



Abingdon Prep News



TAG RUGBY WITH YEAR 3

FROM THE HEAD

The Head, Craig Williams, reflects on our busy Autumn term at Abingdon Prep.

I write this piece in the midst of our Christmas celebrations with the Pre-Prep Nativity, Junior and Senior Carol Concerts and a Year 6 Pantomime all having taken place in quick succession. It is hard sometimes to remember just how busy the children have been throughout the term and all the great occasions they have been throwing themselves into before the Christmas festivities came to the fore.

The children have been on some brilliant trips this term with Pre-Prep visits to Fairytale Farm, Combe Mill, Hill End and Roves Farm. Year 4 explored punishment through the ages at Oxford Castle, Year 5 went on a PGL residential and a great day trip to the Black Country Museum whilst Year 7 went to the Roman Baths and Year 8 spent two days in Swanage studying coastal geomorphology. Children learn so much from trips and visits that further develops their learning and makes everything that little bit more memorable.

Every child in Year 3 to 8 has represented APS in sport, with fixtures and competitions taking place in Rugby, Football, Cross Country, Swimming, Squash, Table Tennis and

Biathlon. The children take great pride in playing matches and learn a great deal about teamwork, communication and leadership, and failure too when out on the sports field. All of these are invaluable life skills that stay with them. Our U13 Football team and our U13 Cross Country team both reached the National Finals in their respective sports this term which was a fantastic achievement and they should be very proud of their efforts.

Music, Drama, Art and Design Technology continue to be central to school life at APS. It is lovely to see the children grabbing the opportunities to learn and participate in these great subjects, producing performances and work that really are far beyond expectations for their age groups. Most importantly, they have fun doing these things and gain huge enjoyment from them, as well as learning some impressive new techniques along the way: the pottery wheel in Year 8 lessons has been used to create some very impressive pieces this term.

Best wishes

Craig



Behind the wicket



Countdown Club teapot trophy winner!



'Le Louvre à Abingdon Prep' with Year 5



Telling Pre-Prep a Christmas Story



YOUR SCHOOL COUNCIL 2023-24

The new academic year's School Council met in October. Pupils from all year groups discussed what changes they would like to see in school. Some excellent suggestions included new Other Half clubs and lunch menu ideas. These will be explored further before a final list is presented to our Head, Craig.

25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

In mid-September, the celebrations for the 25th anniversary of the formation of the Abingdon Foundation got underway with a special cake cutting ceremony held at Abingdon Prep School.

Guests (including former Josca's Head, Chris Davies), Governors, staff and pupils heard from Chair of Governors, Professor Mike Stevens, about the very unique relationship enjoyed by Abingdon Prep and Senior Schools. He spoke about the significance of the term 'foundation' – both in terms of partnership and within the context of how it prepares young people for their future. Head, Craig Williams, then invited two pupils – the sons of former Josca's and Abingdon School students – to cut the cake.

Celebrations continued after enjoying afternoon tea, with a 10-a-side cricket

match between the Senior and Prep Schools, watched by families within the school community who brought along their own picnics. The match was good spirited but competitive – happily for the Prep School, they won the day with some superb cricket skills. Howzat!



FAREWELL TO MEGAN STEELE



After nine years as an early morning cleaner at Abingdon Prep, Megan is leaving us to become a school dinner lady, working regular hours, which will give her more time with her family. Who will put on the coffee in the staff room now?! Joking aside, we send Megan our very best wishes for the future.

'The Lost'

"Gas, gas, gas!"

In that first hour,
Pitch black and in eerie solitude...
Plunging from one shell-swamp to
the next,

Men blundered,
Sentries stumbled,
Demons drowned,
Under an icy crust of unrelenting
mud.

Through the night,
Nameless troops
Disappeared, without trace
In this poisoning place,
Of dull detonations and phosgene
clouds.

By morning,
All was lost...

In this vast, weeping, wilderness,
Of unfathomable mystery.

An enormous dump,
Somewhere off the edge of this
charted world.

Theo, Year 8

A found poem on the theme of war
and conflict

REMEMBRANCE

Pupils remembered those who sacrificed their lives or made significant contributions to the defence of our country and its values, including former school pupils, in assemblies during this week, culminating in our service of remembrance, where our entire school community came together.

The children also examined war and remembrance through the lenses of poets including Binyon, Brooke, Owen and Armitage.



Y4 HIKE THE RIDGEWAY



Year 4 was blessed with glorious weather for our walk along The Ridgeway. The children were in good spirits and everybody enjoyed the fresh air and the chance to chat with friends as well as take in the glorious scenery and geographical features they had been learning about in lessons. After lunch in the sunshine they set off again, and it was pleasing to see pupils supporting each other as legs started to tire towards the end. A great day was had by all.



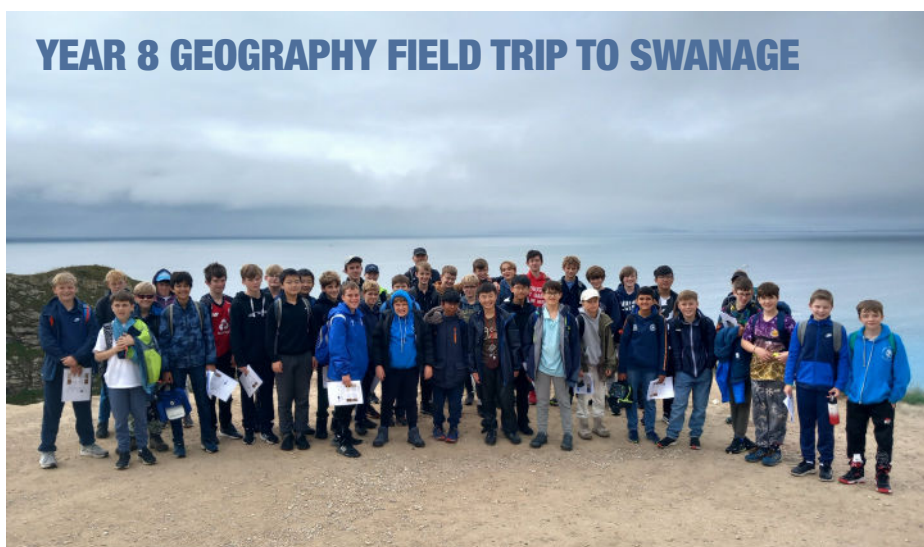
In September, Year 8 went to Swanage, where they looked at coastal landforms.

"First, we walked from Durdle Door along the coast to Lulworth Cove. Here, we did fieldwork on sediment size and beach gradient. Next, Swanage Bay where we had an ice cream and a snack before going up to Peveril Point for a talk from the coast watch station. Back at our accommodation we enjoyed historic tales from a professional story-teller.

On the second day, we walked to Old Harry Rocks, before going to Studland Bay and then heading back home. It was great fun and everyone thoroughly enjoyed their seaside geography field trip."

Written by Josh

YEAR 8 GEOGRAPHY FIELD TRIP TO SWANAGE



YEAR 5 TEAM BUILD AT PGL



In November, Year 5 went on an action packed residential to PGL Liddington. The pupils got stuck straight in and, over the three days, the rope-based activities proved a real highlight, including: abseiling, climbing, Jacob's Ladder and the giant swing. They also got to build and ride on a buggy, play aeroball, make dens and tackle an assault course! Needless to say, with all that energy spent on the fantastic activities, they slept very well needing to be woken up on the last morning!

Year 5 behaved brilliantly throughout. They supported peers when a task was challenging, they helped out and they all demonstrated resilience. The children were also delighted to see the teachers getting involved too and cheered them on.



In November, Year 5 travelled to the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley. It was a thoroughly immersive experience where the children followed the lives of two Victorian children, Harry and Lillian for the day. They visited Victorian shops, houses and industrial workshops. They learnt the craft of metalwork, played with some traditional Victorian toys along the cobbled streets and even went to school to learn reading, writing and arithmetic. We had a bostin' day!



YEAR 5 EXPERIENCE VICTORIAN LIFE



YEAR 7 AT AQUAE SULIS



Aquae Sulis: my visit to Bath in 75 AD

"I went to Aquae Sulis to be healed. This is the only hot spring in Britain. It is a sacred place. There are 43 minerals in the water, so this will help me heal properly. I also wish to pray to the goddess Sulis Minerva and I want her to curse the barbarian who stuck a sword in my arm. The moment I touched the water I felt instantly better and I praised Sulis Minerva." Written by Zephaniah



YEAR 8 EXPLORE EVOLUTION

Year 8 visited Oxford's Natural History Museum, where they had a talk on evolution and adaptation. They found out if they had the gene to be supertasters - a protective trait, and those brave enough could handle Madagascan hissing cockroaches, before heading out to explore the museum (and its ever popular giftshop!).

Year 4 enjoyed a fabulous day at Oxford Castle and Prison which tied in with their History topic of 'Crime and Punishment through the Ages'. While they were there they climbed the tower and mound, they took a tour of the prison cells finding out about how different life was for rich and poor inmates. They also learnt about interesting characters who spent time there in Oxford Prison and found out all about hard labour punishments in Victorian times. After a delicious packed lunch they looked at artefacts which helped them discover more about crime and punishment in different periods of history.



YEAR 4 AT OXFORD CASTLE ...

... AND CHRIST CHURCH, ABINGDON



We enjoyed a warm welcome at the Church, which is a beautiful mix of a centuries-old tithe barn and more modern additions. Heather, the Children's Minister, stood under fairylights hanging

from the beams above the nave to speak to the pupils about the history of the Church and congregation. She pointed out the key things you will find in a Christian Church, including the altar, pulpit and lectern. The children took part in a Baptism role play led by Curate Andrew, christening a doll James Jack Blue Teddy Bear. Another highlight of the trip was kneeling to receive the unusual sacrament of Haribo at the altar. The spongy hearts represented God's love and the fried eggs new life, so that might give us pause for thought next time we have a bag of the sweets to enjoy.

YEAR 6 PANTO 'CINDERELLA AND ROCKERFELLA'



After we returned from half term, Year 6 worked very hard on their production of 'Cinderella and Rockerfella' at the end of the month. Their final performances first to the school and then parents were a big hit. Oh yes they were!

The audience enjoyed booing and hissing Fairy Nastyboots and her sidekick Naughty Kitty, and cheered for the Fairy Brigade as they tried to earn their wings. Despite the Ugly Sisters trying their best to stop her, Cinderella was at last able to wed her handsome prince, the famous pop star Rockerfella. Hurray!



JOYEUX NOËL À TOUS!

It has been a busy end of term in the French department. Year 3 heard about French Christmas customs from a French visitor, enjoying learning that children leave their shoes under the tree for Father Christmas to fill. Year 4 had a trip to the APS 'glacerie' where they got to order their ice creams in French and listen carefully as their order numbers were called out.



Year 5 created a gallery opening of 'Le Louvre à Abingdon Prep' and had each researched one of the paintings or artists so were the experts on the tour. After enjoying pains au chocolat, they put their knowledge to the test with a quiz and rematching all the art work with their titles and artists.



HOUSE SHOE STACKING

Pupils were divided into their Buddy Groups in House Meetings for a shoe stacking challenge. Using just the shoes they had on, the pupils created "shoe buildings" in the most creative ways they could imagine. The highest edifice reached was over 110cms, a fantastic effort from the pupils!



SILVER COIN TRAIL



Our annual silver coin trail in aid of our School Charity for the year took place in early December. Sherrey created a fabulous poster for the children to place

their coins on, as class by class the space filled up raising over £400 for the Oxford Hospitals Paediatric Diabetes Service. Thank you to all who donated their coins.



CLASS PAIRINGS



YEAR 8 POTTERS



ECO GROUP



Our Eco group met with Director of Estates, Mr McKenna, to talk about the possibility of installing solar panels for cleaner, renewable energy at Abingdon Prep. The pupils were given maps showing possible roof spaces which could accommodate them and asked to consider each site: from the angle of the sun, to the strength of the roof. Mr McKenna was very impressed with the careful consideration and reasoning behind their recommendation to build the panels in 'location three' and discussed when this could realistically happen for the school. This activity has given the Eco group insight into how planning decisions and processes work, as well as time frames and varying constraints.

GRENDL AND BEOWULF - THE LAST FIGHT

Sitting amongst the ruins of Heorot, the fire sparked in the tenebrous night; Beowulf emerged from one of the last standing houses, and listened to the woeful tales of the villagers. One told a story full of sorrow of how their whole family had been in the hall when Grendel, an enormous beast with a distorted face, towering frame and strength of ten people appeared. All were lacerated and flensed; that filled Beowulf with vengeance and bloodlust.

Beowulf set off toward the great snow-capped Cliffs of Mordal; he trekked through the icy snow as stones hailed down from the sky. He set up camp for the night as the owls swooped over the canopy and wolves pervaded the woods. The moon shone on the leaves and the snow enveloped mountains.

Beowulf came to a clearing and a boulder blocked the entrance. Beowulf, using all his might, pushed the boulder to the side. Knowing Grendel loved meat, he went back into the woods trying to find a deer to kill. Something rustled in the bushes; he shot an arrow in the direction of the noise. There was a thud as the deer fell down. He started a fire and started cooking... A few minutes later Grendel emerged from the tenebrosity; he bent down then felt an immense pain from his neck. Beowulf pulled at his neck, the sinews snapped, then... "crack!" Grendel fell to the ground. Blood stained the snow and Beowulf marched home victorious.

Written by Benji, Year 7

MATHS ESCAPE ROOM



Pupils in Years 4 to 8 took part in a Maths 'Escape Room' activity, run by visiting professionals. Pupil groups were tasked to break their way in to a box sealed tight with 12 different coded combination locks! With the clock ticking, they combined a broad range of maths, logic, lateral thinking, teamwork and communication skills to solve a series of puzzles and problems. While experiencing fun and frustration in equal measure, lessons in resourcefulness and resilience were learned!



PRIMARY MATHS CHALLENGE

In mid November, around 40 pupils across Years 5 and 6 sat the annual Primary Maths Challenge. Created by the Mathematical Association, the PMC is a fun and engaging mathematical challenge, not just another test in the school year. It reinforces our belief in the importance of problem solving as a means of helping pupils apply their knowledge and develop their reasoning skills. The results this year were excellent, topped with the award of Gold certificates to four pupils, each of whom now progress to a bonus round in February next year.



FOREST SCHOOL

This term, Forest School has been extended out of Pre-Prep up the School. Year 3 and 4 pupils enjoyed celebrating Samhain, a Gaelic festival marking the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter, or the 'dark half' of the year. Pupils toasted a piece of apple over the fire, before dipping it in cinnamon and sugar to celebrate the harvest. We gathered around the warmth and light of a fire to keep out the dark and the cold and we filled the woods with happiness by playing games together!



Year 5 sang carols around the campfire. These sessions with Year 3 to Year 5 have been a big success, and will continue into subsequent seasons.



FIREWORKS NIGHT!



Our Abingdon Prep families all enjoyed the annual firework display. Some pupils, who had clearly carried out flame tests on metal salts in Science during the week, were heard to exclaim the names of the elements corresponding to the colours they saw as the fireworks whizzed high into the night sky delivering bursts of crackles and bangs. With street food and glow products from the JPA shop before the display, it was another super event. Thank you to everyone who helped, both staff and JPA volunteers.

THE BIG THINK

This term's 'Big Think' theme was 'everyone is of value'. The pupils gathered together in their year groups to explore the story of the angels visiting the shepherds with the news of Christ's birth. The children reflected on how the shepherds, although often seen as some of the lowest in society, were chosen to hear the news before kings, emperors and even the religious leaders. Through personal reflection, model making, poetry writing, drawing and discussion, they shared what they thought about the event. Taking time out of a very busy end of term to focus on our value, and the value of all people, provided a moment of calm moment and reminder of what the coming season celebrates.



COUNTDOWN CLUB

The inaugural Countdown winner's teapot was awarded to Theo in Year 8, thereby adding to Unicorn's trophy haul. Theo amassed a score of 43, including getting the conundrum answer, 'manifesto'. It was a competitive but respectfully played final, a fitting end to the launch of this new lunchtime club for senior section pupils.



BADMINTON CLUB

WORKING TOWARDS THEIR BUNSEN BURNER LICENCES

Year 6 recently started their chemistry topic and were thrilled to be practising how to set up and use their Bunsen burner stations safely. Their first task was to collect and set up the equipment; put on their safety goggles; use a lighted splint from the Bunsen on the teacher's bench and very carefully light their own Bunsen burners (set on the yellow, safety flame) until ready to begin.

They then added some zinc oxide powder to a test tube. Using test tube holders, they held the test tube over the flame for about thirty seconds and observed what happened, before allowing it to cool and observing again.

Zinc oxide powder is white in colour at

room temperature. When heated it loses oxygen and turns yellow – upon cooling, it takes oxygen back from the air and becomes white again. All were happy with their reactions and their responsible approach paves the way to more fabulous investigations ahead. They should do well when it's time for their Bunsen test to achieve their licences!



PARACHUTE GAMES CLUB



LET'S BAKE - YEARS 3-4



Special thanks to Lizzie for choosing the readings and coaching the readers and to Lenka for her support with the choirs. Thanks also to Christopher Fletcher-Campbell for accompanying us, and to our VMT's, both those who were there at the Senior Carol Service to direct ensembles, and to those who work tirelessly behind the scenes to guide and inspire the children.

Our new Director of Music, Emma Penfold, comments: "As a music teacher, putting together events like this can seem like a daunting task, especially when you are new to a school, but the support and enthusiasm from the students and staff was limitless, and I am sure every parent felt rightly proud of the outstanding performances the children gave, from their very first experience in front of an audience in the Nativity, through to the more seasoned Year 8 soloists in the Senior Carol Service."

What better way to begin the festive season than our APS Christmas performances, and this year really got off to a fabulous start with the Pre-Prep Nativity and Junior Carol Concert in school, and the Senior Carol Service in the beautiful setting of St Helen's Church in Abingdon.

The Junior Carol Service was an utter delight from beginning to end. From the poignant singing of 'Follow that Star' to the more jovial and upbeat rendition of 'Jingle Bells', everyone performed with enthusiasm and confidence. Accomplished musical solos from Alex and Wilson on the piano made this evening a real treat for all who attended, and every single student in Year 3 and Year 4 participated in class poems, speaking with clarity and projection and setting the scene for a really impressive and magical experience.

Our Senior Carol Service began with Arthur's beautifully sung solo opening verse of 'Once in Royal David's City'. This was followed by an array of readings, instrumental ensembles and singing, bringing some fantastic musicality and sense of occasion to the evening, from 'Walking in the Air' performed by the orchestra, to Guitar Ensemble's confident 'Carol of the Bells'.

Cellisimo gave us a poignant rendition of 'Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas' and a little light relief came in the form of



Jazz Band, where several students took their first steps into improvisation. The choirs did themselves proud with all the hard work put in to developing tone, range and part singing, evident in the confidence with which everyone rose to the occasion, as did our outstanding soloists Vincent, Leo and Arjun.



PLATFORM CONCERTS

The students' natural motivation to be the best they can be translates to an innate love of performing, and nowhere is this clearer than the regular Concert Platforms at APS. Now open to the whole school, they have been a big success, particularly with Year 2 pupils who are only just starting their musical journey. Featuring pieces by Ed Sheeran to Rachmaninov, played on drumkit to cello and everything in between, and supported by our wonderful VMTs and parents, these opportunities for more informal musical outings continue to go from strength to strength.



WORKSHOPS FOR OUR YEAR 8 ARTS AWARD AND ART SCHOLARSHIP CANDIDATES



Alison Holmans of The Chicken Run Studio joined us for a day of sculpting free standing clay models. The pupils' final pieces were spectacular characters including Fantastic Mr Fox (left), The White Rabbit, Peter Rabbit and an inquisitive Puffin. Thank you to Alison for all of her guidance and truly inspiring tutoring.



CLAY SCULPTURE WITH ALISON HOLMANS

Another workshop took the pupils to Stowe School for an exciting day of animation! After pastries, and a tour of the art rooms and gallery, they were shown how to create their own group animations. Crafting sets, backdrops and storyboard ideas, pupils used plasticine to manipulate characters. Our film makers, directors and animators used iPads and specialist lighting techniques to create fantastic films. Thank you to Stowe School for a wonderful day!



YEAR 5 PACKAGING ENLARGEMENTS



ANIMATION AT STOWE

YEAR 7 PORTRAITURE



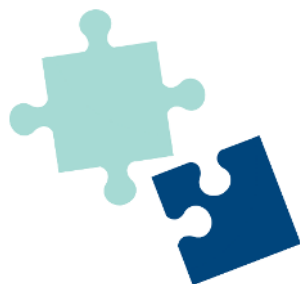
Year 7 looked at colour and the many ways paint can be applied expressively to create an impression of movement.



YEAR 5 PAPIER MACHE ANIMAL HEADS



CREATIVE ARTS CLUB Years 6, 7 and 8 made large scale collages. Taking care to incorporate scale, layers and expression, they have created some wonderfully characterful puppies!



THE TERM IN DT

It has been another busy and creative term in DT!

- Year 3s have been designing and making pneumatic moving monsters and funky photo holders.
- In Year 4 pupils have made working model lighthouses incorporating an electrical circuit and also had fun making periscopes and Christmas cushions.
- Year 5s have been making wooden cam toys, marble run games and Christmas stockings.



Year 3



Year 4



Year 5



Year 5



Year 6

- Year 6 pupils made steady hand games, using an electrical circuit. They also made model planes from balsa wood.
- Year 7 pupils have been cooking with the head chef from Abingdon School, making delicious high protein and healthy recipes. They also used the laser cutter to make their own working clocks.
- In Year 8, pupils have also had the opportunity to do some cooking, designing packaging for their energy bars. They also finished their latest project, making LED mood lights using CAD software to laser cut into wood and acrylic.



Year 7



Year 7



Year 8



Year 8

RECEPTION'S FIRST DAYS AT SCHOOL



Our newest and youngest members of Pre-Prep in Reception got stuck straight into school life from the moment they

arrived. Dressing up, building, sticking, drawing and playing, both in the classroom and the outside Early Years play area.

PRE-PREP TRIPS

YEAR 2 COMBE MILL



YEAR 1 WENT TO...



RECEPTION AT FAIRYTALE FARM



PRE-PREP

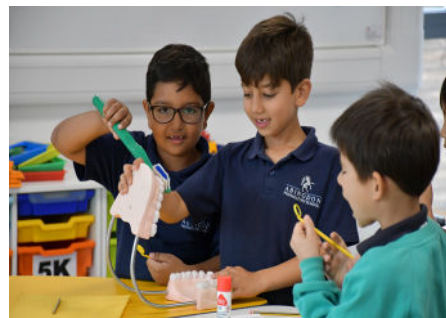
DOCTOR AND VET VISITS



Dr Soukup visited to tell us about her job as a GP. We explored her special bag and equipment and we talked about medicines and staying safe too. After this we collected our own patients and arrived at the hospital front desk to check them in to the Teddy Bear Hospital.



Reception also had a visit from a vet. We made lots of comparisons with the doctor and dentist that visited earlier in the term. Our patient was a dog called Sparky and we checked him for injuries, administered medicine, and listened to his heart. We also looked at different animal x-rays.



In their Science lessons, Year 2 learned about teeth, using the big model, and examining their mouths with mirrors, seeing our different shapes of teeth which have different purposes.



PUMPKIN FESTIVAL

Pre-Prep celebrated the season of Autumn with a pumpkin festival. Families worked together to customise pumpkins for the competition. With songs and pumpkin artwork inspired by Yayoi Kusama, an art exhibition by Year 2 and a pile of generous donations for the Oxford Food Hub, it was a fabulous end to the first half of term.



AMAZING ARTISTS



Pupils Years 1 and 2 in the Amazing Artists Club have enjoyed exploring a variety of artists throughout the sessions, including painting lying on their backs as Michelangelo did to paint the Sistine Chapel ceiling. Favourites have included Louise Bourgeois spiders and model making inspired by famous architect Zaha Hadid.



DIWALI

In November, we welcomed two very special visitors to Reception: Professor Mike Stevens, our Chair of Governors, and Rupal Gupta who came in to talk to the children about the celebration of the Hindu Festival of Lights, Diwali, and her own family experiences. There was music, dressing up, special food, Rangoli patterns (with which Professor Stevens joined in), glitter, glue and diva lamps being decorated. Thank you to our visitors – we really enjoyed having you with us.



GARDENING WITH PRE-PREP





PRE-PREP NATIVITY - BORN IN A BARN

The Pre-Prep Nativity play is one of the year's highlights. The children presented their dress rehearsal to an appreciative pupil audience before the main event of performing for their parents and the wider school community later that week. The children sang their hearts out in all the songs with actions, performing the traditional roles including the star and angels, shepherds, Kings, Mary and Joseph and, of course, all the animals, with great aplomb.



PRE-PREP VISIT ROVES FARM

Pre-Prep enjoyed a magical visit to Roves Farm, a well-earned treat after all of their hard work on the Nativity! The children were delighted to meet so many wonderful animals up close - especially the adorable piglets! And of course, no festive trip would be complete without a very special meeting with Father Christmas. The children had an incredible time. A big thank you too to the JPA for their generosity in paying for the entrance fees!





The U13 football squad enjoyed an inspiring tour to St George's Park, the home of English Football. Whilst away, students were fortunate to experience many state of the art training facilities including a hydrotherapy suite complete with underwater treadmill, indoor futsal arena, world class playing surfaces, and games rooms, all whilst staying in the onsite Hilton hotel. Over the two days, pupils were involved in a futsal tournament and a 9-a-side tournament against schools from across the country.



FOOTBALL NEWS

The U11 and U13 football squads have enjoyed some brilliant soccer at the Regional and National IAPS competitions recently.

The U11s experienced their first taste of tournament football at the Regional Qualifier, reaching the quarter finals before being knocked out by a last minute goal in stoppage time against a strong Downsends side.

The U13s travelled to Summer Fields in Oxford to compete in the finals of the IAPS competition. The competition was fierce, resulting in a win, loss and draw in the group stages. This put APS in the plate competition where they were unfortunately knocked out in the quarter final. Despite not advancing as far as they would have liked, it was an excellent



U11 SQUAD

opportunity to learn how to play and adapt to the demands of tournament football and a fantastic chance to play against some high calibre opposition.

A big thank you goes to the schools and officials for hosting and organising the events.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT - WILL D'ARCY

Many will be familiar with the name Will D'Arcy, an ex Abingdon Prep and Abingdon pupil who is currently working at APS as one of our gap students. Whilst working, Will has been juggling training for winter biathlon (cross country skiing and shooting) and is currently in the process of qualifying for the GB team to compete at the Youth World Winter Biathlon Championships. We wish him the best of luck!



AUTUMN SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS

It has been another excellent term for APS in Sport.

RUGBY: There has been much to celebrate on the rugby field this season, whether it was witnessing pupils play their first competitive fixtures in Abingdon Prep colours or working their way up the teams following continued hard work and commitment.

Highlights include: hosting Taunton Prep on their mini tour to Oxford, and our first Abingdon Foundation match with pupils from Year 7 at both APS and Abingdon joining forces to train together and compete against RGS Guildford.

There have been some excellent close matches against a number of schools and it has been fantastic to witness pupils enjoying the touch rugby version of the game, offering them access to rugby and all the skills associated with a team evasion game such as running, passing, catching and decision making.

CROSS COUNTRY: Throughout the term, the team of Max, Becket, Arthur, Noah, Josh and James have been competing in the English Schools Athletic Association Cross Country Cup Competition. Schools from across the country compete in two rounds of qualifying races (county and regional), for a place at the National Final which was held at Woodbridge School.

The team performed superbly well, winning the county round and placing 3rd at the regional one, qualifying them for the National Final. The team placed 20th in the country, and special mention must go to James who finished in a remarkable 28th place individually.

BRANCHING OUT: This term has seen pupils competing for the school in over eight different sports including basketball, squash, table tennis, rugby, football, cross country, biathlon and swimming. It has been fantastic to see so many pupils giving their best and enjoying sport in all forms!



PREP SCHOOL LIONS SELECTION

Congratulations to the eleven pupils who have been selected to represent the Prep School Lions squad this season. Pupils attended trials at Wellington College and had to battle it out against over 600 students to be selected! We wish them the very best of luck for the upcoming season which will see them play against district teams and academies, as well as the chance to represent England at the Gothia Youth World Cup.



ESAA CROSS COUNTRY CUP

In October, the Abingdon Foundation welcomed schools from across the county to Cox's Field to compete in the 1st round of the English Schools Athletic Association Cross Country Cup. It proved to be a successful afternoon of racing with both Abingdon Senior School and Abingdon Prep teams qualifying for the regional round of the competition, due to take place at Stowe School later in the term.

Juniors (Years 7-8)

- Abingdon Prep School – 1st
- Abingdon School – 3rd

Inters (Years 9-10)

- Abingdon School – 2nd

Seniors (Years 11-13)

- Abingdon School – 1st

Well done to all involved and thank you to the attending schools for a competitive afternoon of racing.



RUGBY MASTERCLASS

In September, APS welcomed Steve Bates and Simon Brown who put our Year 7 and Year 8 pupils through their paces during a rugby coaching masterclass. Pupils learned the correct body position for scrummaging and how to make the most of space in open play.

Steve Bates, who works at Abingdon Senior School, is a former Wasps and

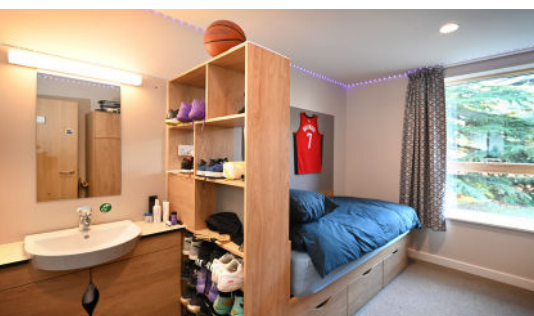
England scrum half who later became Head Coach at Newcastle Falcons and England Saxons and was instrumental in the development of Jonny Wilkinson amongst many other players. Simon Brown is a former Harlequins, Bedford and Barbarians front row forward, who more recently has been Director of Sport at Rugby School and now works in conjunction with Oxford University.



USHERING IN A NEW ERA

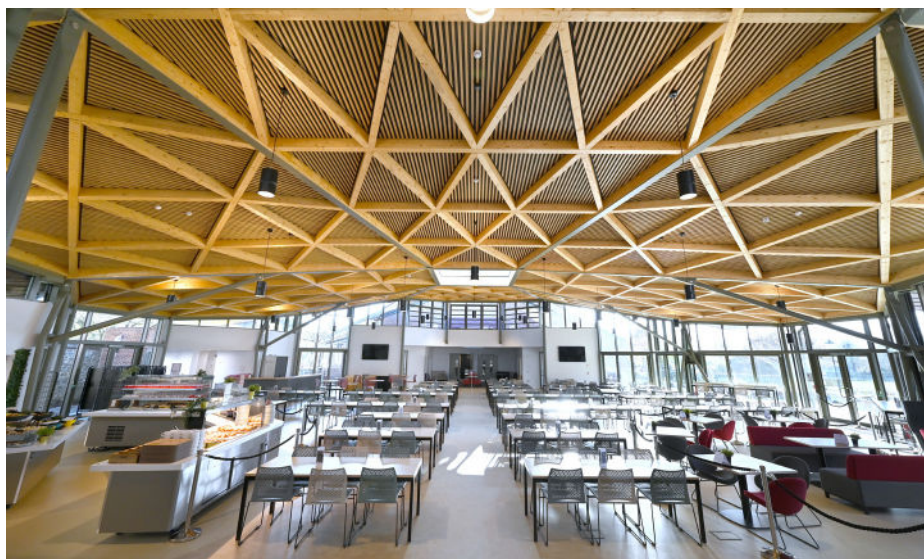
Abingdon School has opened a new, contemporarily designed dining pavilion, as well as two newly renovated and extended day and boarding houses (with plans to renovate the third in due course). The projects sit within the wider context of the school's strategic 15 year development plan to provide sustainable, fit for purpose facilities and focus on enhancing the 'Abingdon experience'.

Sympathetically sitting within the school's existing environment, Abingdon's new dining pavilion is dynamic and eye-catching. Adjoining the 450 seat Amey Theatre, it is set to become the very heart of school life. Intentionally designed to have several different purposes to maximise its useability, it houses a cafe, as well as being a dining hall, event and function space.



The extension and renovation of Austin and Crescent Houses is no less impressive. It has brought geographic cohesion to Abingdon's school community with each House now approached from within the school site. By extension, access to the school's many sports and recreational facilities has also been made easier.

Internally, the accommodation is thoughtful and practical. Communal House rooms and kitchen facilities are arranged to maximise student interaction, down-time and host social events, whilst dedicated 'quiet' study areas provide a purpose built space for



students to concentrate on their academic work. Boarders additionally have use of their own kitchenettes, contemporary designed shower and wash room facilities, and spacious bedrooms with plenty of built in storage, shared between 2 and 3 students (with single rooms for sixth formers).

Each of the new developments has been constructed, where practicable, using sustainable materials, maximising insulation and using renewable sources of energy for heating and lighting.

Mike Windsor, Head of Abingdon School, comments:

"I am immensely proud of the quality of our provision - in everything from our academics and extracurricular, to the facilities which

are available to students, staff and our wider community. The opening of our renovated boarding houses and state of the art dining pavilion benefits all of our community and my hope is, it will continue to significantly enhance the Abingdon experience for many for years to come."



A CLASSICAL ADVENTURE



Over half term, 58 pupils and 6 staff travelled to Rome and the Bay of Naples.

Highlights included visiting the richly decorated houses of Pompeii; seeing world-famous sculptures in the Capitoline and Palazzo Massimo Museums; walking in the underground warren beneath the amphitheatre at the centre of Spartacus' uprising; and enjoying the warmth of the late afternoon at the Canopus at Hadrian's Villa.

With great food, warm weather and fantastic sights, it was a memorable trip.



**JOHN LOCKE
ESSAY
FINALIST**

Congratulations to Gordon, who has been named global finalist in the John Locke Institute's essay competition (Law category) for his essay 'Suppose you were contemplating, in violation of the rules of this competition, submitting an essay written for you by AI. What would be the difference between such an act and ordinary attempted theft?'. Gordon was invited to a weekend of lectures and college dinners, culminating in a presentation at the Sheldonian and a reception at the Ashmolean Museum.



EVENSONG AT ST MICHAEL'S

On St Cecilia's Day (22 November), it seemed fitting that the Chapel choir would sing their termly evensong in St Michael's Church in Abingdon. For many of our choristers, this was their first experience of this reflective service, which included pieces by Vaughan Williams, Stanford (whose Psalm 150 was accompanied on the organ by Philip), Howells and Bach. The choir coped with the challenging long phrases brilliantly alongside singing with clear diction and balance.

We are so proud of 3rd Year student, Anur, who used the £250 he won from the John Rayson award (topped up with additional funds he earned doing chores) to host a drama workshop for differently able children at Kingfisher School, Abingdon. In conjunction with staff from Kingfisher School and Boost! School of Acting, the 3 hour October workshops saw over 20 differently able students take part. Anur said of the experience: "Drama allows us to express and process our own voices and knowledge. It aids in collaboration and creation allowing participants to share art. In the process, it builds

confidence and, more importantly, it is fun. I learned how, even with very limited ability to speak or express themselves, children at the workshop were able to engage and have fun. Kingfisher is special for educating children with special educational needs, but also for having exceptional teachers and staff who help their pupils achieve their potential. I am so grateful to Caroline and Tom from Boost! who were a key part of the project, as well as Dr Gardner, Mr Stockdale, Dr Howe, Mr Jenkins and Miss Sharman for their help in bringing it to fruition and to Abingdon for awarding me the John Rayson award."



JOHN RAYSON AWARD



RACING FEVER

The ASP Motorsports Club, with members from Abingdon, Fitzharrys and John Mason schools, worked on design and development plans with undergraduate engineering students on placements at GKN Automotive's Innovation Centre in Abingdon. The blue team is continuing to develop last season's successful Fitz24 electric racing car; the red team has begun renovating a second car, aptly named the Red Kite. Under GKN's guidance, students worked on bodywork designs and materials and improved power control systems for the new racing season in 2024. It was inspiring to see the constructive working between pupils and the young engineers at the forefront of automotive technology innovation in Abingdon.

CHARITIES NEWS

Our School charity this year is the **Paediatric Diabetes Education Charity**, part of the Oxford Hospitals Charity, for which we have already raised an amazing total of over **£1500!** We kickstarted our fundraising by wearing blue to school to celebrate World Diabetes Day on 14 November. Our Silver Coin Trail demonstrated some great collaboration, with the pupils all carefully placing their coins on the beautiful poster created by Sherrey. Retiring collections at our brilliant Year 6 pantomime, Junior and Senior Carol Concerts raised further generous donations. And finally, the Year 7 Tycoons held a mini market after school in the last week of term, selling their wares with great enthusiasm, future entrepreneurs in the making!

A huge thank you to all those who have donated and contributed, and with more events in the offing, we look forward to raising more funds to donate to this wonderful charity.



CHRISTINGLES



GIFTS FOR GROWN UPS



JPA NEWS

We have had a very busy first term of this school year with hundreds attending Firestorm, beautiful Christmas Wreath making and gorgeous handmade Christmas cards, mugs and coasters making wonderful keepsakes. The lucky winners of our first ever virtual Christmas Raffle went home very happy and we finished the year with the annual Gifts for Grown Ups event.



None of these would be possible without all your help and volunteering so, thank you for bringing your Josca's Parent Association together.

Sarah Dempsey, JPA Chair.

DATES FOR 2023

Quiz Night - Friday 26 January

Scalextric Fun - Friday 1 March

Eggstravaganza - 20 or 21 March (tbc)

CHRISTMAS AT APS

It was a fun filled festive extravaganza at APS on the penultimate day of term, with festive jumpers, Christingles and our annual 'Gifts For Grown Ups' stalls - and that was only the morning! After a fantastic Christmas lunch, the afternoon was full of parties and the Year 7 Business Tycoon mini festive market stalls where an array of biscuits, flapjacks, popcorn, doughnuts, milkshakes and bubble drinks proved very popular. A wonderful way to end the term and particular thanks to Nicky, Sarah and their JPA elves for helping run such a successful event along with all the Year 7 parents and Alison Thomas who supported in the making of festive treats.



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