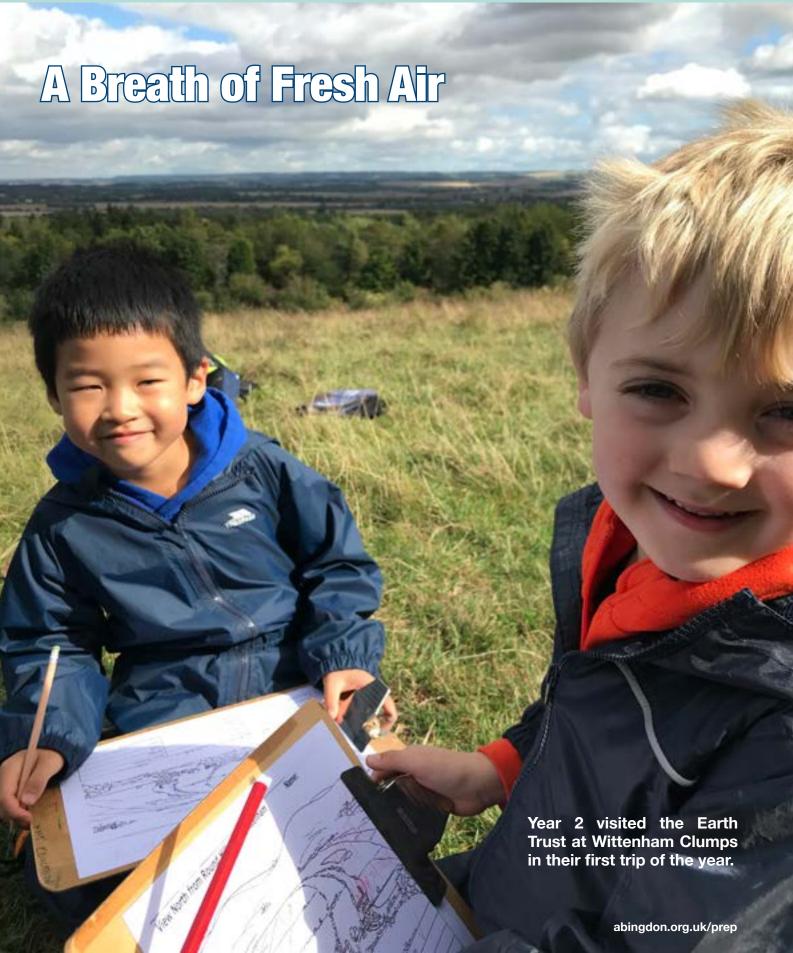
AbingdonPrepNews





AbingdonPrep News

From the Headmaster

It is easy to forget when the final day of term comes around just how much the children have accomplished since term began in September. Our new pupils are fully settled into life at Abingdon Prep, and all the children are enjoying all that our busy prep school has to offer.

It has been a slightly strange term with the optimism of a return to 'normal' school life, tinged with concern over Covid cases and absences. However, both teachers and children have coped amazingly well and school has been operating at full speed with our usual range of trips, Other Half activities, and of course, lessons.

final amazing week saw some performances, with live audiences back. The



Pre-Prep Nativity was a fantastic way to kick off our Christmas celebrations with some terrific singing and dancing. We were then treated to two Carol Services, for Years 3-4 and Years 5-8. It was great to be able to sing carols again and hear the beauty of the childrens' voices at this exciting time of year.

Amongst the most valuable learning experiences that schools can offer are trips, and this term has seen the boys getting out of the classroom to explore our local area and further afield. Our Year 8s spent two days exploring Studland Bay whilst Year 4 spent their first night away trekking a section of the Ridgeway, both learning about the geography of those areas. Pre-Prep have enjoyed visiting Cogges and Roves Farms, whilst our Year 5s were sent back in time to The Black Country Living Museum to learn about life in Victorian times - 'Ye Olde Confectionary' store was certainly a hit!

Our fantastic JPA (Josca's Parents Association) organised the return of Firestorm and the weather played ball allowing for a terrific evening of fireworks and lightsabers which was enjoyed by all. Gifts for Grown Ups was another event which the JPA very kindly ran for us and the boys loved, being able to get all their Christmas shopping done at school without parents knowing what they had bought for them. These events take a huge amount of organisation and I would like to thank our great JPA team for their efforts in putting them together.

After a long absence, competitive rugby fixtures returned this term and the boys really enjoyed representing the school in matches once more. Some great rugby was played, both contact and tag or touch, allowing everyone to get fully

Finally, I just wanted to thank all of our parents for their continuing support of the school. I hope that you all stay safe, have a lovely Christmas and enjoy a Happy New Year.

Best wishes

Craig



Remembrance



Our Remembrance Day theme this year was to consider those brave men and women from all over the Commonwealth who aided Britain in wartime and emergencies. Some boys sent in stories of their own relatives, which helped to build up our Remembrance display. Several boys in Year 3 generously gave up their time every morning to sell poppies and raise money for the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal. On Thursday, at 11am, the whole school stopped for 2 minutes' silence, signalled by the Last Post.





Blue Peter Green Badges

Pupils in the Green Team were very excited to be presented with their Green Blue Peter badges in assembly following the completion of their Climate Heroes Challenge! This involved making changes to their everyday lives with the goal of helping to protect the planet. The boys undertook challenges such as turning off lights and taps, using refillable water bottles, eating more vegetarian food and walking rather than taking the car. The boys threw themselves into the challenge with gusto and are aiming to keep their changes going for the long term. Rachel Whitmore



The team is now promoting 'Plastic-Free Ts' encouraging everyone not to bring single-useplastic wrapped snacks to school on Tuesdays and Thursdays (for starters).

AbingdonPrep News

Fond Farewells



Jacob has been a gap student for just over a year. His talents as a swim coach have been put to good use as he has led swimming sessions in our Other Half programme and supported during lessons. Jacob's willingness to get involved in everything and his administrative prowess have been, to coin his own phrase, 'legendary'. We will greatly miss his cheerful disposition around school, support of colleagues and pupils and his ability to respond to an email almost while it is still in the ether. Thank you Jacob for all you have done and we wish you every success with your degree. Rachel Pairman



Jane Warne

We also say goodbye to Jane, our unflappable Head of Marketing (below left at an Open Morning) who, after many years working for the Foundation, is returning to the freelance world. We wish her every success.





November saw the return of our fireworks night for school families. Held on the sports field, the evening began with the boys letting off steam with glowing lightsabers. Street food stalls did a roaring trade supplying everyone with gourmet burgers, kebabs, waffles and barista made coffee. When it was time for the super display by Titanium Fireworks, you could hear the oohs and aahs in the crowd as the fireworks fizzed, whizzed and banged in gorgeous colours. Our thanks go to all the Prep staff who acted as marshals, Jacob for the photos, and not least to Sally and her team of helpers from the parents' association - some of whom returned on Saturday morning to 'pick the field' of firework debris for the rugby matches later. Thank you!

Annabel Gaskell





Democracy in action - voting for class reps





The boys in the Middle Section had a true taste of democracy this month when voting for their class representatives. Each class in the school elects a class representative, chosen anonymously by their peers, to join the school pupil council. Abingdon Prep highly values the pupil voice, and the school council meets regularly to discuss all the ideas that the boys in each class bring to the table.

The boys in Years 5 and 6 experienced this election as though they were voting for an MP in the outside world. Boys received a polling card with their name and the address of the polling station. They were escorted to the station where they presented their card and, after confirming their full name, received a ballot paper with the names of all the candidates. They then took these to their private polling booths and, careful not to spoil their paper, put an "X" next to the candidate that they wanted to choose, before folding their paper and popping it into the secret ballot box. The winners were announced by the Headmaster in assembly. Having spoken to several of the boys, they say that they now feel more prepared for what an election is really like, and will certainly vote when they are older. It's not too scary really!

AbingdonPrep Trips



Year 6 Theatre Trip

Year 6 went to the West End to see a matinee of the musical *The Prince of Egypt* at the Dominion Theatre with music by Stephen Schwartz (*Wicked*), Expanded from the DreamWorks animated film, the musical tells the story of Moses from being hidden in the bulrushes as a baby through to leading the Hebrews out of Egypt by parting the Red Sea.

Everything about the musical was fantastic, but the choreography and dancing stood out as being fab-u-lous! During the interval, the boys were fascinated by peering into the orchestra pit to discover where the music came from. Several audience members commented on the boys' good behaviour which was lovely to hear. We all gave the cast a standing ovation at the end, and were rewarded by a wave from Ramses. What a great day out!



Science Partnership

Due to lockdowns it had been a long time since the Abingdon Science Partnership could welcome visitors from schools in and around Abingdon to do workshops.



Year 5 was invited to the Yang Science Centre for a trial run of a density workshop led by a new team of sixth form scientists. The boys all enjoyed getting to wear the junior lab coats and working with the workshop leaders to build density ladders in measuring cylinders. They had four coloured solutions, which if added in the right order would sit on top of each other, with the most dense at the bottom and least dense at the top. Simple but great fun!

Air Quality Project Winners

Some time ago, boys from our Science Clubs at Abingdon Prep participated in a project measuring air quality and submitted posters to a competition judged by ATOM (who run Abingdon



Town's annual science festival). Mr Thomas from the Abingdon Science Partnership, who works closely with ATOM, presented our two winners with their prizes.

AbingdonPrep Trips



Blessed with glorious weather, the boys could see with their own eyes the features they had investigated through maps, diagrams and photographs back at school. The first day took in Durdle Door, Stair Hole and Lulworth Cove, with lunch on the beach. Following a short hop by coach to Swanage via Corfe Castle, the boys were then thoroughly briefed on various aspects of oceanography, weather and climate, maritime and coastal hazards, and the network of mostly voluntary organisations that help us to stay safe at and next to the sea. There was nothing that Stuart, our

excellent guide from the National Coastwatch Station at Peveril Point, did not know about the surrounding coast and ocean floor.

The next day we walked along the beaches of Swanage Bay, investigating the various defences designed to protect the town and land behind. As we climbed up and over Ballard Down, the panoramic vistas across Studland and Bournemouth Bays, right across to the Isle of Wight, came into view, giving ample opportunities to see and enjoy Old Harry Rocks and the Pinnacles up close. After a well earned picnic lunch at Middle Beach, and a brief study of dune succession across Studland Beach and Nature Reserve, the boys were finally allowed to dip their toes in the English Channel and enjoy some time in the sand before we headed back, glowing with sunshine, good memories and, I hope, enhanced knowledge of a key unit of their AP+ geography curriculum. I know the boys will thank the staff who accompanied them - Anne, Kyle and Liam - for their great support. Stefan Gerrard.



AbingdonPrep Trips

Year 8 - Art & Science at the Natural History Museum





Year 8 enjoyed a combined Art and Science trip to Oxford's Natural History Museum. It was a crisp autumn morning, but the sun was shining for their first task of drawing the architecture of the building's exterior, looking for the details in the carvings and the perspective of the outline shape.

After an early lunch, we moved inside for a lecture on natural selection and adaptation given by Sarah from the museum. This included a discussion of barnacles which so fascinated Charles Darwin, and discovering whether we were supertasters or not. Those who were brave enough also got to handle some of the museum's hissing cockroaches after discussing their adaptations!

After the lecture there was time for more art, drawing some of the unique details of the museum's interior and animals, plus a science trail of some creatures with interesting adaptations to discover. Naturally, the museum shop provided its own attractions too!

Annabel Gaskell





Year 4 go to Christ Church, Abingdon





Year 4 has been studying the features of a Christian church in RE. To support their work in class, the boys visited a local church in Abingdon to see what happens there and to learn more about the ceremonies of baptism and Holy Communion.





Six students from the Middle Section participated in a 'Business Challenge' at Abingdon School, along with three other local schools. The challenge was to design a healthy snack, including its ingredients, logo and marketing plan. Our team had sixth former Rowan, a former Abingdon Prep pupil, to help them. They designed a bar called 'Fruit Rush' and were awarded the 'Best Presentation' prize for their submission, as well as winning the marketing quiz.

Rob Shaw

AbingdonPrep In School



Mid November brought Anti-Bullying Week, during which we had assemblies, form time and PSHCE lessons based around this year's theme 'One Kind Word'. As well as these, Natalie Hunt, our Foundation Mental Health and Wellbeing Coordinator, visited to deliver a series of workshops to all age groups on consent, respect and body boundaries. Classes explored what body boundaries are, why it is important to respect each other's boundaries and how to

say no. On Friday it was 'Odd Socks Day' where the boys are invited to wear odd socks for the day to promote the idea that everyone is different and this is something to be celebrated.





Senior Section Sonnet Competition

Some of our Year 7 and 8 boys chose sonnets by Shakespeare, and recited them to their peers at an assembly in our competition.



Year 8 Advanced Drama

The boys performed two pieces to parents recently. The first was 'Take Your Kid to Work Day' and the second was the final part of the last scene from 'Journey's End'. The boys looked forward to performing as it has been such a long time since they have participated in a 'live' piece of drama. Natasha Watson

House Meetings Resume

After waiting for 18 months, the boys were finally able to meet in their school houses again. All four house captains had organised fun sessions in their house rooms. The focus was to make things to decorate their house boards which line the corridors. Some boys came up with mottos and slogans, some designed house shields, while others drew pictures of the mythical creature that represents their house. The house boards will soon be arrayed with interesting slogans and colourful images!







Creative and Performing Arts Colours

DRAMA and MUSIC (combined)

Senior Full: Oscar

DRAMA

Senior full: Conor, Henry, Oliver C, Oliver H, Ollie, Seb.

Senior half: Freddie D, Freddie J, George, Ishaan, Matthew, Nirmat, Oskar.

Junior full: Rupert.

Junior half: Arjun, George, Jonty, Matthew, Monty, Thomas, Xac.

MUSIC

Senior full: Lawrence.

Senior half: Colman, Finn, George, Laurie,

Nathan, Samuel, Xavier.

Junior full: Alex, Jayden, Leo, Louis,

Vincent.

Junior half: Arjun, Horace, Isaac, Jonty, Matthew, Monty, Rahul, Sasha, Sam, William..

ART

Senior full: Samuel C Junior half: Kian, Leo H.

AbingdonPrep In School





Public Speaking and Debating Competitions

First, the Middle Section Public Speaking Competition, where entrants were given five minutes to convince the audience of their arguments, which included opposition to the conservatorship of Britney Spears, Britain's homelessness policy and the migrant crisis. Congratulations to our Year 6 winner who argued that we need to listen more carefully to the advice of David Attenborough about climate change.

Then it was the turn of the Senior Section. This competition featured two debates, one on whether the moon landings were faked and the other about whether vaccines should be made compulsory. The winner from Year 8 argued against the latter subject. Many thanks go to Richard Jackson, Teacher of History at Abingdon School, and to Kevin Senior, an Abingdon Foundation Governor, for forming the judging panel for both events. *Rob Shaw*









Panto Time! Pre-Prep and the Junior Section had an afternoon of fun and excitement when the pantomime came to Abingdon Prep. We were joined by Aladdin and his friends as they tried to outwit the evil Abanazar. We met the Genie of the Lamp and had a visit to the Cave of Doom! There was lots of fun and laughter – a fabulous time was had by all!



AbingdonPrep Music





It was fantastic to be able to welcome parents to our Junior Section Carol Service held in the school hall. For some of the boys, this was their first performance at Abingdon Prep, and they rose to the occasion superbly. It was a fun and festive event, with some great singing from Years 3, 4 and the Junior Choir, some wonderful solos, as well as an array of festive readings. The audience deserves their own round of applause for joining in with gusto in the congregational carols. We even had a performance conducted by one of our pupils—a budding choral director in the making!

This event marked the beginning of the Christmas season at Abingdon Prep. The hall was dressed beautifully with our Christmas tree and lots of decorations the children had made in CDT. The sense of awe and wonder created by our live performances and our boys' singing so well cannot be understated, it was a very special event for all involved. Sean Fitzpatrick







There are few things more magical than coming together as a community to celebrate Christmas through singing and music. This statement certainly rang true when we met together in St Helen's Church in Abingdon for our Years 5-8 Carol Service. This was my first Carol Service in St Helen's since arriving at APS and I confess I didn't quite know what to expect. Will the church's acoustic be good? Will the children be as good on the night as they were in rehearsal? Will the audience be able to join in with the singing when wearing masks? Will the whole thing have to be cancelled due to the pandemic like so much else over the past 20 months?!



Years 5 to 8 Carol Service

All my concerns were allayed entirely with the opening moments of "Once in Royal David's City" sung by a duo of Year 8 boys, whose voices soared beyond hearing and comprehension, and touched the very soul.

Thus followed an evening of superlative performances from Years 5-6, Years 7-8, and our Senior Choir, interspersed with beautiful solo pieces and articulate readings. Masks notwithstanding, the audience joined in with



gusto during our congregational carols, finishing with a glorious descant in "O Come All Ye Faithful."

That the APS family could meet together in this way was itself a triumph of logistics and Covidsafety measures. But, given everything over the past few years, the fact that your children could rise to this occasion so well, and give



that indescribable feeling of hope and internal warmth that only communal singing can provide, has made me feel so proud to be a part of a school that is clearly very special.

The children should be so proud of themselves too for pulling off such a feat, and music has never felt more alive to me at APS than it did at our Carol Service this week. Your children are a credit to you and to our school and, in a world where we are increasingly being forced apart, our community feels closer and stronger than ever. I look forward to welcoming many of you at our musical events in future.

Sean Fitzpatrick



AbingdonPrep Art and CDT





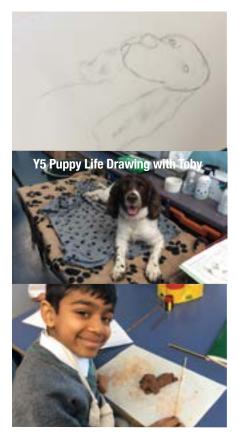












Stanley the Reindeer at Waddesdon Manor

Waddesdon Manor, the Art Department and nine students from Years 7 and 8 have been working in collaboration to create a life sized sculpture of a wooden reindeer as a part of Illuminated River's, 'Bridges, Boats and Beyond' project. We were assigned the painting 'Swan Upping' by artist Stanley Spencer, which highlights life and tradition on the River Thames. The Head of Learning at Waddesdon outlined the brief to the team via Zoom. The boys flew with ideas and decided that they wanted to create a collage of all their work based on the image we were given. They worked with individual paintings, digital manipulation and enlarged studies of key areas of Spencer's image.

The end result was a triumph and the learning team was thrilled with their level of creativity and professional finish. The reindeer is now being exhibited in the woodland of Alice's walk, as part of the Illuminated lights trail. Please let us know with a photo if you visit Waddesdon, and see the majestic 'Stanley' the reindeer. Congratulations to those who took part!





AbingdonPrep Pre-Prep





AbingdonPrep Pre-Prep First Trips

Reception's first trip - Cogges Farm



Reception had their first day together out of school, visiting Cogges Farm. We were met by Margaret, who took us on a magical journey through the story of The Little Red Hen. We made our own pots, planted corn seed, threshed the corn, ground it into flour





and then made bread in the old Victorian kitchen. After our picnic lunch we explored the farm where we met the animals, went on an egg hunt, found the pumpkin patch, examined the hedgerows, and walked by the meandering river ending up at the adventure playground. The day was rounded off with dancing and clapping along to a folk group playing under the apple trees. Most of us fell asleep on the way back to school!

Year 1 - Hill End











Year 2 - The Earth Trust at Wittenham Clumps



Year 2 had a brilliant trip to the Earth Trust in Wittenham Clumps on Monday. We walked all the way down to the river to learn more about the water cycle and how rivers work, we were even lucky enough to see two different narrow boats using the lock! Then we walked up to the clumps to see a view of the river and drew field maps of the horizon.







Reception enjoyed their return to the farm to find out what Christmas would have been like during Victorian times. With gingerbread stars to bake on the range, making wreaths, paper chains and crackers, we had a fabulous time, whilst we learnt about the origins of each craft. With a carpet picnic around the tree in the Victorian parlour and a bracing race around the meadow we certainly returned with new knowledge and a very festive minibus filled with smiling faces!







AbingdonPrep Pre-Prep & Sport



Cross Country

APS entered the fourth Abingdon School Cross Country Relay Competition with an U13 A and B squad consisting of five runners from Years 7 and 8, which our A team won by 21 seconds!

Six boys from Years 3 to 6 competed in the Manor Prep School cross-country event. Both our Year 3 and Year 5 boys won their year group team competition and Abingdon Prep secured the overall team competition. A great effort from all of our boys and excellent experience for many of them for whom this was their first cross-country competition.

A Year 7 team entered the U13 English Schools Regional (Oxfordshire) Cross-Country Cup event held on our sports field. There were 18 schools involved, with Abingdon Prep finishing in third place overall in the U13 team competition over a flat 2.8km circuit. The boys are really excited about qualifying for the 2nd round of the ESAA Cross-Country Cup competition.







AbingdonPrep Sport

U13A at the Dragon School Festival







Rugby Highlights

We returned to a near full sporting calendar for Rugby this term, giving all the chance to play. Term began with our U13A team playing in the Dragon School festival - vital to get early match experience. (W3, L1). The U9A and B teams enjoyed good draws against Christ Church Cathedral School. Ex England and Wasps player Steve Bates joined us to give regular coaching sessions this term. The U8As had fun in the first Manor tag festival which was all about promoting good play and sportsmanship. We hosted our 10th annual U13 Rugby Sevens Festival with four other schools joining our A and B teams in the 'Round Robin' event. The U9s' final matches of the season were against Magdalen College School with the backdrop of Christ Church Cathedral, Merton and Corpus Christi Colleges in the background.

Rugby Colours

Colours were awarded for a combination of excellence on the field of play in terms of performance and attitude during training:

Junior Rugby Half- Colours

Year 5: Jed, Leone, Orlando, Reuben, Tristan. Year 6: Benji, George, Herbie, Noah, Tom.

Junior Rugby Full- Colours

Year 6: Alex, Joseph, Josh, Leo, Will.

Senior Rugby Half-Colours

Year 7: Josh, Laurie, Matt, Paddy, Ted. Year 8: Alex, Justin, Oliver, William, Yumi.

Senior Rugby Full-Colours

Colman, Conor, Henry, James, Sebastian, Zachary.



nding

The inaugural U8 Manor Festival





House Rugby

Year 3 & 4 (U8 & U9) Unicorn

Year 5 (U10) Year 6 (U11)

Griffin Unicorn

Year 7 (U12) Year 8 (U13) **Phoenix** Griffin







Rugby Awards

In the Autumn term we celebrate rugby endeavour. The 'Most Outstanding Player' comes from the A team of each year. The 'Most Improved Player' can come from any team in each age group.

Team	Most Improved	Most Outsta
Under 8s	Magnus	Alex
Under 9s	Ben	Trystan
Under 10s	Christopher	Reuben
Under 11s	Emmanuel	Josh
Under 12s	Freddie	Laurie
Under 13s	Oliver	Seb

AbingdonPrep Christmas Cheer

During the last few days of term, Christmas cheer pervaded the school in many ways. Pupils and staff dusted off their festive jumpers, reindeer antlers and an impressive sprout hat from one Year 8 to raise money for our chosen charities this year.





It was lovely to be able to resume the popular Gifts for Grown Ups Christmas market thanks to a team of hard working parents who helped even the most discerning of shoppers. After careful deliberation the pupils were rewarded for their customer loyalty with special APS gingerbread men thanks to the generosity of the JPA.



A big thank you to the JPA helpers



The festive food continued with our Christmas lunch and each year group having the opportunity to visit cake sales run by our Year 7 Business Tycoons. For many, not much can rival roast turkey with pigs in blankets for lunch but I think that the Tycoons' popcorn, cupcakes, cookies and doughnuts may just have managed to this year.



Young Tycoons, ready for business!



The day was rounded off by more willing volunteers from Pre-Prep who helped run an outdoor cake sale for our younger pupils and their families.

A huge thanks to all parents who supported our many events – a fabulous way to end the term and begin the festivities in earnest.

Rachel Pairman



Tucking into Christmas lunch







The Junior Section created their own Christingles and learned the meaning behind each element. Candles were lit and lights turned off, creating a lovely festive scene. The boys might say the highlight was eating the Christingle treats at the end!

AbingdonPrep News is the newsletter of Abingdon Preparatory School, Josca's House, Kingston Road Oxford OX13 5NX Tel: 01865 591570

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