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Abingdon Prep News

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SCIENCE WEEK YEAR 7 DRY ICE WORKSHOP

FROM THE HEAD

The Head, Craig Williams, reflects on a short but incredibly busy term at Abingdon Prep.

As I write, it is lovely to see the daffodils and crocuses in full bloom outside my office window. Spring is such a lovely time of year with the slowly returning sunshine and expectancy of the summer to come.

The creative arts were very much on show this term with a brilliant Year 3 and 4 musical, 'Alex in Wonderland', and two spring concerts where all children were involved, performing a range of songs alongside a series of talented soloists and ensembles. What I enjoy most about these events is the excitement with which the children approach them and give so much energy when they are up on stage performing to their friends and family.

Many of our Year 8 pupils have been undertaking scholarship assessments this term across the full range of academic and wider curriculum subjects. This year has been a very successful one with 9 scholarships awarded to Abingdon School and 1 to OLA.

On the football pitch it has been perhaps our most impressive season ever, with our Under 11A, Under 12A and U13A all remaining unbeaten, and our U12As creating a school record, scoring 75 goals and not conceding any! There have been more hockey matches than ever before, and every child in Years 3 to 8 has represented the school in matches again.

Young Art Oxford saw 24 of our children

ABINGDO Www.abingdon.org.uk/ having their work, on the theme of 'Time', being selected for the exhibition in May at The Ashmolean and it has been wonderful to see so many children really enjoying using the pottery wheel for the first time too.

Trips have taken place to a wide variety of venues with historic Tudor houses, story museums, farm parks, author talks and geography quizzes to name but a few.

Our Year 8s thoroughly enjoyed a ceilidh with their counterparts at Headington and our Year 2s got to know new faces in a hockey skills morning working together with other pupils from local primary schools. Science week saw a host of workshops and shows for Years 3 to 8, and Year 8R worked with Pre-Prep. Earlier in the term pupils in Year 6 used their detective skills to work out who had kidnapped me from a conference, using chromatography to identify the kidnapper's pen.

All our year groups finished the term with a brilliant Easter Egg hunt and our youngest pupils may even have caught sight of the Easter Bunny. Our parents association kindly supported us with that but also ran a hugely enjoyable Scalextric evening and a quiz night, with the staff team just about securing top spot after a recent run of poor performances!

Best wishes

Craig



OBITUARY TONY FAULKES

This term we said a very sad farewell to Tony, one of our stalwart minibus drivers, who has been with Abingdon Prep for many years. Tony unexpectedly passed away at half term.

Tony was a vibrant character who loved being with children more than anything else. He has numerous grandchildren and was always talking about them when sitting on the bench next to where he would meticulously park his bus whilst waiting for his passengers to arrive. A plaque will be affixed to his bench.

Tony was rarely seen without a Costa in his hand and could always be relied upon to go the extra mile, both literally and metaphorically, to help someone out. He will be greatly missed by everyone in the Abingdon Prep community.

School Council

The School Council met three times this term, with main topics being 'Colours and Cups' and lunch menus. All the year groups had something to offer and many fun ideas were proposed, ranging from making the current system more balanced to suggestions for new ideas for rewarding pupil achievement.

After consulting with their peers in form times, the hard-working Council met again to discuss further with Craig. The team put forward many really good ideas, many of which will be implemented into school life over the course of time. Craig thanked all the pupils for all their suggestions for clubs, sport, food and other aspects of school life.



FIRST AID IN YEAR 7

As part of our keeping safe strand in PSHCE, Year 7 pupils learnt about what causes choking, signs of choking and then importantly, what action to take. Led by our school nurse and with the aid of specially designed training vests, they were able to practise scenarios including the abdominal thrusts to dislodge an item from an artificial windpipe. Whilst we hope no one has cause to put their skills to use, they felt confident they would know what to do in this type of emergency.





RESILIENCE RUCKSACK FAIR

Year 6 enjoyed being part of research at Reading University to develop tools for young people to grow their resilience. They visited four booths and learnt about the science behind sleep, exercise, friendship and self compassion and how these can boost resilience and wellbeing. They got to choose a range of tools to help them develop in these areas including a comic, stress ball, pedometer, reflection journal and access to a song to aid sleep. There was a lot of positive feedback from the pupils to the researchers and hopefully this will help Reading University deliver this fair to other schools.



As the 1886 proverb goes, we're certainly hoping "March winds and April showers bring forth May flowers". Photo by Paula, Sodexo.







IN SCHOOL

Bienvenue à la crêperie!

In French, Year 3 have been learning how to order in a café and got to practise this with a visit to our pop-up APS crêperie. They placed their orders, exchanged greetings and basic conversation with our helpful waiters and listened carefully for their order to be called. With a choice of chocolate, strawberry or sugar and lemon, there were some tricky decisions to be made!





Internet Safety

Safer Internet Day is the UK's biggest celebration of online safety. In their Computing lessons, we looked at the following topics in workshops:

- Young people's perspective on new and emerging technology
- Using the internet to make change for the better
- The changes young people want to see online
- The things that can influence and change the way young people think, feel and act online and offline.

To complement the workshops, pupils were invited to a 'technology museum' where they could get hands-on experience of technology through the ages.



SCIENCE WEEK

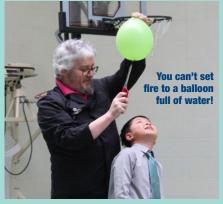
Each spring, schools all over the UK celebrate Science Week, an annual event of STEM activities promoted by the British Science Association (BSA). We were busy at Abingdon Prep with most year groups taking part in fun activities and workshops, many following this year's theme of 'time'.



Year 8R and Pre-Prep teamed up to work together on a number of activities: Reception timed pendulums; Year 2 made sand or water timers, and Year 1 made shadow puppets. The older pupils enjoyed working with the younger children.



lan from Science Oxford visited to give Years 3 to 5 a 'Fire' Show, which concentrated on teaching the Fire triangle, but finished with coloured flames and a fire volcano! lan then gave a Forces Show to Year 6, which looked at many different kinds of forces, from Newton





to aerodynamics, from bridge-building to the shape of eggs. There was lots of enthusiastic audience participation too.

Earlier in the week, Years 7 and 8 took part in two different workshops. Year 7 explored the properties of dry ice with Nitro-Jen from Bright Sparks, and Year 8 tried to make earthquake-proof buildings from spaghetti and marshmallows with the Outreach Team from Oxford University's Earth Sciences Department - the roller frames were super at simulating quakes.



For our Science Week assembly, Year 8R presented and acted some of the greatest science discoveries ever for the rest of the school to guess. From being attracted into a black hole, to having an apple fall on one's head, to the petri-dish that broke the mould (pun intended) for Fleming, assembly was full of science facts.



IN SCHOOL

World Book Day and Author Visits



Abingdon Prep was a hive of excitement on World Book Day (WBD). Our theme this year was Heroes and Villains. There were some amazing costumes, from Harry Potter and the Dementors, Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader to Captain Underpants and Willy Wonka! Prizes were awarded to the best dressed (including a staff prize), but the children made the job of judging extremely hard. It was a wonderful way to celebrate the joy of books and encourage everyone to get reading!





Either side of WBD itself, were author visits including all important book signings.

Years 7 and 8 joined their senior school counterparts in the Amey Theatre, where YA author Candy Gourlay gave a fascinating talk about writing the hero, and told the story of her journey to become an author as a Philippino. Some Year 8s stayed on for a writing workshop with her afterwards too.

Year 5 visited Chandlings where Clare Balding enthralled her young audience talking about animals, her life and her books with plenty of interaction with them too.





Abingdon Prep pupils joined in the RSPB's 'Big Garden Birdwatch'. The children spotted carrion crows, blue tits, blackbirds, woodpigeons, great tits, chaffinch, jackdaws, house sparrows and even a red kite. They then added this important information to the countrywide survey which, in turn, will help to provide greater understanding on our garden birds.



This term's winner of the Countdown teapot was Adhiraj, with faultless numbers rounds and being the only competitor to recognise 'numerator' as the final conundrum.

Year 6 Orienteering Course and Contour Models

Year 6 pupils put their mapwork skills to the test on an orienteering course around the school site. After plotting the 6-figure grid references on their base map they were released from the classroom. At each point



they had to record the letter and punch their score cards.

They concluded their mapwork skills with some fantastic 3D cardboard contour models. They were given the options of an



A3 base map of the Wittenham Clumps, a peak from the Nepalese Himalayas, or the option to pick their own hill from an OS map at home. We have been wowed with their results!





Year 4 concluded their Tudors History topic with a memorable trip to the Elizabethan manor house of Ufton Court. The pupils were employed as constables working under the parish's Justice of the Peace, where they were instructed to look out for any 'strange goings on'.



Years 3 and 4 had a memorable day at Hazard Alley in January. This interactive and immersive, safety education experience teaches children about how to stay safe, understand risks and avoid accidents.

The children learned about keeping safe at home, on the roads, near water, by railways and online. They also had the chance to practise making a call to the emergency services and do some first aid too. It was a hugely important day for our pupils and lots of fun!

Worldwise Quiz

Nine pupils from Years 7 and 8 competed in the Oxfordshire round of the Geographical Association's Worldwise Quiz hosted by MCS. The three teams Malaku, Cho Oyu and Lhotse put in a great performance over 7 rounds which included a decision making exercise on whether to locate a new potash mine near Whitby, OS map skills, country outlines and a very tricky 'More or Less' round. We had an enjoyable evening applying our geographical knowledge to questions such as "Is the M1 motorway longer than the length of the Grand Canyon?", "Is Luxembourg larger or smaller than the world's biggest iceberg?" and "Where is there more rain - London or Brussels?"

The Year 8 team of Arjun, Joseph and Rupert finished joint fourth out of 21 teams.





YEAR 5 VISIT THE PITT RIVERS AND NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUMS



Year 5 had a splendid day at the Oxford museums, combining history and science. The morning workshop was on the Maya which included handling authentic artifacts and a tour of the Pitt Rivers. After lunch, the adaptation workshop included looking at a polar bear paw, plus a tour of the Natural History Museum. The workshop facilitators were excellent, getting the children hooked on the topics right from the start.





ART AND DT

The Term in DT

Students have been working hard on a variety of different projects spanning the many areas of DT, including product design, textiles, graphic design and food tech.

Year 3s used their sewing skills to create their own tooth fairy cushions.

Year 4s built excellent siege towers, using their wood working skills.

Year 5s used the laser cutter and sublimation printing to create their own jigsaw puzzle and packaging.

Year 6s had a lot of fun this term, designing and making their own chocolate bar and packaging using CAD software.

Year 7s created fantastic clocks using the laser cutter and also created their own packaging for their clocks too.

Year 8s used graphic design software to create room designs, and working on their technical drawing skills, focusing on 1 and 2 point perspective.



















The Term in Art

Our highlights include:

- Our Year 8s success in achieving their Arts Award, and trying the pottery wheel for the first time!
- The Years 1 and 2 Amazing Artist Club experimented with Picasso 'bull' paintings, Basquiat dinosaurs and Mothers' Day cards.
- The art clubs have had lots of fun marbling and bookbinding their own notebooks.
- Year 3 made terrifying Egyptian death masks.
- Year 4 immersed themselves in chalking Indian mandalas in the playground and clay Mehndi tiles.
- The Year 5 and 6 groups have been busy designing typographic T-shirts, and cakes made from clay.

What a wonderfully creative, artistic and experimental Spring term!

ENGLISH AND DRAMA



"Thine eyes I love, and they, as pitying me, Knowing thy heart torments me with disdain,

Have put on black and loving mourners be, Looking with pretty ruth upon my pain."

With these words, the opening quatrain to Shakespeare's Sonnet 132, Sam in 8S laid the foundations of his victory in this year's senior section sonnet competition. Rupert, also of 8S, was a worthy runnerup, with Harry and Aaron, both of 7N, both highly commended by judge Dr Dani Heywood-Lonsdale from Abingdon's English department. They may have formed the cream, but it was no mere trifle below. All the competitors recited their sonnets with aplomb; none required prompting at all, a reflection of the high ambitions and standards set by all those from Years 7 and 8 who entered.

Performing Arts

Year 8 were asked to create performances using characters from their favourite books. From Harry Potter and Alex Rider to King Arthur, we enjoyed their work's diversity.

Year 6 studied *Macbeth*, and in particular the title character himself. Working in small groups the children prepared and presented cases for the prosecution and the defence of Macbeth. Did he murder King Duncan?







Years 3 and 4 performed *Alex in Wonderland*, taking the audience with them down the rabbit hole in Abingdon Prep's take on the Lewis Carroll classic. There, Alex encountered many well-known characters including the White Rabbit, the Duchess, the Cheshire Cat, the Caterpillar and the King and Queen of Hearts, not forgetting the Mad Hatter's bizarre tea party. Sherrey and Claire made some special props including a teapot for the sleepy Dormouse and a super caterpillar suit! Congratulations to all for their hard work giving such an enjoyable evening's entertainment.









SPRNG CONCERTS

What better way to round off a short but busy term than with two Spring music concerts.

The middle section performance featured a variety of singing, class recorders and solo pieces and the children clearly enjoyed the opportunity to share their hard work with real enthusiasm.

The senior concert was an eclectic mix of ensembles and soloists, showing a wide variety of musical talents, and a highlight was definitely the Years 7 and 8 choir's performance of the hit 'The Lion Sleeps Tonight', complete with evocative rainforest soundscape and actions.







Foundation 25th Anniversary Thanksgiving Service

As part of the 25th Anniversary of the Abingdon Foundation, 30 pupils sang as part of a Service of Thanksgiving in Abingdon School Chapel. They performed their own solo anthem in this most wonderful of settings, and also combined with the Abingdon Chapel Choir to sing a 90 strong arrangement of the 'Irish Blessing' by Bob Chilcott. To see the awe the APS children had at this event was very special and all who attended were completely inspired by the talent of the older students.









CONCERT PLATFORMS

We held three Concert Platforms this term, and as always these were well attended events by both pupils and families supporting. It's wonderful to see how keen the pupils are to make the most of these lower key performance opportunities.



PRE-PREP





PRE-PREP TRIPS



Reception went to the Cotswold Farm Park and met lots of animals.

Year 1 discovered wonderful stories brought to life at Oxford's Story Museum.

Year 2 went to Abingdon's Science Partnership for a planetarium show and it took the whole corridor to model the solar system to scale!





YEAR 2 AT THE ASP PLANETARIUM



GRANDPARENTS' AFTERNOON

Pre-Prep were joined by grandparents and family friends to experience a fabulous afternoon of fun and games. There were toys old and new to share,





homemade cakes and cups of tea and the hall was filled with excited voices and lots of laughter, spanning many generations.







Pre-Prep Author Visit

Pre-Prep were treated to a special visit from a local author, Emi-Lou May, who read her book 'Doctorsaurus' and shared her insights into the world of writing with the children. They were not only enthralled by the captivating story but were also able to explore the story in different languages. Emi-Lou's visit was made even more memorable as she brought along various characters from the story, allowing the children to immerse themselves in the magical world she created. Thank you Emi-Lou!



PRE-PREP



FAIRE DES PIZZAS!

Year 2 pupils have put their French vocabulary to the test while making their own pizzas. The children chose their toppings and reviewed their pizzas with their best French and with fantastic accents too. Year 2 all agreed that their pizzas were 'excellentes'!



One of our parents visited Reception to talk about Chinese New Year and what it means to her and her family. The children found out about the origins of the Chinese zodiac animals. They also made spring rolls and tried on traditional Chinese dress.

100 DAYS SMARTER

Reception celebrated being 100 days smarter in style with party games, foods that made 100 and crazy hats!



PRE-PREP WORKSHARE

Pre-Prep had an exciting morning sharing their work with their families. It was great to be able to share the progress, hard work and learning through fun, along with a few tasty home made biscuits too.



















FROM PRE-PREP!















SPRING SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS

HOCKEY: Still in its infancy at Abingdon Prep, hockey continues to go from strength to strength. Pupils from Year 3 to Year 8 have had the opportunity to train more than ever before as well as get their first taste of competitive fixtures against MCS, Pinewood, St Hugh's, Cothill, Chandlings and Abingdon. It has been fantastic to see the pupils improving at a real rate of knots.

FOOTBALL: The football club has had a tremendously successful season with teams in the U13s and U11s going unbeaten throughout the season. The U12s went one better than this, not only remaining unbeaten but also keeping a clean sheet for the entire season, scoring 75 goals and conceding none!

IAPS: A select number of pupils have had the chance to challenge themselves against the best in the country at a number of IAPS competitions this term. The U13s developed tremendously after their full day of hockey at Cheltenham College, adapting to the fast pace and expansive style of play. It was a privilege to host 16 schools across the region at Tilsley Park for the U11 IAPS competition. The U11

squad grew in confidence and stature throughout the tournament and narrowly lost on penalty kicks in the quarter final of the plate competition.

The swimming squad competed superbly well at the Dragon, during the qualifying round of the IAPS Swimming finals. All eyes will be on the rankings list when they are published at the start of the summer term to see if pupils have gained a place at the National Final, taking place at the London Aquatics Centre.

SCHOLARSHIP NEWS:

Congratulations must be extended to Josh H for securing a sports scholarship to Abingdon School and James C for securing a sports scholarship to OLA. We look forward to following their sporting journeys as they depart APS this year.

PARTNERSHIPS:

Pupils in Year 2 from APS and Wootton Primary School enjoyed taking part in a hockey masterclass with Abingdon School 1st team players, Sam and Roddy, providing some expert coaching tips. It was fantastic to see the pupils learning new skills and playing with smiles on their faces.





SPORT

Always a highlight in the calendar, the Inter House Cross Country race allows the whole school community to come together to support one another and celebrate the hard work pupils have put into training and racing throughout the spring.

We were extremely fortunate to welcome back ex APS pupil Quinn, now in Abingdon's U6 and captain of cross country, to hare the races and present the awards. Since developing his love for running here, he has gained numerous accolades, represented England and recently secured his place in the U20 Great Britain team. Quinn's first race in a GB vest will be at the World Championships in Belgrade. Good luck and we will be cheering you on!





Toby



RESULTS: Place Year R 1st Charlie 2nd Zander 3rd Hugh

Year 1 Lucas Ollie S

Year 2 Zeyi

Year 3 William M Sebastian Joshua B Charlie R Sebastian Harry M

Year 4 Year 5 Josh P Sam D Harry Timothy Paddy

Year 6 Will B Trystan Will A

USE CROSS COUNTR

Year7 Year 8 Arthur James C Beckett Noah P Leone Henry R











CAREERS INSIGHT



In late January, students across the OX14 Learning Partnership in Years 10, 11 and Sixth Form attended a career insight talk. Co-hosted by Abingdon and St Helen and St Katharine Schools, industry leaders talked about the different professions which can be accessed from the study of Geography including Property, Surveying and Planning; Campaigning and Advocacy; Business Supply Chains; Environmental Consulting; and Government and International Relations.

Michael Triff, Head of Career Guidance at Abingdon, said: "This was a well attended event providing a useful opportunity for those considering, or currently taking, Geography A Level to find out more about the career paths to which it can lead. My thanks to all who helped to organise it."

Maths Feast

Before half term, a team of 4th Year mathematicians competed in the regional Maths Feast Competition held in Compton, near Newbury. Maths Feast is a fun educational challenge which tests problemsolving and teamwork skills. There are several rounds requiring different skills and strategies for success.

Our students had to estimate the number of cats, complete a cross number grid, and work out who would wear particular coloured hats, before finishing with a challenging 3D shape construction round. They scored full points in two of the four rounds, and enjoyed spending a morning out on a Maths trip!





GCSE Geology Trip

On a drizzly February afternoon, Abingdon's nascent Geology Department made the short trip to Dry Sandford Pit, an old quarry near Cothill. The objective was to investigate the nature of the depositional environments operating in the Boreal Jurassic Seaway during two of the subzones of the Oxfordian Stage of the Upper Jurassic.

Beds were measured, sediments graded, fossils identified and litres of HCI pipetted onto potential carbonate rocks. In the end, and after much head scratching, a detailed graphic log of the exposure was completed and a full(ish) picture of how conditions changed over this relatively short period of geological time was gained. The day was rounded off with the examination of some spectacular Jurassic solitary corals. A splendid afternoon.



Canoe Polo success

Two canoe polo teams travelled to Malvern College in March for an afternoon tournament with Malvern College and Queens College. Abingdon A came in 1st place and Abingdon B in 2nd place, only losing one game against Abingdon A. Everyone enjoyed themselves with students from all schools creating a fun and supportive atmosphere.



ABINGDON NEWS



Making Nylon

The top chemistry set have been finishing the final topics of their GCSE course, the latest being learning some advanced organic chemistry. What better way to bring this practical and exciting topic to life than to make Nylon (which in the wider world can be used to make clothing and complex machined parts)?

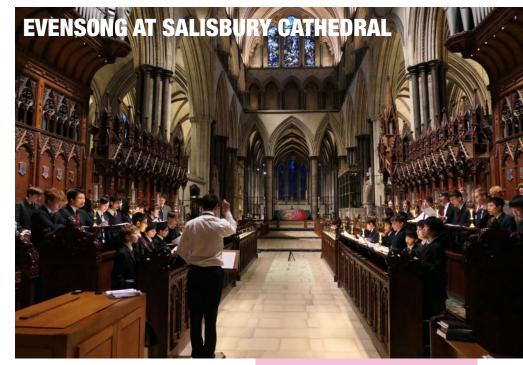
Abingdon student wins coveted Rugby Scholarship

Many congratulations to Upper Sixth student, Ollie who, having won the 1st XV Rugby Players Player of the Season award, has clinched a prestigious scholarship contract with Ealing Trailfinders Rugby and Brunel University. This will offer him the rare opportunity to pursue academia alongside professional rugby training with the aim of propelling him into the BUCS Premiership.

Ollie says: "Abingdon School has provided an exceptional platform for both academic and athletic development and I am grateful for the mentorship and coaching that have guided me to this pivotal moment in my rugby career."

Matthew Gold, Abingdon School's Director of Rugby, adds: "We take immense pride in seeing a student progress from Abingdon Prep School through to the Senior School and beyond with such ambition and potential. I'd like to extend my own congratulations to Ollie on this remarkable achievement, and extend my best wishes for his future endeavours in rugby. We shall be following with much interest."







In February, the Chapel Choir had the privilege of singing Choral Evensong at Salisbury Cathedral. Following the opening 'Responses' by Ayleward, they sang the Psalm with clear diction. The canticles included Charles Wood's 'Setting in Eb No. 2' and Elgar's wonderful anthem 'The Spirit of the Lord' from his oratorio 'The Apostles' - this provided the choir with refined quieter and reflective moments, whilst the majestic acoustic of the Cathedral enabled the climaxes in this anthem to soar. An extraordinary opportunity and our students sang with clarity, style and nuance.

STAND UP FOR YOUR RIGHTS

In a nod to women's rights, our joint senior production 'Made in Dagenham' told the extraordinary story of the 187 working women who went on strike at Ford's Dagenham factory in 1968. Our outstanding performers, supported by band and stage crews, moved the audience from tears to laughter in three sell-out shows.



Juliette Powers

Sadly we recently said farewell to Juliette, one of our School Nurses. She brought big smiles and a caring attitude to every child she saw. She was a supportive colleague with amazing creative skills who produced some wonderful health promotion displays around the school. We will miss her support and kindness but we all wish her well.



Lettie Birkett-Jones

Lettie has been with us for less than a year but what an impact she has had. She has thrown herself into school life and it is like she has always been here. A 'can do' attitude and willingness to help, alongside her calm and sunny demeanor, will mean a huge hole is left in school. Lettie thank you, you have been simply amazing and we wish you all the best for the future.



Pascal Naqib

In the two terms that Pascal has been with us teaching Latin, she has shared her love for all things Classical with our pupils, and set up a lunchtime Greek club for all ages. A warm and kind individual who cares greatly for the pupils, she has been involved more widely in the school, volunteering to support with readers in the younger year groups and lending her musical talents to concerts and events. Pascal is not leaving the Foundation, moving over to teach Latin at the senior school, but we will miss her at APS.





Nasio Trust update

We are delighted to continue our school sponsorship of four Kenyan children through the Nasio Trust. The Abingdonbased charity works to break the cycle of poverty by supporting families and children and providing both education and access to medical care. APS pupils have been finding out more about the children in form time and section assemblies. A heartfelt thank you to both the JPA and Abingdon Rotary Club for continuing to enable this sponsorship. For more information, plus the opportunity to support other children see thenasiotrust.org.

Pre-Prep sponsor **Mordecai**, the youngest of six, raised by his mother after his father sadly passed away three years ago. With the support of the Nasio Trust he attends St Irene Early Care Development Centre.



Dragon Cake Sale in aid of Sobell House

Middle section sponsor two children. **Brighton** is 8 and lives with his father. He is in Grade 2 at Mumias Township Primary and attends Nasio Trust programmes in the holidays to receive breakfast and lunch.

Lorna is 10 and the youngest of five. She lives with her parents who struggle to earn more than \$1 a day. She aspires to be a doctor when she is older.



Senior section sponsor **Ahmed**, who is 12 but until four years ago hadn't received any education. He lives with his grandmother who has twelve grandchildren to support. Now, through the support of the Nasio Trust, he is at school and progressing well, and would like to become a teacher.



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