**OAKLEY SCHOOL REPORT 2023**

So far, we have had an incredibly busy year and it doesn’t look as if it’s going to slow down any time soon.

We have so many highlights to the year that it’s probably easiest to choose just a few examples.

**Church**

It is always a delight to take our children to church although sadly we have only made it to church once this year- for Harvest. The Christmas service was cancelled due to school being closed because of a leaking reservoir. We did however manage to celebrate Christingle in school. Delivering the service in near darkness, the hall just lit by tea lights, makes this a very special moment for all, especially our children lighting their candle for the first time.

In September I was accosted by some of our lovely ex Year 6 children who are now quite grown-up Year 7s, I was quite entertained by their new roles showing prospective parents around Wheatley Park School. Parents have been incredibly complimentary about what they’d seen at the open days. The children’s confidence and desire to take on new responsibilities reminded me of some of the opportunities provided by school to develop these skills alongside their activities outside of school.

**Computing**

Last summer I received a phone call from Mr Lovell, who is the Computing Lead at Ashfold School. As part of the school’s charitable status, he offered specialist computing teaching for our Year 5 & 6 children. So far, Mr Lovell has spent time teaching some of our children the skills of 3D modelling and computer aided design through Mario Kart. Every time I popped in to see what they were doing they were totally engrossed in their learning.

**Science**

Having an incredibly strong STEM focus in school, we were able to announce our achievement of the Primary Science Quality Mark- Gilt Award. This award recognises sustained development of science, building from the initial award. Plenty of evidence is required for submission and the assessors were particularly impressed by the enthusiasm of our children and the many experiences provided to add to and enrich our curriculum, like the STEM Fair.

**Sport**

We continue to excel at competitive sport and most definitely punch above our weight. We have four football teams (4 last year) and we have played several matches in the league. We have also played in the netball and basketball league.

Last Saturday, approximately 20 children participated in the x-country at Ascott House. We achieved several good placings and brought home some well-deserved silverware.

**Young Voices**

As a school we have always had a passion for singing therefore yet again we signed up for Young Voices at Wembley Arena.

**Charities**

We have supported many charities over the year including Children in Need and the MacMillan coffee morning amongst others.

Our KS2 children were invited to take part in a charity Swimathon organised by the Rotary at Thame Leisure Centre in February. They had the challenge of swimming as many lengths of the pool as possible in 55 minutes.

Groups of children delivered Christmas parcels to residents in the village, accompanied by Father Christmas. This is always an enjoyable excursion and an opportunity to sing!

We had a surprise visit from Matteo from The Chandos Arms just after Christmas where he handed over a cheque for £376.00. This was from the proceeds of their Christmas raffle. We would like to thank everyone who bought a ticket and of course to Matteo and Brandon for thinking of us.

I have to give a special mention and a huge thank you to all of our PTA (FOS) who have been working tirelessly across the year with their fundraising efforts. Their favourite fundraiser (not), the school disco is coming up soon.

**Sensory garden**

One of our current projects is to create a sensory garden and play area on the field with willow tunnels and secret hideaways. The children are eager for it to be completed so they can play in it.

Preparations are underway for the next Oakfest. I must admit, when Mrs Seaton-Reid told me back in January 2018 that Oakfest most definitely wasn’t a school fete, I really didn’t anticipate it being on the same level as Glastonbury either! Please join us- tickets are on sale now. Everything we raise, whether it be through Oakfest or FOS, is ploughed back into activities or resources for the children.

**Northern Ballet**

Regardless of cries of ‘…but I can’t dance’ (mainly from staff I might add), the class sessions progressed well with all children transforming from ugly ducklings into beautiful dancing swans, with a few frogs along the way (pliés). It was a delight to watch our children gracefully moving across the hall. Maybe one day we’ll hear that one of our past students performs for the Royal Ballet!

**SATs**

Our Yr6 children will sit their SATs next week. They have worked incredibly hard and deserve some amazing results. I hope you will join us in wishing them well.

As we head at a rapid pace towards the end of the school year, and the end of my time as headteacher at Oakley, as a school, we would like to thank the whole community for your continued support.

Best wishes,

Caroline Witton

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Headteacher

Oakley Church of England Combined School

01844 238364