



LONG CLOSE SCHOOL
WE AIM FOR HIGHER THINGS

PEGASUS NEWS

December 2019

GREETINGS FROM MISS NIJJAR

I have greatly enjoyed my first term at Long Close and thank you all for the warmth of your welcome. The friendly, positive atmosphere each day is, for me, the defining characteristic of Long Close and I am grateful for the privilege of leading a remarkable school which promotes a true balance of academic and character development for its pupils.

By any measure this has been a terrific term - Model School status for Read Write Inc, 44th place in the prestigious Sunday Times Parent Power ranking of Independent Prep schools, and passing the Regulatory Compliance Inspection without a single action point - with excellent achievements in every area of the School. There are too many successes for me to list, but I am delighted that this newsletter captures many of the highlights. None of these would be possible without the dedication of the staff and I am most grateful to them all for their support and immense hard work.

The few weeks leading up to Christmas have been particularly special. Both Nativity performances were enchanting and the wonderful array of costumes and songs with, of course, amusing unpredictable moments, created special



memories. Against the extraordinary beauty of St Mary's Church, the pupils stunned me with the calibre of singing and readings in our Carol Service and I know how proud parents must have felt. A special mention must go to Mrs Bingham, our Director of Music, who enabled a programme of such high quality to be performed. The Christmas Fair was a fitting way to end the term and the event served to highlight the strength and support amongst parents, pupils and staff. I am indebted to everyone for making the occasion a huge success, especially the remarkable PTA elves and the enterprising Senior students who ran stalls.

I wish all members of the school community all the very best for a memorable 2019!

News from the Prep School

Our class ambassadors have put their heart and soul into the new job and been generous in their caring support of others. The teachers' energy when delivering inspiring learning through a topic approach has deepened and enriched pupils' understanding of the humanities. The pupils are proud of their portfolios and we look forward to more pupil work showcase days sharing a variety of our learning across the curriculum. We thank you as parents for your involvement and support.



Diwali

Everyone in the Early Years dressed up in their best celebration clothes and had a fun-filled day. Nursery made firework pictures with brightly coloured paint and glitter and used new words like 'bang, whoosh, crackle and pop!' Reception created their own clay Divas, made a huge Rangoli pattern using coloured pulses and they all made greetings cards.

We also welcomed family members who decorated the children's hands with Mehndi and explained how and why they celebrate Diwali with their family. We had a party and danced to Indian music as well as familiar party songs. It was such a special day!



Ruth Miskin Model School

Long Close School has been appointed as a 'Read Write Inc.' Model School as a result of our outstanding literacy teaching. Model schools are selected as regional centres of excellence where teaching children to read is at the heart of what they do. The award was presented by Councillor Bains (Labour, Upton ward) and Jean Spurgeon, Educational Consultant for Oxford Education.

The phonics-based programme is taught for 1 hour every day at Long Close and starts in Nursery. Children make rapid development in their reading and writing as a result of the approach and the hard work of Miss Staniford and the other Early Years and KS1 teachers.

'Our Model Schools demonstrate an inspirational passion and excitement for teaching. Their attention to



detail and focus on continuous professional development marks them out and is the key to their success in getting every child to read by 6.' states Ruth Miskin, Creator of Read Write Inc.

Miss Nijjar was thrilled to receive the award: 'It is wonderful to see the commitment of our staff and excellent progress

of our pupils acknowledged and it will be fantastic to be able to inspire other schools.'

As further evidence of the academic performance of its pupils, Long Close Preparatory School rose from 86th to 44th place in the country as reported in the prestigious Sunday Times Parent Power ranking.

Current Affairs

Long Close participated in the World's Largest Lesson which brings the Global Goals to children in 130 countries. Every year group focussed on a specific issue which the pupils debated and they then produced campaign posters to promote it.

Mr.Sargeant's assembly on the new Model United Nations Club that he will be running next term was inspiring. Here the students will learn about diplomacy, international relations and the important work of the United Nations. The club will be an educational simulation of the UN and its various committees and will raise students' global awareness.





Ufton Court

Year 4 spent an amazing two days staying in this Grade 1 listed building. They learned about the Anglo-Saxons and Vikings and more about themselves in what was, for many, their first overnight trip away from home with their friends. The children were transported back in time, learning about the ways and customs of Anglo-Saxon life, why the Saxons settled in the area and the battles that took place between them and the Vikings. The Ufton Court staff were hugely complimentary of the children. Well done Year 4 - you were true ambassadors of the school!



Berlin

History students from Years 9-11 visited Berlin which is probably the most important city in Twentieth century History. They visited the 1936 Olympic Stadium and other landmarks where Hitler would have led rallies in Nazi Germany. They also saw the Holocaust Memorial and other poignant reminders around the city as well as Cold War landmarks such as Checkpoint Charlie and the last remaining stretch of the Berlin Wall.

It was a wonderful overseas trip and the students' assembly on their return demonstrated the real impact it had.





Roald Dahl Museum

Year 3 visited The Roald Dahl Museum where they were introduced to many of the author's amazing stories. They were able to explore for themselves the Children's Gallery where they could visit magic mirrors which made them look big or small, optical illusion wheels, shadows and even magically being transported to another world! It was a fun-filled day which was ended by children designing and making their own Dream Bottles after being inspired by Roald Dahl and his wonderful creations.

Weald & Downland Museum

The Year 5 visit to the Weald and Downland museum really brought their Tudor topic, 'Off with her Head', to life. We participated in fantastic workshops and learnt a great deal about life on a Tudor farm, were able to dress as Tudors and experiment with a range of the toys from that period. A thoroughly engaging, enjoyable and exciting day was had by all!



Early Years go down to the woods!



Early Years went on their first outing of the year to the Look Out Discovery Centre which has new Science resources - our favourite was the heat camera. All the children were able to go into the forest, with Nursery exploring and making pictures using natural materials. Reception went up the lookout tower to search for the missing pigs and went to rescue them. When they arrived the 'Big Bad Wolf' had left a letter challenging them to build him a den in the woodland area.

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Christmas at Long Close

The Early Years started off the festive season with 'The Lucky Owl'. The hall was packed with parents as we heard the story of the nativity with lovely songs and actions. The KS1 'Hooray in a Manger' was narrated and ably told by Year 2, whilst Year 1 were wonderful chorus members - singing and dancing with great enthusiasm and sitting beautifully listening to the story.

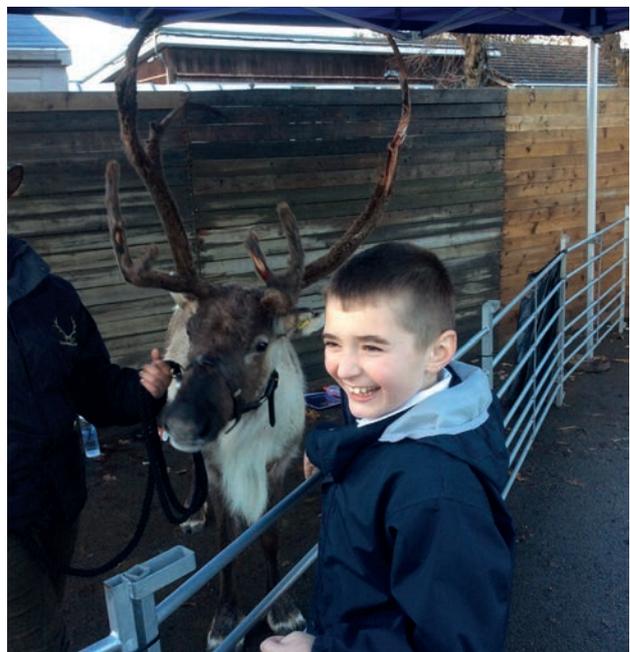
The highlight of the term for our older pupils was our Carol Service. Many hours of practice paid off with a superb performance. The readers were confident and articulate and it was lovely to showcase our musical performers with a series of duets from the Senior School. It really is a wonderful school community event and it was lovely to see so many parents there.

Everyone entered into the festive spirit with Christmas jumpers, a traditional turkey lunch and an educational visit from some real reindeer. The Christmas Fair was a wonderful way for all members of the Long Close family to celebrate the start of the holidays together.



Peripatetic Lessons

We are delighted that all our ABRSM students passed their exams, and these certificates will be given out in assembly. We do have spaces on the following instruments - piano, drums, violin, guitar and woodwind, so if the recent musical events have inspired your child please don't hesitate to get a form from the office to start lessons in the New Year.





COGNITA

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The pupils took part in an initiative across all Cognita schools worldwide. Christmas Around the World meant designing their own cards and sharing them with more than 40,000 students in Europe, Asia and South America.

Thinking of Others

We have been reminding the children of how lucky they are and how important it is to think of others less fortunate. We did so in our Harvest Festival (with a lovely assembly of poems, artwork and music) when parents kindly donated produce to local Food Banks, through our MacMillan Bake Sale, assemblies and PSHE sessions in anti-bullying week and on Children in Need day.



Remembrance Day

2018 marked the centenary of the end of the First World War so our commemorations were particularly poignant. The assembly started with a moving rendition of 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow' by Parri and Anisha and senior students re-enacted segments from 'Private Peaceful' by Michael Morpurgo. We were very fortunate to have a guest speaker, Danny's grandmother, to talk to the pupils about her personal experience of living through the Second World War so that they could appreciate the sacrifice of other generations.



Sport

Over the course of the term, both Nursery and Reception have had amazing journeys in their PE lessons- 'visiting' the zoo, the moon, the forest, the beach and the circus! Many of their key motor skills have been developed and most importantly, it has been great fun! Reception have been enjoying learning to swim.



We have had many fixtures for Years 3 to 6 in rugby, football and hockey and hosted a successful rugby tournament against neighbouring schools. All squads have improved their technique and teamwork and we have had some great successes on the pitch. In PE lessons, all groups have mastered core skills in gymnastics and tested their fitness levels in our athletics challenges.



The Seniors set impressive times in their athletics challenge and Years 7 & 8 have worked extremely hard on core fitness. In fixtures, our teams have worked hard against some very strong opposition. The stand-out event was the football match against Ditton Park – where we fought back from 3-1 down to win the game.



Mrs O'Connell was a member of the England Masters team who won Gold in their Hockey World Cup in the summer. It is fantastic for the children to learn their hockey from a champion!

