



Pre-Prep's special visitors



From the Headmaster

I am writing this at the end of an incredibly busy term where the boys have shone in a wide range of activities across both the academic curriculum and the 'Other Half'.

Our scholarship candidates often take centre stage during the spring term and I am delighted to report that we have achieved a fantastic 17 awards, including 5 academic, 8 music, 3 sport and 1 Art. The standard required to achieve one of these awards is incredibly high and all the boys who have sat for scholarships should be very proud of themselves.

Our Junior and Senior Sections have both put on fantastic plays this term, with 'Dragon Days' involving every boy in Year 3 and 4 and 'Animal Farm' being delivered in the last week of term by our Year 7 and 8s. Both performances were exceptional and more importantly, all the boys involved seemed to delight in being on stage and performing to their friends, families and teachers.

In the sports arena, we now have a National Cross Country champion, and we have had a number of very successful football teams across all age groups, with

some particularly impressive results from our unbeaten U10As and a very strong U13A team too. Our U9 team produced a brilliant 2nd place finish nationally in the British Biathlon championships with some great individual performance higher up the school as well. We have also had five of our Year 8 boys selected for the Wasps and Gloucester Rugby academy programmes which is a great effort. We are certainly looking forward to the cricket and athletics seasons ahead, with two boys hoping to defend their IAPS national athletics titles.

Science week was a great success this term with all the year groups taking part in different events and a highlight for me was the visit of two penguins to school, followed by a fortnight of baby ducklings being looked after in Pre-Prep. Architecture workshops took place in the final week of term too, creating a range of structures from Viking longboats to bridges. STEM and CDT are very much alive and well at Abingdon Prep.

With best wishes

Craig Williams



Charities

This term the individual houses have been organising events to raise money for their chosen charities.

Unicorn, who are raising funds for 'The Alzheimer Society' encouraged the school to wear their seasonal jumpers for the Christmas lunch. Phoenix, who are supporting 'Save Vietnam's Wildlife' asked the boys to come to school in red and gold, the colours of the Vietnamese flag.

'The Friends of Della and Don' was the chosen charity for Dragon. The couple (right) gave a fascinating talk about their experience of being in Sri Lanka when the tsunami hit the island in 2004. They set the charity up after seeing the devastation caused and have raised funds to support the village, particularly helping the school. Dragon had a hugely successful Sri Lanka day where boys wore shorts and shades and had the opportunity to buy traditional cakes and pasties. The money raised will fund a teacher for two months. *Anne Parker*



Thank you!



At a recent assembly, Craig thanked Paul and Cheryl Wentworth for their 14 years of support at APS. From chairing the JPA to running the fireworks display, and especially for replacing and creating the much loved Christmas Bazaar games, Paul and Cheryl's creativity has been hugely appreciated by many years of boys.

Cheryl ensured there was funding for the first electric fretsaw in the CDT room over ten years ago and Paul is still working with the CDT department to create an outside benching area by the MUSA. So watch this space... *Katie Smith*



During our recent Science Week, some very special visitors arrived in the Year 1 classroom. All was quiet when five perfectly formed duck eggs were safely delivered in an incubator. The peace did not last long however, as the sixth duckling had hatched in the van during transit! Within 24 hours all the ducklings hatched and the excitement was captured on the 'duck cam'.

Whilst the ducklings got used to their new surroundings, the boys quickly started to think about names. The first to be named was Ned, after our gap student, as it was his birthday. The second was Scruffy because of his slightly disheveled appearance. The other four were named Donald, John, Sunny and Cheepy, using the name out of the hat method!

As the ducklings grew older they came out of the enclosure and ventured onto the carpet. Here the boys had the opportunity of handling them. They were slowly introduced to water and by the end of the week were diving down to retrieve food. The ducklings have been an incredible learning opportunity for the boys in Pre-Prep, indeed, the whole school was delighted with them!



APS Bake-off is back!



...helping judge



...finals next term



House Merit Cup

The Recycled Staff Garden



After half term, Katie and the amazing Charles from the Grounds team unveiled the secret project they had been working on to Craig and staff. A small outside space at the back of the staff room had been transformed into a communal seating area.

Charles cleverly made the benches, stools and table from recycled wood, including old fencing from Joscas' field. Pallets became planters and some recycled acrylic from CDT added colour in the form of flowers.



January snow!



House Paper Aeroplane Challenge



AbingdonPrep In and Out

Year 5 visit the Pitt Rivers & Natural History Museums



Justin (5L) tells us about Year 5's trip.

The first thing we did was to meet our guides and watch a slide show about codices, Aztec family life, food and the Aztec calendar. We learnt about how codices were made by scribes to show the Spanish king about the Aztecs' culture. We saw what people wore and how strict Aztec parents were. I learned that fancier clothes would reflect your place in society. The last slide was very interesting - it was all about the Aztec calendars. There were two, one for tracking normal time and the other for tracking religious ceremonies. We then looked at many fascinating objects around the museum. There were not many Aztec objects because Cortes and the Conquistadors from Spain destroyed them. We drew pictures of an Aztec man with all the information that we had learnt that morning. This was my favourite part of our visit (mine is on the right).

After lunch we went into the Natural History Museum where we learned about evolution. It was fascinating to learn how animals change so they can fit into their surroundings and location. The lab was filled with really interesting objects in jars, as well as fossils. Our guide was a real scientist who knew everything about animals from tiny insects to wild cats. A really



fun moment was when I had to be an ancient animal (the first to have a spine that could swim and walk on land). Afterwards, we were given an iPad to guide us around, which told us about all the types of animals and rocks. At the end, we got to go freely around the museum and looked at the things that interested us the most. My favourite part was being picked to be the ancient animal. Everyone had a very good time!



Salter Festival of Chemistry

In March, four boys from Year 8 joined teams from twenty other schools from Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire for a day of chemistry at Oxford University.

The boys took part in two challenges and were awarded first prize in the 'University Challenge', seeing them race against the clock to react different concentrations of sulphuric acid with magnesium ribbon in a set time. The time was 2 minutes 30 seconds and our team was 2 seconds out. They were praised for their team work, communication skills and tenacity.

The day ended with a superb display of chemistry by members of the Inorganic Chemistry Department at the University, who treated us to some explosive demonstrations! *Rebecca Schwarz*

Warhammer Club



Warhammer, the fantasy tabletop wargame is popular with the boys, who enjoy building and painting their armies before pitting them against each other.

School Council Think Tank Meeting



When School Council went to Craig's office for a Think Tank Meeting, we discussed ideas for improvements and changes that had been collected from all year groups. The categories included OH clubs, food, the playground, the curriculum and some miscellaneous ideas. While discussing the issues and suggestions with Craig we were treated to snacks and a drink. While some suggestions were not possible for various reasons, many were. We look forward to them being implemented. *Alex H*

Year 7 become the Victorian Waxwork Museum



The first Abingdon Prep Victorian Waxwork Museum exhibition opened in exceptional style one March morning. All of Year 7 took part in this exciting event. The aim of the Waxwork Museum was to persuade the curators (the teachers) why different famous Victorian characters should not be melted down and replaced by another waxwork.

The boys researched their famous Victorians, created fabulous A3 collages and wrote persuasive speeches giving reasons why they should remain in the museum. They also dressed as their character and there was a wide array of props (Mrs Beeton's thick gingerbread was out of this world!).



The boys waited patiently until they were activated by pushing a button above their heads or beside them. They then 'came to life' and were animated whilst delivering their persuasive speech; the vast majority of which had been learned off by heart.

The event was a roaring success with all boys participating fully and all teachers being blown away by the standard of arguments and hard work that had gone into the event.

Queen Victoria and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle were particularly popular, as were Cadbury and Rowntree (but for different reasons!).

Well done to all involved. *Natasha Watson*

Senior Section Speed Stacking!

After a few weeks of feverish training, ten competitors, representing all five form groups, graced the stage in our inaugural Speed Stacking final. The atmosphere was electric, with rousing music and a jubilant crowd. Competitors had 30 seconds to warm up and then three attempts to generate their fastest time for a 'cycle' (cups stacked in formations: 3-6-3, 6-6, 10-2). The heat rose towards the close of the competition when Thomas posted the best time of the morning (11:461s), with



only two competitors to go - but on his third attempt, in the final stack of the competition, Freddie posted the best time of the day (10:995s), clinching personal glory for himself, and a bounty of edible rewards for 8R.
Roger Owen



Well-Being Club

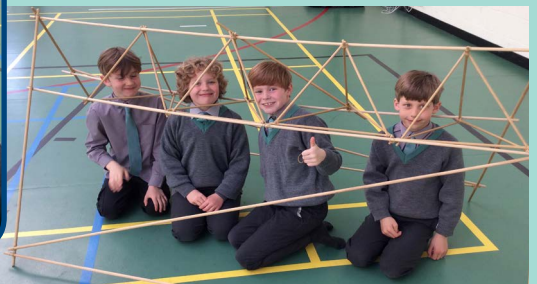
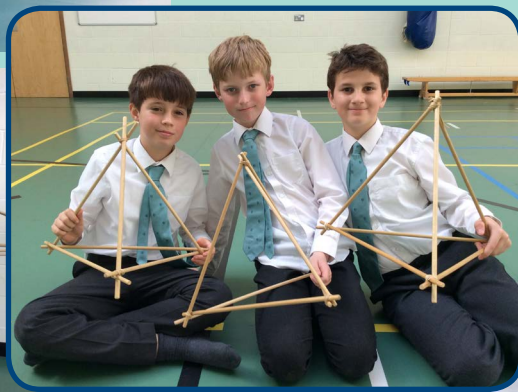
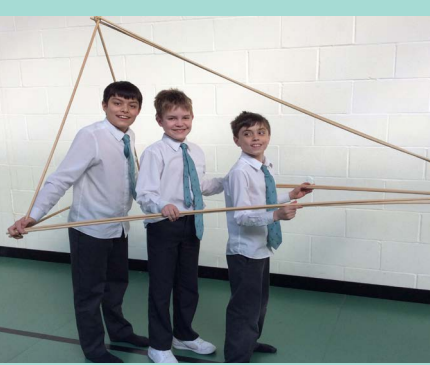
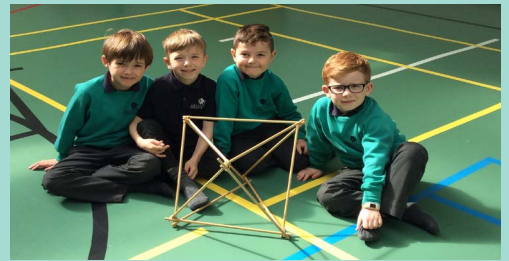
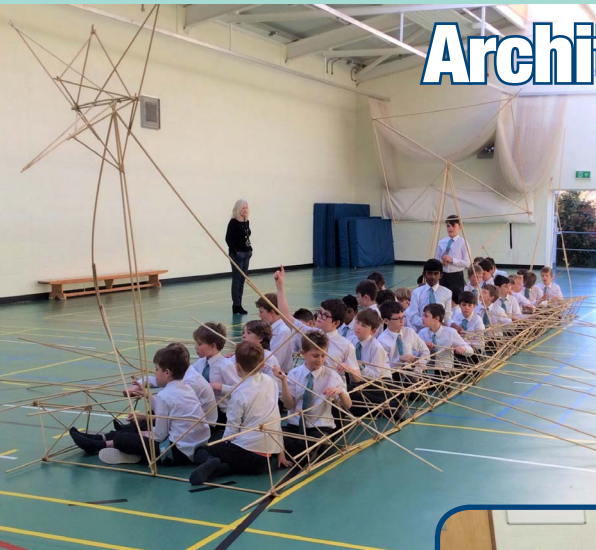


This term we have been focusing on deep breathing techniques to help us calm down, positive affirmation, yoga and meditation. We have created a toolkit of strategies to assist us in coping with daily stresses. *Louise Batho*



Architecture Workshop

The 'Architecture Workshop' company visited us once again to work with pupils in Years 2, 4 and 6. Problem solving in groups to make giant structures using only sticks and rubber bands proved to be very challenging! However, you can see from the results that the pupils worked collaboratively and produced some excellent end products, from giant Octahedrons to bridges and even an enormous Viking Longboat. *Katie Smith*



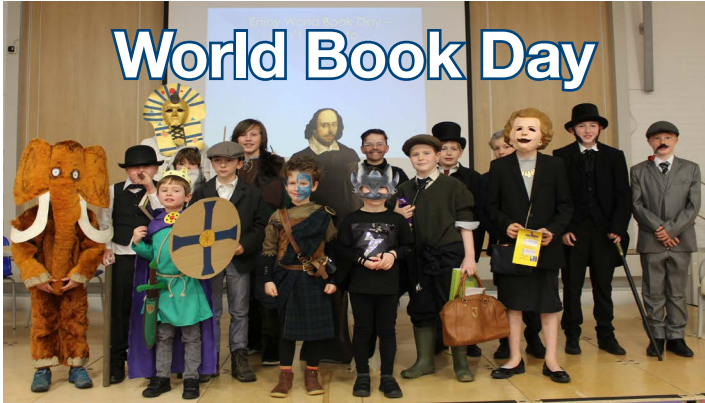
House Music Festival

The festival was a two day event this year. On Tuesday 12 March, the Junior/Middle and Singing festival featured 14 instrumentalists and six singers. Our adjudicators were Annabel, who is a high level violinist and pianist, and Karina, an experienced singer. All boys performed confidently and with great musicality, but in the end first place was awarded to Toby in 6N for his piano piece, *The Avalanche*, with Arjun in 3S the runner-up, also on piano, playing *Night of the Tarantella*. The Debbie Rose Singing Cup went to Charlie in Year 8 for his beautiful rendition of *Poor Wayfaring Stranger*, which moved Karina to tears.

The Senior House Music Final took place the following day, and we were delighted to welcome Sophie Biddell, Director of Music at Christ Church Cathedral School to judge the event. The standard was extremely high, as eight of our finalists were recipients of music awards to the senior school or Magdalen College School. The House Music Cup was presented to Nikhil for his high-spirited and expressive performance of the traditional Russian piece *Black Eyes* on violin, accompanied, fittingly, by Ilya, our Russian piano teacher, with Leo C. on French Horn playing Mozart and Daniel on piano in second place playing Rachmaninov. The two day festival was truly inspiring and a testament to the wealth of musical talent we have at APS.

Our Senior Finalists





World Book Day

Where did our Headmaster, Craig go? It was WG Grace who welcomed in all our historical characters at the school door on World Book Day! The pupils and staff excelled themselves in dressing up as characters, real or fictional from history and favourite books. Our special assembly was led by Head of English, Natasha, who shared some of the school staff's favourite books.

Each form had picked a winner from their class. They came to the front and a panel of judges, Trudi and Susan from the library and Annabel, picked more prize-winners from them. Craig awarded the Headmaster's Prize to his favourite character from everyone else too.



First prize was awarded to King Tut (Year 8), second to William Wallace (Year 2) and third to James Herriot (Year 6). The Headmaster's Prize went to Margaret Thatcher (Year 6) - complete with handbag and pearls.



The Staff Prize was awarded to Roger as Frankenstein's monster, but it was good to see so many staff dressed as suffragettes after the recent centenary.

From Alfred the Great to many eminent Victorians to Steve Jobs, our boys' costumes spanned the centuries and fictional characters. From Berlie Doherty's Jim from *Street Child*, and Toothless from *How to Train Your Dragon* by Cressida Cowell and David Walliams' *Ice Monster*, everyone enjoyed the variety and imagination that went into our World Book Day celebrations.



Science Week

Schools all over the UK celebrate Science Week, an annual event with STEM activities promoted by the British Science Association (BSA). We were busy at Abingdon Prep with every year group taking part. Read about Pre-Prep's activities with Year 8 helpers on p13, and the ducklings on p3.

Science Oxford came to run events on two days. Firstly, Roger led workshops on changing materials for Year 7 who looked at transforming states of a range of materials (right).



Then, it was Year 8's turn for the Science Oxford show on sound including some super demonstrations.

Year 4 discovered the journey of a sneeze and how to prevent germs.

While Year 5 investigated how the plastic microfibres from fleece can get into the oceans by washing some fleece and filtering the water to collect the fibres (below).

Year 3 made pipe-cleaner neurons and learnt more about the brain, also getting the chance to look at pollution: comparing water samples from different environments.



Andy from Science Oxford gave a fun Forces show to Year 6, which needed several volunteers to test Newton's laws, build a bridge and test it.

Science teachers Rebecca and Helen gave an assembly which looked at some of the activities we had done and showed how Science really is all around us.



Alongside all these activities, we also hatched a clutch of duck eggs (see page 3). Our youngest visitors to the school enchanted everyone.

Finally, the judges all agreed on Michael in Year 4's poster (left) as our overall winner for the BSA poster competition. Our winning posters were sent to the BSA and we'll be exhibiting entries next term.



Dragon Days



The villagers are terrified of a dragon in the mountain. So, to keep him content, they give him food gifts on Dragon Days. However, with the help of a visitor and a goat herder named Gilda, they soon discover that the dragon is not as ferocious as they first thought, and they learn to live in harmony together.



As part of their drama and music programme, Years 3 and 4 worked extremely hard to prepare this amazing musical production. They all gave exceptional performances, to both the school and their parents, in an all singing and dancing extravaganza! Well done boys - you were fantastic! *Suzanne Skelton*



Animal Farm



Adapted by Peter Hall from George Orwell's Animal Farm.

Animal Farm was a dynamic production brought to life by members of Years 7 and 8. A wacky and vibrant play; it explored the theme of corrupt societies and false equality in a farmyard setting. It showcased excellent acting from the main cast, as well as those in the supporting roles. The set was constructed expertly by Sherrey, alongside the maintenance staff, and managed to bring out the sinister side of communism. The costumes were clearly thought about by the Director, Natasha, and added to the whole ambience of the production. The make up enhanced the characterisation and added another level to the final performance. Well done to all involved, both on stage and off. A superb and moving production.

Natasha, Alex, Archie and Max.

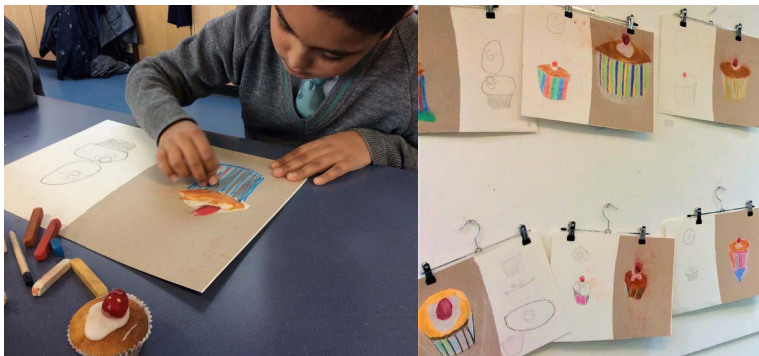




Senior pupils participated in an Experimental Watercolour Workshop, learning a variety of 'wet on wet' and 'wet on dry' methods, exploring additives, salt and cling film to vary the texture of their paint. We then added granulating fluids and masking latex to add further dimensions to their work. Some fantastic work and incredibly mature use of media.



The Year 3 and 4 art club made moving dragons for Chinese New Year using a template and careful paper folding, closely supported by Year 8 art leader Freddie, who was expert at assembling them.



Year 5 had forty cakes as their drawing theme. They worked on developing 3D cylinder shapes, altering viewpoints and exploring colour in the style of Wayne Thiebaud. The boys enjoyed sketching, observing and blending tones in chalk pastels to achieve soft, but bold shapes. The best part however, was sampling the cakes made by Sherrey at the end!



Art Club paint the set for 'Dragon Days'



Y4 Siege Towers



Y5 Football Goals



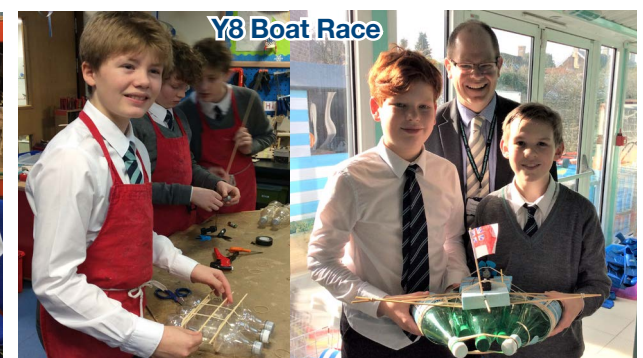
Y3 Bees & Ladybirds



Y6 Balsa Planes



Y7 Desk Fans & Tote Bags



Y8 Boat Race



Penguin Parade

A pair of Humboldt penguins visited the children in Reception to Year 3. The boys listened in awe as Barbara the penguin guardian explained about habitats, diet, lifestyle and special penguin features. This was an inspirational opening to Book Week, offering us an exciting stimulus for our writing. The children and adults learnt a wealth of new facts, and it turns out that penguins are just as nosy as people!

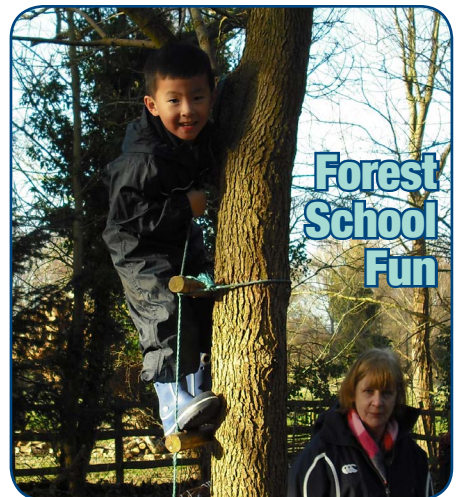


Pre-Prep Spring Work Share



Seeing stars!

The Winchester Science Centre Planetarium came to Pre-Prep. Inside the big dome, the boys travelled through time and space to visit distant stars and planets. Some of the boys learnt how to identify the Plough and how to locate the North Star.



Forest School Fun



Pre-Prep Cross-Country

The event kicked-off with Pre-Prep running in the U7s 500m race. This was won by Max, followed closely by Jed with Arthur in third place, all from Year 2.



Chinese Dancing Workshop



AbingdonPrep Pre-Prep Out & About

Year 2 at Warwick Castle



Year 2 enjoyed an action packed trip to Warwick Castle. First stop was the Horrible Histories maze, where no-one got lost! They explored the castle's towers and ramparts, and then ventured inside to discover the Great Hall and the King Maker exhibition. They learned all about the history of the castle



and its inhabitants through the ages. The educational officer showed how medieval weapons were handled and used, and the boys got to handle some artefacts. Later we watched a bird of prey show and saw some magnificent creatures before the journey back.



Year 1 visited Hill End where they had the opportunity to be closer to nature, with the space and time to explore and appreciate the wonders of the natural world. During the day they made bird feeders and bug hotels, learnt about different habitats and went on a bear hunt! The boys are learning to appreciate how their actions can impact on the natural environment.



Reception at Gotswold Farm Park



The sun shone as the children bottle fed lambs, held tiny chicks, fed the goats and cattle and met many rare breeds of farm animals. We had to be quiet as we entered the animal barn - there were many new additions born overnight and twin goat kids arrived as we were eating our lunch!





Reception reach 100!



In March, the children in Reception celebrated 100 whole days of school. They had been counting lolly sticks each day, learning all about tens and units as the days passed. The run up to the 100th day was so exciting with all sorts of party preparations, making crazy hats with 100 stickers to decorating 100 glasses with 100 sparkling dots.

When the day finally arrived we found all sorts of things to count and find 100, from stones to buttons. There were party games and party food, healthy snacks that magically turned into digits, but some treats too! We are all very sure what 100 looks like now!

Science Week in Pre-Prep



During our March Science Week, Pre-Prep visited the science lab for the first time to do some science experiments, with the help of Year 8. Reception made slime, Year 1 made paper aeroplanes and Year 2 explored electrostatics.

Alongside the activities, many boys entered the 'journeys' poster competition, and pictured below are the two winners from Reception and Year 1-3 age groups.



Left: the winning entry in Year 1-3 category, a deep sea journey with submarine, diver and real shells.

Right: the winning entry in Reception - a working model of the water cycle!



Easter Bonnets and Egg Rolling



Pre-Prep families constructed some imaginative Easter Bonnets which the boys paraded around the school and into Assembly. Then they went outside for the traditional Egg rolling championship on the Mound - spot the eggs!

Spring Sports Review



Abingdon Cross Country



Although we don't play **rugby** this term, the U13A team enjoyed a visit to St Edward's School to watch the England team train, collecting many prized signatures!

After just three **hockey** lessons, Y5 held the Dragon to a 1-1 draw. Hockey is a developing sport for APS, with fewer fixtures to test our teams.

In **football**, our U8C team (coached by Suzanne) finished the season undefeated in their four matches. The U10As successfully completed a second successive unbeaten season! Now unbeaten in 17 matches, scoring 54 goals and conceding just eleven. Steve reports the U11As deserved better than their results showed, winning four, drawing two and losing two of their eight matches. The U13As (coached by Sam) won eight out of ten of their matches, including a 14-1 victory over one opponent.

The Abingdon **cross country** meet was run in our first dusting of snow in January. Later in March our U11s finished 7th out of 47 teams at the National Preparatory Schools' Cross Country Championships. Quinn came 1st in the U13s and our team placed third.

In the **British Schools' Modern Biathlon Championships** at Crystal Palace U9s were our highest placed team, finishing 2nd; the U11s and U12s came 6th and 7th respectively. Quinn finished 7th in the U13 individual competition.



England rugby team training



U13 v Davenies



U9 v Christchurch



Hockey v The Dragon



Chandlings Cross Country



Football v Cokethorpe

Spring Term Football Awards

This term, football is our major team sport, and the Games Department recognises the sporting endeavour of many of its pupils. The 'Most Outstanding Player' naturally comes from the 1st XI. The 'Most Improved Player' can come from any team in each age group.

Team	Most Improved	Most Outstanding
U8	Samuel	Josef
U9	Edward	Jamie
U10	Justin	Dylan
U11	Edward	Benji
U12	Will	Finn
U13	Monty	Oliver



British Schools' Biathlon

Inter-House Cross Country



The weather was slightly windy and soft underfoot this year for our annual inter-house Cross Country. The event kicked-off with Pre-Prep running in the U7s 500m race. This was won by Max, followed closely by Jed, and Arthur in third place, all from Year 2.

In the U9s (1525m) Ted led from the start to the finish. James and George finished 2nd and 3rd. In the U11s (2025m), Sam (Year 6) went out hard from the start and stayed all the way too, holding off a chasing George. The final result was Sam (1st), George (2nd) and a pleasing 3rd for Josca.

The U13 race (3050m) contained no less than three Oxfordshire County Cross Country runners and a number of others with a good running pedigree. Quinn went out at a phenomenal pace and stretched his lead throughout, finishing in a time of 10:14, breaking his own record by 21s. Freddie, Monty and Jacob raced for the other places. Monty managed to pull away from the others to finish 2nd and Jacob finished fast in 3rd.

The top six finishers in the U11 and U13 races went on to represent us in the National Preparatory Schools' Cross Country Championships at Malvern School.



Final House Results

- U7: Griffin
- U9: Unicorn
- U11: Dragon
- U13: Dragon

JPA News

The best things come in threes. By the time you read this we'll have had three JPA events in quick succession. The Quiz, Scalextrics night and the Eggstravaganza. Numbers have been lower than previous years, but fun levels have been high and we've managed to raise lots of money for school projects and our supporting charities. A huge thank you to everyone who helped to organize these events in the lead up and on the day.

Vacancy. After three years as JPA chair, it's time for me to move aside and let someone else enjoy the fun. If you are considering taking over this role, please don't be daunted by it. We are pretty well organized so that the load is spread across lots of brilliant helpers. Mainly it's a co-ordination and communication role, or whatever you make of it. You'll make some great links across the school years with parents and staff alike. Please let me know this term if you are interested as it would be great to start to introduce the new chair of the JPA before and during the summer holidays. *Stuart Bonthron*



Quiznight: The winning Staff team

Scalextrics Night



Easter Eggstravaganza



AbingdonPrep News is the newsletter of Abingdon Preparatory School, Josca's House, Kingston Road, Oxford OX13 5NX Tel: 01865 391570 www.abingdon.org.uk/prep Editor: Annabel Gaskell

Abingdon School is a company limited by guarantee Registered in England and Wales Company No. 3625063. Registered Office: Stratton House, Bath Street, Abingdon OX14 3LA Registered Charity No. 1071298