



## Yesterday's Toys



Year 5 visited the Victorian Living Museum at Dudley to find out about life for Victorian children. Read more about their trip inside.

## From the Headmaster

I sit here in my office writing this as the term has drawn to a close and the boys have all left to start on their exciting Christmas adventures. It seems eerily quiet without the hum of boys going eagerly about their work but it is a great time to reflect on what has been accomplished this term.

There have been numerous trips encompassing all year groups with highlights including the three-day Year 8 geography field trip to Swanage, the two-night Year 6 Bushcraft, the overnight Year 4 Ridgeway walk and Pre-Prep visits to Cogges Farm and Roves Farm.

This has been a highly impressive rugby season with our strongest set of results for many years and some terrific rugby being played. Our U12As, U11Cs and U8As all remained unbeaten and all boys in Years 3-8 have represented the school in matches, a key part of our sport for all offering.

Pre-Prep performed their Harvest Festival in October and at the end of term, 'Born in a Barn' nativity which was a quite brilliant performance thoroughly enjoyed by the boys

and their families who were watching. The celebrations for Christmas continued with the fantastic Carol Service at St Helen's Church in Abingdon. Music continues to play a vital part of our educational offering at Abingdon Prep.

Our four houses have each selected their charity for the year and we have already been raising money for our whole school charity, Be Free Young Carers, through a silver coin trail, and our wonderful Christmas Bazaar which was so well supported by all.

The Other Half program continues to expand and again we have offered more than 100 clubs this term, ensuring that the boys can try their hand at something new or look to improve their skills in something they love to do.

Our boys continue to work hard and get involved across all areas of the curriculum. I hope they all enjoy a well deserved Christmas break.

With best wishes

**Craig Williams**



**Unicorn won the end of term House Merit Cup by just 35 points**



### Old boys have a nostalgic visit

Three boys who have just completed their A-levels at Abingdon School were keen to visit Abingdon Prep for a final trip down memory lane before heading off to university.

They enjoyed seeing all the changes made to the school since they were here and reminisced with current pupils and staff about their time here. Noah spoke with the boys in Year 1 about his memories from Reception and Pre-Prep and the younger boys enjoyed learning that playing on the mound held just as much appeal then as it does now!

It was lovely to see boys finishing their journey through the Foundation alongside those just starting out. We wish the older boys every success with the next phase of their education.



**Sharing Reception's presents from Father Christmas**

### Meet our new School Council



## Remembrance

This year, as in previous years, boys and staff stopped for two minutes at 11am on Monday 11 November as part of our own and national remembrance commemorations. The two-minutes' silence was respectfully observed, and was punctuated by the poignant strains of 'The Last Post' and the 'Reveille', this year played by Max in Year 8.



Boys will have had their own particular people or memories to consider. However, many may have thought back to the previous week's assembly in which Michael, a local historian and ex-Abingdon parent, came in and taught them about some of the local men who had gone off to fight, and, in some cases, did not return. These included Charles Bond, who actually lived in what is now Josca's House, before he went to the Western Front. Sadly, Rupert Aldworth, the son of a local farming family who owned land in Frilford, was one of those who did not return. Michael also emphasised the influence of the war on local families, especially the women and children left behind, some of whom suffered multiple losses which inevitably impacted greatly on what was then a largely agricultural community. We are very grateful to their contribution, as we are to those who continue to serve our country.  
*Stefan Gerrard*



## Nightmare Before Death

Through the glaze of my tears,  
I could see him dying - right in front of me.  
His mouth foaming and blood oozing from his wide eyes,  
Like sap from a tree.  
I could see the remaining figures falling like little toy soldiers  
And being impaled by solid black balls.  
I could see the Germans with their snarling faces.  
I stood with my mouth agog as a bomb landed on my right,  
Blowing fifteen soldiers out of this living hell.

I could hear the firing of guns like rain pouring down  
On all the fearful faces of the English army.  
I could hear the crash and boom as bombs landed  
All around me like an avalanche roaring down a mountain.  
I could hear the headache-inducing shouts and screams  
As if the men were trapped in an endless nightmare.  
I could hear the crackling of fire, like bones being constantly broken.

I could feel the sweat dripping off my brow, like a tap left on  
As my finger tightened around the trigger.  
I could feel the searing pain as a bullet struck my shoulder  
As fast as a bolt of lightning.  
Blood pouring out of it like a waterfall.  
I could feel the paralyzing pain like guts being pulled out of a stomach  
And then punched back in again,  
As the blast of the bomb knocked me out - cold.

I could see nothing...  
I could hear nothing...  
I could feel nothing...

by Alex, 8A



Odd Socks Day

Once again, boys and staff at Abingdon Prep took part in Odd Socks Day to celebrate how we are all different and all unique. This was part of a national anti-bullying campaign where assemblies, lessons and workshops during the week reinforced the important theme of 'Change Starts With Us'.

## Nasio Trust update

Abingdon Prep has continued to sponsor four children through the Nasio Trust, an Abingdon-based charity working to break the cycle of poverty in Western Kenya. Boys have been updated in assemblies about these children and have learnt how their lives are so different from ours: Lorna (Pre-Prep), Joseph (Junior Section), Abraham (Middle Section) and Joseph (Senior Section). Visit [thenasiotrust.org](http://thenasiotrust.org) for more information. *Alison Heaton*



## Year 6 Bushcraft



Our first trip of the year was the Year 6 residential Bushcraft experience at Cornbury. Having been put into tribes prior to arriving, the boys' first tasks involved each tribe building a fire on which they cooked their lunch, and the building of shelters, under which many of the boys slept.

Friday saw the boys learning about making traps, enjoying some fresh water swimming and being taught the art of camouflage.

Interspersed between all of these activities there was also ample time for the telling of stories and riddles and the singing of songs around the camp fire.

Boys also enjoyed playing various games in the woods and hungrily ate the freshly made food such as pasta bolognese and a full English breakfast. Pizza ovens were used by the boys to make their own pizza for dinner on Friday evening.



## Year 7 at Bath



## Exploring Evolution

Year 8 visited the Natural History Museum in Oxford. We began in the lecture theatre with Sarah from the museum, learning about Darwin, evolution, adaptation and natural selection. The boys discovered whether they were genetic super-tasters or not, and those feeling brave got to handle some giant hissing cockroaches, before touring the museum with a worksheet. The shop's array of rocks and treats also proved rather popular!



## Year 4 visited Christ Church, Abingdon



## Year 5: The Victorian Living Museum



Year 5 pupils, who are investigating how life for Victorian children changed over time, visited the Victorian Living Museum, Dudley.

We descended into the coal mine, exposing the boys to the cramped and dangerous conditions experienced by young Victorians, complete with an explosion showing how coal was dislodged from the seams. Happily, we emerged

unscathed, albeit after a shorter shift than our Victorian counterparts. The schoolroom gave the opportunity to write with slate and chalk, and to recite the alphabet and tables, as well as experiencing some Victorian discipline! The boys also visited a selection of Victorian era shops and houses to see and hear demonstrations of Victorian housekeeping and toiletry habits. Purple tongues did result from the trip to the sweet shop, although we were glad to report there was no arsenic in the confectionery, as in the 1800s. A final highlight was watching a blacksmith at work in the forge. Sparks really did fly. A successful trip, and in no small part owing to the good attention and questions posed by the boys.

## Year 4 walk the Ridgeway



The sun shone on the Year 4 boys during their overnight trip hiking on the Ridgeway in September. Over two days they walked nearly 14 miles, staying overnight at a hostel where they enjoyed playing in the woods and slept well! All boys showed resilience and teamwork over the course of this great trip, as well as having the chance to build new and existing friendships.

## Year 8 Dorset Field Trip



Year 8's Geography field trip theme was coastal geomorphology. On the first day, the pupils visited Durdle Door, Stair Hole and Lulworth Cove, studying features of a concordant coastline. The day after, in testing weather conditions, they examined a discordant coastline getting up close to Old Harry Rocks and the Pinnacles, and investigating the changing profile of Studland Beach. On the final rather rainy day, the boys visited Corfe Castle. A successful trip, and a memorable one for the richness of its landscapes, coastal features and... its dramatic weather!



## APS Quizzers at MCS



Two Abingdon Prep teams went to the annual Worldwide Quiz hosted by Magdalen College School. The teams faced several rounds of questions, all of a geographical nature, ranging from locational knowledge to map reading. Both teams performed soundly in a large field of entrants. The Prep's B team enjoyed some success – ie they won some chocolates! – by winning the round on fieldwork-based questions.



Two teams from Years 5 and 6 competed in the annual Prep Schools Quiz Challenge at Magdalen College School in Oxford. They pitted their quizzing skills against a number of local preparatory schools. Rounds included questions on high culture, geography, history, politics, art and literature. Both teams fared very well, with the teams finishing in respectable mid-table positions out of the 22 teams that took part.

## More of the Other Half



Hand 'X-Rays' in Up & Atom Year 3-4 Science Club



Year 3-4 Outdoor Explorers



Table Tennis, Years 5-6, and Years 7-8



Wellbeing - Years 3-6



Cookery for Years 5-6



Building a water wheel in Brain STEMs Years 5-6

## Our Bees Move House!



There was great excitement in October when a team came to re-home the swarm of honey bees that had been resident behind the weatherboards in our school hall roof-void since late last spring. They had not been bothering us unduly, but as the weather got cooler, they were becoming more angry when agitated by any nearby noise and vibration. Removing the boards revealed a whole row of honeycombs. The bees were gradually sucked into a special box to transport them to their new homes in a local apiary, and the combs removed – the wax structures were dripping with honey!

Many of the boys came to look, and the beekeepers showed them the special box and talked to us about bees. If you put your hand near (but not on) the grille you could feel the heat coming off the hundreds of buzzing bees, including the queen, inside. Soon, any remaining bees were all gone.



## Year 3 and 4 Art Club

At the end of October, Year 3 and 4 Art Club was getting into the Halloween spirit making 'batty bats' with help from two of our Year 8 art leaders. Fangs, oversized wings, and googly eyes featured aplenty in the boys' spooktacular 3D batty creations.



In November, our two Young Leaders taught a wonderful session on 'Marbling'. The pupils were able to choose their own colours and create some beautiful marbled wrapping paper in time for Christmas. Thank you to Ned and Edward for running a very exciting and creative club!



## Whizz! Bang! Pop! Aah!

After one of the wettest firework nights we have ever had last year, it was a relief that the rain just about held off for our event this time. The better conditions meant we could all enjoy our food and drink outside in the dry, and that the boys could let off steam playing with light-sabres on the field before moving over to the sports field to watch the fireworks.

The display by Titanium fireworks was superb, full of whizzes, bangs, and colour (many of the boys had done flame-testing in science earlier in the week and were shouting out the metals that gave the different colours).

A huge thank you to all the parents and staff who helped on the night, and to the Titanium fireworks team who gave us a fabulous display.

## Debating and Public Speaking Competitions



In early December, Abingdon Prep held its annual Public Speaking and Debating Competitions.

First, it was the turn of the Middle Section Public Speaking Competition. Entrants were given five minutes to persuade the audience of their arguments, which this year included banning the sale of fireworks for private use, the importance of the UK leaving the European Union with a deal and expanding nuclear energy. Well done to our Year 5 winner Laurie who argued that the sale of tobacco should be banned.

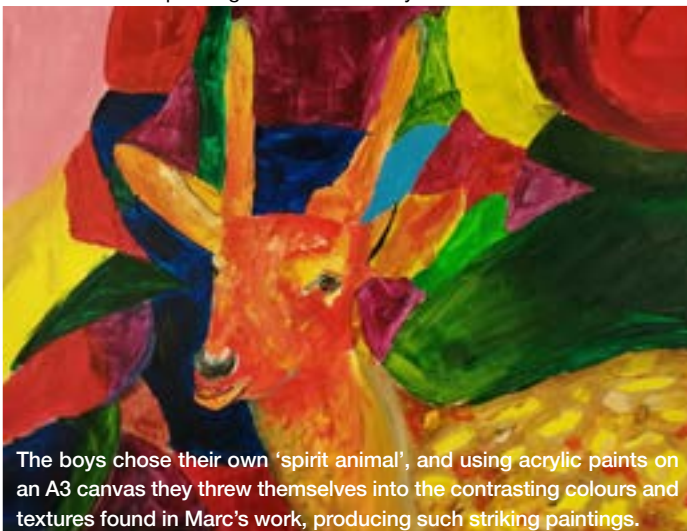
Then it was the turn of the Senior Section. This featured two debates, one on the influence of social media and the other about the monarchy. Both debates featured some strong questioning from the audience for each speaker. The winner was George from Year 7, who argued that social media was a positive influence on society.

Many thanks go to Dr. Burnand, Head of Scholars at Abingdon School, Mr. Scott, Teacher of English at Radley College, and to Glynne Butt, an Abingdon Foundation Governor, for forming the judging panel for both events. *Rob Shaw*



## Franz Marc Art Workshop

At a weekend workshop, Year 7 and 8 boys worked in the style of Expressionist painter Franz Marc, whose iconic style of colourful, dreamlike animal painting was influenced by the devastation of WWI.



The boys chose their own 'spirit animal', and using acrylic paints on an A3 canvas they threw themselves into the contrasting colours and textures found in Marc's work, producing such striking paintings.

## Griffin's Orangutan Assembly



Five Year 7R boys from Griffin House introduced last year's Griffin House Charity, Sumatran Orangutan Society (SOS), by sharing the work they do in Sumatra to protect the habitat in which the orangutans live. We were then treated to some wonderful pictures of the Sumatran rainforest, courtesy of Rachel from SOS, and an insight into its importance along with some interesting facts about Great Apes. SOS was also able to share a camera shot of a Sumatran tiger, one of only 600 left in the world, triggered as it explored a newly planted rainforest.

# Carol Concert

The Christmas concert is a highlight of the year. Children, parents and teachers came together once again in the beautiful St Helen's church in Abingdon to celebrate the festive season with music. The concert included beautiful choral pieces such as John Rutter's Angel's Carol, a fun fusion of Led Zeppelin and Deck the Halls by Jazz band, as well as more traditional carols performed by the Orchestra and Guitar group. Thank you to Katie and her helpers for decorating the church with the children's Christmas arts and crafts, and all the visiting music staff who took part in the concert. Special thanks must go to our Director of Music for this term, Adam Treadaway, whose expertise and dedication resulted in such a memorable evening. *Lenka Sowter*



## Concert Platform



Our regular after school concert platforms offer boys a chance to play for an appreciative audience of parents and peers.

## Radley College Orchestral Day



Eleven boys attended an Orchestral day at Radley College. The Precentor, Sam Gladstone, put them through their paces with some engaging warmups, then the boys rehearsed in small groups, building up to the full orchestra. It was amazing to see how these young musicians were able to develop their playing as a large ensemble in such a short amount of time. After tea and cake, the students performed together for friends and family - a truly wonderful occasion.



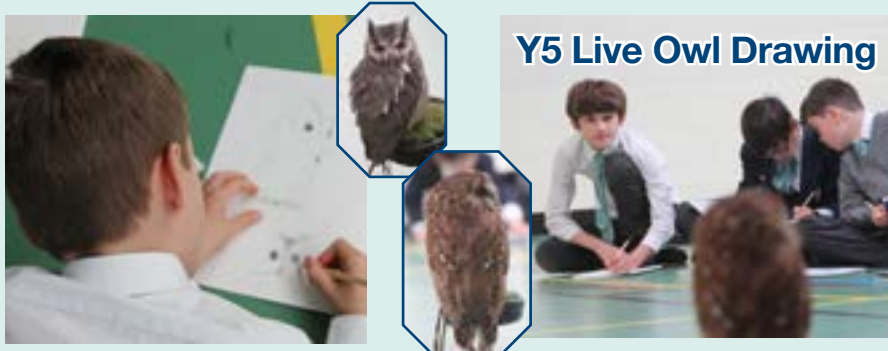


Year 3 made pictures using natural vegetable paints

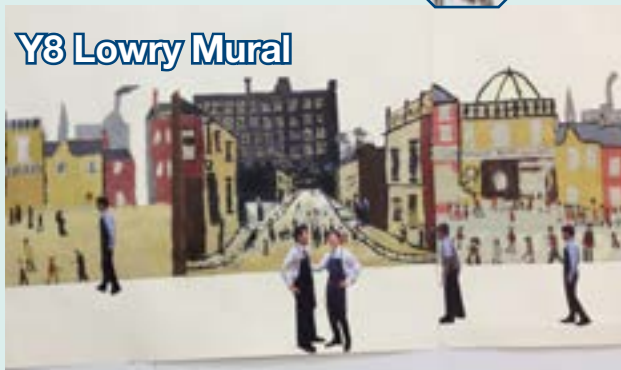


Art Trip to Stowe

Stowe school invited nine of our Year 7 and 8 artists to attend the inter schools Art Festival. They tried their hands at light sculpture, drypoint etching, model making and sketching in response to the architectural features of the school. The boys were commended for their innovative ideas and collaborative creativity. *Sherrey Tysom*



Y5 Live Owl Drawing



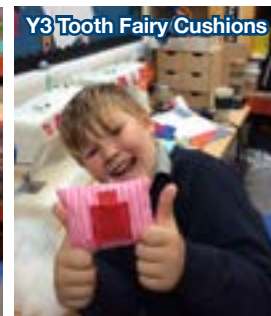
Y8 Lowry Mural

Year 8 have been exploring architecture this term. To round off their project they painted a selection of industrial landscapes on board canvas inspired by L.S Lowry. We extended the work into a whole class mural, using photography to put ourselves into the artwork.

Striking a Lowry pose caused much hilarity. However achieving a sense of perspective in such a large composition was rather more challenging. A wonderful collaboration and atmospheric final piece.



Y3 Tooth Fairy Cushions



Y6 Emojis



Y5 make boxes for juggling balls



Cressheads Challenge

Grown in a Cornish crabshell



Y4 Baubles



Y5 Pop-ups



Y4 Wall Hangings



Y3 Mobiles



Christmas in CDT

# September

## The Reception Learning Lion Cubs settle in



Y5 and 6 tried out their first CDT projects of the year on Pre-Prep



## Pre-Prep Young Ambassadors



The role of our Young Ambassadors is to support their peers during play times, using their early leadership skills to help others make good choices while playing and having fun. Young Ambassadors are also another point of contact for Pre-Prep boys at break times and they support others socially, helping initiate new activities or just keeping each other company.

# October

## Reception visit Cogges Farm



Reception set off on their very first trip to Cogges Farm Museum with rain clouds on the horizon. But the sun was able to peep through and nothing could dampen our spirits as the children learnt how to bake bread in a hot bread oven, grind corn into flour, plant corn seeds in little pots they had made from newspaper and re-tell the story of the Little Red Hen. With a picnic lunch, an exploration of the amazing adventure playground area and time with the animals some very happy and tired little boys made their way home on the minibus.



# October

## Harvest Festival



Harvest is an important time for Pre-Prep. It marks the transition from summer to autumn and is a wonderful celebration of the world around us. We enjoyed a traditional Harvest Festival, bringing gifts to the harvest table, which were donated to The Gatehouse Charity in Oxford.

We were joined by Rev'd Paul Gooding, assistant Chaplain from the Senior School, and Paul Wisby accompanied us as the children shared songs and poems. Reception dressed as the floppy-floppy scarecrows in their song, Year 1 built a poem, the ukelele club performed their first ever group piece, whilst Year 2 confidently explained the work of The Gatehouse charity and told us about the meals that are provided for the homeless in Oxford.



## Forest School



## November



Helen tries on all of the fire-fighter's safety gear!

Blue Watch from Abingdon Fire Station visited to talk about keeping safe and what to do in an emergency. As the boys toured the fire engine, they saw the equipment and how fire-fighters use it in an incident. Reception even tried a hose!



Blue Watch visit Pre-Prep



**Get Out!  
Get the Fire Brigade Out!  
Stay Out!**

## Divali in Reception



Reception celebrated Divali, the Hindu festival of light. Parent Rupal came to share Indian food and music, and everyone helped to wrap Elaine in a sari.



## November

### Pre-Prep Workshare



Pre-Prep was a hive of activity as some very proud children shared their latest work with their parents.



Hubble Bubble - Pre-Prep Science Club



## December



## The Pre-Prep Nativity - Born in a Barn



Pre-Prep performed a traditional Nativity play for their families to enjoy. It began with the sheep and donkeys from Reception processing into the hall with glowing lanterns, smiling as they took their places. An array of Year 2 animals filled the stable and angels from Year 1 lit the sky as the story unfolded with a selection of catchy and exciting songs. The animals told the story of the news in the barn on that special night, as Mary and Joseph sat quietly with their baby son. They were soon joined by kings, camels, shepherds and mice. What a busy night! The boys were a real credit to the school, taking part with gusto and remembering every single line and song word with actions! An outstanding performance from Pre-Prep.



# December

# Roves Farm



The day after Pre-Prep's nativity performance, we set off to Roves Farm to find out about the story from the Donkey's point of view. The adults became the audience in a real stable with live animals. Mary and Joseph were two boys in Reception who led the donkey to the chilly stable where Jesus soon joined them.



The best thing of all was a visit to Father Christmas in his sleigh with promises of being very, very good being exchanged for wishes and requests for Lego. They also met an elf in the workshop, who let the boys choose their own gift from the shelves. We also heard about everything needed for Santa's reindeer to have the stamina to fly all night. There were opportunities for Christmas crafts, a visit to pets corner, a huge adventure playground and our picnic. It is no wonder there were some sleepy travellers on the way back to school. We would all like to say a big thank you to the JPA for supporting us with this event so generously.  
*Linda Gaskell.*



Reception returned to Cogges Manor Farm to find out about Christmas traditions in the past. They made pagan kissing bells, cooked Tudor ginger pigs and learned about Christmas trees, cards and crackers in Victorian times. They



**Cogges at Christmas**

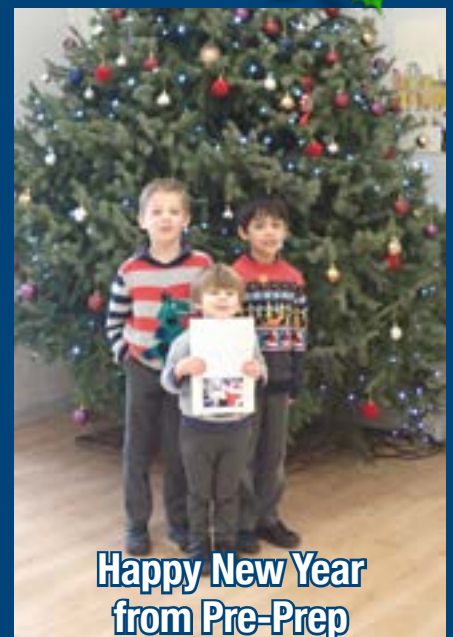
made wartime snowflakes and paper chains from newspaper. They ate lunch around the drawing room fire and walked in the fields to round off their day of Christmases past.



# Celebrate! Christmas in Pre-Prep



A Letter from Father Christmas - he left presents under the tree!



**Happy New Year from Pre-Prep**

# Rugby Highlights



Victorious U13As at the APS Rugby Sevens



U8 Rugby Festival at Cheltenham College



Try! U8-9 APS Tag Festival



Y5 House Rugby



U13As at the St Hugh's Super 12s Festival

- The Under 13As were the eventual winners of the APS U13 Rugby Sevens Festival in November. They beat Cothill by 28 - 0 in the Final.
- Our U8 A, C and D rugby teams were all unbeaten in the regular season. The Year 3s have lost only 3 of their 53 matches!
- Both our U11C and U12A teams were also unbeaten in their regular rugby season.



U9s at Christchurch



vs St Hugh's

## The U10s Play at Twickenham

To be given the chance to play and even score on the hallowed turf of English rugby is not an opportunity to be missed! In November, our Under 10 squad spent a morning playing in an 8-a-side tournament against a number of different prep schools and clubs. Our boys did extremely well, scoring a number of tries and winning all of their matches. The post tournament pictures of the boys highlights how pleased they were. There was even more for the boys to enjoy and witness all that Twickenham has to offer. The Killik Cup was held later that day between a star-filled Barbarian team and the Fijians. Ireland's Rory Best led out the Baa-baas in perhaps his last appearance in an international. It turned out to be a fabulous game with an abundance of tries, some nimble footwork and clever passing from the Fijians who in a thrilling finish held on to claim victory 33-31. All in all, the perfect rugby day! *Ashley David-Ward*



**Biathlon:** Josh (2nd), George (3rd) and Sam (3rd) all performed exceptionally well at the South Eastern Biathlon Regional qualifying events (Abingdon Vale and Bath Biathlon Championships) in October and will go on to represent Abingdon Preparatory School at The British Schools Biathlon Championships at Bath University in March



Abingdon Vale SE Biathlon Regional Event

## The Gothia World Youth Cup

Abingdon Prep boys Benji, Sam, Hugh, Luke and Ned were selected to represent the Prep School Lions this summer at the Gothia World Cup in Gothenburg. It was an incredible experience for the boys playing teams from all over the world including Peru, Mexico and Germany. They were superb ambassadors for Abingdon Prep both on and off the football pitch.



Abingdon Cross Country Relay

## House Rugby

Year 3 (U8)	Unicorn
Year 4 (U9)	Griffin
Year 5 (U10)	Phoenix
Year 6 (U11)	Phoenix
Year 7 & 8 B	Dragon
Year 7 & 8 A	Phoenix



## Autumn Term Rugby Awards

This term we celebrate rugby endeavour. The 'Most Outstanding Player' comes from the 1st XI of each year. The 'Most Improved Player' can come from any team in each age group. The 'Man of Steel' awards celebrate individual achievements.

### Man of Steel Awards

Year 4: Alex, Satoshi, Sam, Ralph

Year 8: Freddie, William, Billy, Alex

Team	Improved	Outstanding
Under 8:	Kit	Yash
Under 9:	Thomas	Ralph
Under 10:	Thomas	Paul
Under 11:	Henry	Conor
Under 12:	Patrick	Orson
Under 13:	Tommy	Alex

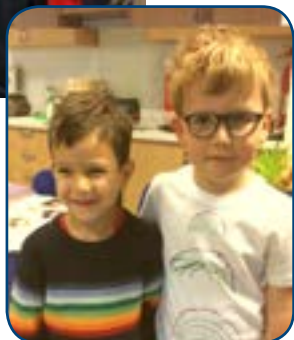
## The Christmas Bazaar

In the 2019 Christmas Bazaar, our new stalls got their second outing and again proved a hit with boys and their families. The Hall was a hive of activity, and the array of stalls in the classrooms run by boys, the JPA and external vendors, meant there was something for everyone. Santa's Grotto was ever popular, our buskers entertained and some spectacular raffle prizes had all our fingers crossed!



Once again, many of the Year 7 boys were taking part in the Peter Jones Foundation Tycoon Enterprise business competition, and their *Dragon's Den* stalls had a very successful day, selling milk shakes, cookies, snacks, stress balls, fluorescent slime (with a dark booth to see it in!), 3D-printed decorations, crackers and more.

Thank you to everyone who helped on the day: JPA, parents, staff and the boys for making this such a unique event.



The dawn of a new academic year heralds the beginning of our next fundraising efforts for our chosen charity. This year we are supporting **Be Free YC** – a local Oxfordshire charity which offers support and advice dedicated to improving the lives and well-being of young carers across our region. They not only provide emotional support but also organise opportunities for young carers to get involved in trips and activities with other carers who have comparable caring responsibilities.

We have had a fantastic first term beginning with a rather vibrant home clothes day when the boys came in the colours of the rainbow pictured in the charity's logo. The rainbow theme continued with our annual silver coin fundraiser which this year also featured additional coin

denominations in order to complete the rainbow effect.

Towards the end of term, the Christmas Bazaar saw the Year 7 boys selling the products that they had created through the Tycoon Business Challenge which involved them setting up their own businesses. The young entrepreneurs were clearly adept at their tasks as the products sold at the Christmas bazaar made a profit of nearly £1400! This sum was the perfect conclusion of what has been an outstanding term of fundraising with our total already close to **£5,000**. All who have contributed or participated in whatever shape or form should be suitably proud of this achievement. Thank you once again for your support. *Anne Parker*



## G4G: Gifts for Grown Ups

The season of giving was well and truly upon us when the boys attended the Gifts for Grown Ups event organised by our JPA. The sports hall was awash with gifts to appeal to even the most discerning of shoppers and the boys delighted in selecting that special something for parents and other family members. A large team of parents acted as personal shoppers and wrappers who faced the perennial challenge of how to wrap and disguise a football. A huge thank you to Karen and her team for organising such a special event. *Rachel Pairman*



## JPA News

The committee which organises school events really appreciates the support and time given by other parents. The events not only raise money for charities and school projects, but also hope to add to the feeling of a wider community within the school. Many thanks to all who support us; it couldn't be done without everyone's input. We have a great team on the committee this year, but would very much appreciate someone who could give a bit of extra time and commitment to act as chairperson or secretary. If anyone would like to find out more about these roles, or about the committee, please feel free to contact us (without obligation) on [JPA@abingdonprep.org.uk](mailto:JPA@abingdonprep.org.uk)

**With thanks from the JPA Committee**

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