer stones. The children were able to chisel and sculpt hieroglyphics into the softer stone, just as the ancient workers would have done on the inside of the tombs. One of the most enjoyable stations was where the children discovered how the Ancient Egyptians moved the colossal stones to the pyramid site. They were astounded to learn that each stone weighed more than 100 children and had trouble pulling the weight of just two of their friends with a rope on the ramp! Lastly, the children learnt how systematic the building of a pyramid had to be as they got involved with creating their own enormous, but highly scaled down version. They worked hard and eventually marvelled at the amazing structure they produced. Well done Year 3! What a hardworking, but fun and memorable day we had! It really brought our studies of the Ancient Egyptians to life! For photos of the day, please visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/longcloseschool

Year 4

Year 4 pupils have continued to create some excellent poetry in class. Everyone has been using such wonderful figurative language in the form of similes, metaphors, personification and alliteration. Aaliyah wrote a poem, which has been displayed in the reception area, and it will be 4M's turn next week to display an equally brilliant sample of their work. In history, the children have been captivated by the different types of Vikings that went into battle, such as Berserkers and shield maidens. We will now be looking closely at Valhalla and why Vikings wanted to go there. In maths we have been reviewing all topics to ensure understanding while Miss Malocca's group has been finding fractions of amounts and working on equivalent fractions. The children have continued to practise their stitching techniques in their DT lessons this week.

Year 5

Year 5 had a great week practising for our Shakespeare assembly. On Thursday we visited Stratford-upon-Avon and learnt all about Shakespeare's life. The children took part in various activities including writing with quills, Tudor shopping, studying real Tudor coins and naming artefacts from the era. Later we visited Anne Hathaway's Cottage, where he was born, and we then walked to Hall's Croft - a large Tudor building where Shakespeare's son-in-law practised medicine. The pupils had a fantastic time and learnt a huge amount from the trip. In science, the children continued their work on the cardiovascular system which focused on the lungs and heart. The Year 5 netball team played their first match against St Bernard's Prep School. The team played very well but were up against some very experienced players. After four quarters of fast moving action, St Bernard's came out on top. Mrs Barnes was very proud of the enthusiasm and effort throughout the game. Well done girls!

Year 6

Year 6 have been busy developing their practical skills in a variety of subjects. In DT they successfully completed making battery powered toy cars. Whilst in science they continue with the topic of 'Dissolving' by investigating which solids are soluble and whether different factors affect how quickly a material dissolves, or whether it dissolves at all. Set 1 maths group have been using their compasses to draw circles and then labelled the radius, diameter and circumference correctly.

MUSIC DEPARTMENT NEWS & SPORTS FIXTURES

It has been another busy week in music at Long Close School. Rehearsals have now started for the Prep Instrumental Afternoon on Thursday 16 March and the Senior Instrumental Afternoon on Friday 10 March at 4.15pm. All members of the school choirs and orchestra are expected to attend their concert, and all instrumentalists will be performing a short solo. Refreshments will be provided and both afternoons promise to be lovely celebrations of the musical talent we have at Long Close.

I am delighted with the uptake for instrumental lessons within the school and they are going really well! We do still have spaces for violin, drum, guitar and woodwind instruments if any other pupils would like to take up one of these instruments. Forms are available from Mrs Jones in the front office and need to be returned to her once completed.

Thank you for your prompt responses for places at this year's Wellington College Choral Day. The event is now full so there are no more spaces available.

Mrs Bingham, Director of Music

UPCOMING MUSICAL EVENTS FOR THE CALENDAR

*Thursday 23 February: Wellington Prep Choral Day—Choir Members in Years 5-7 only.
All places now taken.*

*Friday 10 March at 4.15pm: Senior Instrumental Afternoon - FOR ALL SENIOR PUPILS
IN CHOIR OR WHO LEARN AN INSTRUMENT*

*Thursday 16 March at 4.15pm: Prep Instrumental Afternoon - FOR ALL PREP PUPILS
IN CHOIR OR ORCHESTRA AND WHO LEARN AN INSTRUMENT*

SPORTS FIXTURES FOR W/C 30 JANUARY 2017

Tues 31 Jan: U9 Netball v Eton End (H)

Tues 31 Jan: U9AB Football v St Bernard's (A)

Wed 1 Feb: U11AB Football v St Bernard's (H)

Wed 1 Feb: U10 & U11 Netball v Eton End (A)

Fri 3 Feb: U13 Football v Shiplake (H)



SCHOOL NOTICES

HALF TERM HOLIDAY CLUB AT LONG CLOSE

Always Growing's Holiday Club for 3-13 year olds will be back again at Long Close this February half term and we can't wait to get started! We had a fantastic time over the Christmas holidays with lots of fun activities for the children, including bouncy castle and trampoline fun, visits from some reptiles and plenty of arts and crafts.

We will be open from Monday 13 February to Friday 17 February 2017, from 8am to 6pm, and we will have a range of activities to suit everyone. The cost for a full day (08:30am-5:30pm) is £31.00* and we also offer half day places for £19.00, which split at 1pm.

* Additional slots between 8:00-8:30am and 5:30-6pm will cost an extra £3 each.

You can now book online: <http://alwaysgrowing.co.uk/booking/>

If you have any questions at all or any trouble with our new booking system, please email info@alwaysgrowing.co.uk or call 07761 293425. More information can also be found on our website: www.alwaysgrowing.co.uk

We look forward to seeing many of you soon.

The Always Growing Team

SCHOOL EVENTS FOR W/C 30 JAN & 6 FEB 2017

Monday 30 January—Year 5 Assembly

Tuesday 31 January—Final date for GCSE entries

Tuesday 31 January—KS2 Parents' Information Evening—Moving Beyond KS2

Friday 3 February—Senior Girls' Trip to watch Thriller Live! In London

Monday 6 February—Prep School Curriculum Collapse Week—Pre-History

Tuesday 7 February—Years 9-11 Parents' Evening 1600-1930

Wednesday 8 February—Years 1-6 Body Percussion Assembly/Workshops

A MUSICAL ADVENTURE

If you're looking for activities to go to during half term, the Dionysus Ensemble will be performing 'A Musical Adventure' at St Mary's Church, Slough (SL1 1PJ), on Thursday 16 February 2017 at 11am.

It is a children's concert with bite-sized music, suitable for ages 0-7. Entry for children costs £2 each but adults are free. Book your place online at www.amusicaladventure.co.uk.

CHEERLEADING CLUB DEMO

The new Cheerleading club leader, Evangelina Maw, will be running an information/demo event for Years 5-9 on Monday 30 January at 1:30pm in the School Hall.

PTA NEWS

Happy Friday everyone, only 2 weeks to go till the PTA School Disco!!!



For: Years 1-6

When: Friday 10th February

Doors open at 6pm and the fun starts from 6.30pm

Where: Thames Valley Athletics Centre

Cost: £8 per ticket

Hopefully you have received the flyer with the registration form at the bottom. This just needs to be completed and returned to the office with payment. No physical tickets are provided but your child's/children's name(s) will be added to the list of attendees. On the evening we will be 'checking in' the children and providing them with a wristband to indicate whether they opted for vegetarian or non-vegetarian food.

PTA committee members/volunteers will be around next Friday morning (3rd February) at the school gates with registration forms, so if you haven't had a chance to register/pay before then we can take details and payment that day.

A big thank you to those who have volunteered to help on the night already, we are still in need of more help! As a reminder the help needed is with –

- * Entry and exit desk
- * Food station
- * Tuckshop
- * Tattoo/glow bands stall
- * Room monitors

Please get in touch with us directly or via your class reps if you can spare 30 mins or an hour to help out.

Stay in contact with us:



Join the PTA Facebook page

Click on the image to go to our page (CTRL and click)



Join our mailing list

Click on the image to email us (CTRL and click)