



The Walnuts School

THE WALNUTS SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN TERM DEC 2018 Issue 46
I am absolutely delighted to be making my first contribution to this

PUPILS RETURN TO SCHOOL AFTER THE CHRISTMAS BREAK ON: MONDAY 7th JANUARY	PARENTS EVENING SPRING TERM DATE: Thursday 28th February 3:30—8pm
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HEADTEACHERS NEWS

Dear all

It has been a very busy term and a lot has been happening behind the scenes. It is testament to the dedication and professionalism of the staff that they have continued to ensure they do all they can to help and support the children and young adults.

It will be sad to see some long standing members of staff leave. We wish them all well with their next adventures. This does though signify an exciting step towards a new structure which has more leadership and progression (career and skills) opportunities. Through this we believe the school will have a staff team that offers additional support to you and each other.

The Shakespeare performance was a highlight for me seeing the amazing talent we have here at the Walnuts School. It has been wonderful to see the progress all our young people are making.

Thank you too for your support and I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas.

Jonathan

Wow, what an exciting term we have had! All students have settled into their new classes and have produced some amazing work. It has been great to see them grow in confidence; a special highlight was seeing some of our amazing Upper School students performing a Midsummers Night Dream; it was truly inspirational. It was also a great pleasure to see students from the Lower and Middle departments participate in our Christmas events; many overcoming their personal challenge of performing in-front of others. Every-one has worked so hard to make these events happen, a special thanks to you all.

The Friends of The Walnuts School (FOW) disco was a huge success, another thank-you to everyone involved who gave up their personal time to raise money for the school. If you would like to be involved with FOW, please contact the school. The students are now ready for their well deserved break as are many of the adults.

I hope you all have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and I look forward to seeing you all next year! - LISA

PINE GROUP

What a wonderful term we have had in Pine class so far this year. It is amazing how our new children have settled in to school life so quickly. As for those children who have stayed in Pine this year, they have also taken to the new faces, new classroom style and new routines really well. Pine has been a great hub of child centred learning this term and it has been great to see where the children have taken their learning. We think Pine group are a real little team, the children are always keen to see what each other are doing and to join in with exploring new objects and activities together. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with your children this term and while I am excited about my new role as planning leader in Upper school I will really miss this lovely group of children. I can only hope that I get to see them all again when they join Upper school, just as some of my new class were in Pine when I first joined the Walnuts. We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Warmest wishes from Karen and the Pine Team



CEDAR GROUP

This term Cedar's topic has been 'All about me'. Cedar really enjoyed reading the story about the Gingerbread man and doing lots of art activities to do with the story. They particularly enjoyed making and decorating their own gingerbread man. Cedar class has learnt all about their bodies and were able to use the computer to draw their own faces. They have become experts at writing their own names on their work and have enjoyed writing their names in different ways. They particularly enjoyed writing their names like a rainbow. Cedar class have also been learning about where they live and the different houses that people live in. They had great fun building their own houses in the messy room using play dough as mortar between bricks. Another favourite story they read was the three little pigs. They loved the sensory story and joining in with the repetitive phrases. At the moment Cedar are learning about Advent and the Christmas story. They will be visiting local garden centres to look at the Christmas displays. Well done Cedar class for all their hard work.



ASH GROUP

Ash group have been busy this term with our topic of All About Me. We have been enjoying sensory stories including an autumn story, bonfire night and Diwali stories as well as learning about The Large family by Jill Murphy. The children enjoyed looking at their family photos when doing work about their families and shared them with the class.



We are working on communication within the class and encouraging all children to request an adult either by touching their name badges or using sentence strips as well as encouraging them to use their voices and this is something they are working very hard on.

We enjoy spending time outside of school as well with swimming, forest school, trips to Padbury Park and also our walks to our local park where we are learning to walk safely outside of school and using communication aids to request activities whilst at the park such as pushing on the swings or spinning on the roundabout.

Ash group have done really well settling in this term and we are looking forward to our topic of Transport after Christmas.

Lindsay, Adrienne, Jane, Chantel and Joyella

LAUREL GROUP



Laurel Group have been very busy this term. The children have settled well into their class routine. Our first topic was *all about me*, which enabled the children to learn about their new peers and how to work well together. They all enjoyed using colours to make a picture of the night sky lit up by fireworks.

This half-term our topic has been *long, long ago*. We have learnt about traditional fairy tales, including Rapunzel and Jack and The Beanstalk. The weekly highlight for Laurel Group children is their swimming trip to Wroughton Pool. The Laurel Group team would

like to wish everyone a very happy and restful Christmas break J

HOLLY GROUP

Holly Group has worked extremely hard over the last term, settling quickly and enjoying every moment our Autumn term had to offer! Holly Group demonstrated great bravery and confidence whilst exploring our local community, learning about independence and safety in new places. We tied in our learning about poetry with our community trips, experiencing first-hand the effects of autumn outside and using this knowledge to write our very own Autumn Acrostics!

Our storybook focus has captured the imagination of Holly Group and seen them demonstrate the worried faces of the Owl Babies and model the snarl of a nasty wolf in *The Three Little Pigs*. Holly Group became so enchanted by *Little Red Riding Hood* that we managed to re-enact the story in a group – a joyful moment that filled Holly’s team with pride!

Next term we are looking forward to our Transport topic and seeing what new adventures Spring Term brings...



CYPRESS GROUP

The term has been exciting, as well as a busy one. Our first topic for the term focused on “All About Me”. During the first few weeks the adults and the children were getting to know each other, and worked on building, and fostering an enjoyable experience to get to their likes and dislikes. “All About eating, and the story of the Hungry engaged at making a healthy also looked at Dinosaurs as a and the bucketful of Dinosaurs. children had to decide what they linked to visiting the Pet shop. The exploring the pet shop, and Maths, one of the focused concepts with the various dinosaur heights. everyone an enjoyable two week



relationships. It was an exciting, and know the children’s personalities, Me” topic linked in with healthy Caterpillar. The children were caterpillar with various fruits. We topic, and focused on the story, Harry During one of the activities the would feed the dinosaurs. This was children had an amazing time observing the various animals. In was on tall and short, which tied in Cypress group would like to wish break.

SYCAMORE GROUP

There have been a lot of bones in Sycamore this term! In the first half of the term we had fun learning about the human skeleton and reading the story *Funny bones*. The children enjoyed assembling our skeleton puzzle, learning some bone facts, and looking at real human x-rays using the light box. They were very good at joining in with the repeated phrases in the *Funnybones* story – *In the dark, dark street there was a dark, dark house...*

In the second half-term we looked at bones of another sort, in our Dinosaur topic. The children were interested to see how we have learnt about dinosaurs from fossilized bones and footprints that they left behind, and they were thrilled to see the giant ‘Sycamoresuarus’ skeleton created by Wendy up on our display!

Along with all this fun, we are very proud of the progress the children are making with their social communication skills. From saying ‘hello’ to their friends in the mornings, to sharing the parachute or assembling the Christmas tree together, Sycamore Group are really starting to work together. **Happy Christmas** from us all in Sycamore Group!



CHERRY GROUP

Cherry group have had a wonderful autumn term, all the children have engaged really well with our topics *All About Me* and *Long Ago*. We have really enjoyed learning about our bodies and naming games. We have also been focusing on self-care skills such as washing our hands, brushing our teeth and eating healthily.

Cherry group have loved exploring fairy tales this half term, they have been so engaged listening to our sensory stories and we have been encouraging lots of role play and opportunities for communication.



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Cherry group are now really enjoying making cards, decorations and practising for the Christmas concert.

I will really miss Cherry group when I move to the middle school in the New Year but I will really look forward to seeing them in the future and wish all the pupils the best wishes for the rest of the school year.

We wish you all a very merry Christmas.

Ruth and the Cherry team.

ROWAN GROUP

This term Rowan class has been enjoying our topics. In the first half term we explored different habitats and the animals that live within them. We looked at a variety of habitats, we focused on the Jungle in our English sessions. During the second half term we have been investigating materials and weather. We enjoyed reading the 3 little pigs as we were able to learn about straw, wood and brick houses. Rowan class particularly liked our latest story, ‘We’re going on a Bear Hunt’. We have enjoyed listening to the sounds from the story. In Maths we have been identifying numbers and values. We enjoyed exploring different shapes and money.

During our PSHE lessons, we have been looking at ourselves, what we look like, what we like to do, what we like to eat etc. In all our lessons we are learning to interact and communicate with our peers. We have been engaging in activities to help us to wait, share and take turns. Every day we complete our hygiene programme. Rowan class have been learning to understand the importance of stopping the spread of germs, by covering our mouths when we cough or sneeze and how to wash our hands effectively.

From everyone in Rowan class, we hope you have a very enjoyable Christmas holidays.



HAZEL GROUP

We have got off to a busy start in Hazel group this year. Last half term our topics were Solids, Liquids and Gases and Poland. This term our topics have been Properties of Materials and Ancient Greece. We have been looking at a range of Ancient Greek myths in English including 'Theseus and the Minotaur' so we went on a trip to Willen Lake Labyrinth; I'm happy to say that all of the children made it out. The children have also enjoyed creating their own stories. As part of our science topic we took a trip to MK Recycling Factory where we learned how all the materials are made and how they can be reused. We have started focusing on hygiene and have been brushing our teeth twice a day with toothpaste at school. For maths we have covered lots of areas including fractions, multiplication and division, although they are tricky getting much more confident with been a big success and Hazel confident swimmers, some have even stopped using floats! Hazel group wish you Happy Holidays and enjoy the Christmas break.



OAK GROUP

Oak Group have been busy! We have been learning about Italy in humanities and materials and their properties in science. We have been working nicely as a group and learning about our strengths and similarities as well as understanding the different situations we each need support. There are some lovely friendships blossoming! We have been enjoying visiting various parks and developing our social and friendship skills. Probably our favourite lesson is cooking where we all enjoying making and eating the food! We are looking forward to Christmas crafts and activities and would like to wish everyone a merry Christmas.



MAPLE GROUP

Maple Class has had a Lovely first half term, learning about ecosystems and France. We especially enjoyed tasting some French foods. This half term we have been learning about the weather and different types of materials. We really enjoyed finding objects that were magnetic or could float.

Maple Class has been fantastic getting out in the community, they have been learning to go to Sainsbury's to buy items for our snack sessions. They have been brilliant at learning how to collect and pay for their items.



One of Maple classes' favorite sessions has been with Speech and Language, getting to make requests to try things on from their dressing up box. The have really enjoyed trying all the fantastic hats, glasses and gloves and have even posed for a few photos. Have a wonderful Christmas holiday break and we wish you all a happy New Year, The Maple team.

CHESTNUT GROUP

Chestnut group have had a very busy first term! The children have all settled in to routine and are making good progress with transitioning independently between the different areas.

During the first half term, we built upon our understanding of different animals and their natural habitats. We also briefly focused on plants and enjoyed reading Jasper's Beanstalk and then planted cress seeds and were amazed at how quickly they grow!



This half term, we have had lots of practise sorting materials into wood, metal, plastic and fabric and then sorted materials into soft and hard. We are currently focusing on the weather and trying to remember what we need to wear in it is rainy, sunny and snowy.

Thank you for your continued support over the term and we wish you a very Merry Christmas!
The Chestnut Team

WILLOW GROUP

Willow class have settled in to their new surroundings and are working well with the new structure in a new class. The first term's topic was ecosystems and the second term's topic was materials and their properties and the weather.

We started the term with learning all about me and the other children/staff in the class. We learnt names to match to faces and the children now use names when requesting. We have worked on a range of different books this term which include; Jasper's Beanstalk, Handa's Surprise, The Three Little Pigs, The Bear Hunt and The Snowman story for Christmas.

The children learnt about 2D shapes and were able to find and match different picture shapes in the environment. Most children enjoyed learning and listening to the shape songs on the interactive whiteboard. We also learnt about money, exploring the different coloured coins and shapes and they were able to match and sort coins.

The children have also developed in other subjects such as Science working with materials and PSHE working on hygiene. Each child has enjoyed different activities such as riding bikes, cooking, trips out, swimming and softplay.
Well done Willow group



BIRCH GROUP

Since starting in September, Birch group have adapted fantastically to a timetable and a class environment quite different from what they experienced last year. Supportive and encouraging towards each other, the students have demonstrated a keen interest in a lot of subject areas, which is fortunate since this term we covered plenty.

Birch have studied Portugal; taking in its geography, history, food and music. More recently during our Ancient Greece topic, we have looked at myths, legends and fables and learned about democracy through a class presidential election. We have also been holding our own Greek-inspired class Olympics in PE.

In maths they have worked on place value, multiplication, the properties of shapes and money. The students' understanding of money has also been developed by regular trips to the shops to buy ingredients for the tasty treats they have been cooking every week.

Science saw the children investigate changes in states of matter with experiments such as melting chocolate and dissolving salt. We also looked at why things are made from certain materials by investigating their properties.

Excitingly, story work and factual reporting in English have shown that Birch has some brilliantly imaginative and skilled writers.

They should all be very proud.



REDWOOD GROUP

This autumn term Redwood was working hard developing their knowledge about solids, liquids and gases and the country in Europe-Poland. We have been working on extending our vocabulary, especially by grouping and naming. We have been exploring the meaning and sounds of the new words.

The big focus was also on understanding personal safety in the community. The students were developing independent living skills like looking after themselves and preparing food. They have been visiting variety of shops where they could practice their social skills. In Numeracy they have been practising developing their understanding of number and place value, addition, measures and shapes, doubling and halving measures. Redwood has been learning about the importance of personal hygiene and tooth care. In PSHE we have been learning about feelings and emotions and different ways of dealing with them. We would like to wish everyone Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



POPLAR GROUP

Poplar group have really enjoyed reading and listening to different stories in literacy this term. A particular favourite has been Handa's Surprise and The Three Little Pigs. We have enjoyed using sensory stories, learning the order of events and repeating key phrases from the story. In maths we have been working on number and money. We have been working on sorting coins by various categories. Poplar group has been very active this term. We have enjoyed going swimming every week. The students have developed great water confidence and have been developing their personal care skills by working on getting changed more independently. We have also been going on walks in the community, working on crossing the road safely.

Hope you have a lovely Christmas break from the Poplar Team

UNS

The first term in UNS has been a busy one. We have been following a variety of WJEC units, including communication, number, working together and developing our ICT skills. We are working towards gaining accreditations. In Maths we have explored both number and shape then in English we have developed our skills in communication, reading and writing.

We have enjoyed our weekly swimming trips to Woughton Pool, interacting with each other and developing our water confidence. Throughout the term we have make a variety of snack meals as part of our food technology sessions with a focus of following instructions and becoming more independent. A definite favourite has had to be pitta bread pizzas!

As part of our weekly activities we have been working on developing our independent living skills and completing work based learning activities, which will help us to become more independent. This has included completing jobs around school including being the internal postman, identifying who the post folders need to go to and delivering them.

We hope you have a lovely Christmas and look forward to welcoming everyone back in the New Year.



UKL

Upper KL has had a successful first term. It has been a big change for all of the young people as it is their first year in Upper School; they are all coping extremely well.

They are enjoying the Upper School system where they move classes and see different teachers for different lessons.

They have worked well to develop their story and writing skills in English this term. We looked at Shakespeare initially and are now reading some stories that match our current science topic of Earth and Space.

In food technology we focused on healthy eating this term and the young people were able to make a range of fruit and vegetable based dishes. They are learning to sew in Design Technology and working towards being able to thread a needle and sew a button on.

We enjoyed seeing the visiting Panto at school. All the young people in Upper KL could be seen to enjoy it, it was great fun!

Wishing you all a happy Christmas holiday



USS

We have had a really lovely start to the school term, with the children all settling in and developing new friendships.

In English we have been studying and comparing the original three little Pigs story to the more modern version of the 'Big Bad Wolf', through which the children have been developing their knowledge of adjectives and verbs.

In Maths we have been doing multiplication, division and ratio, differentiated according to their levels.

For Humanities we have been learning about the history and development of Milton Keynes,.

PSHE has been covering topics on friendship and recognising 'kind actions' and 'unkind actions'. The children have been learning how to recognise bullying, as part of anti-bullying week.

In our PE sessions we have been using the bicycles and the class have been building their confidence and skills.

The highlight for us all has been the production in drama of 'A Midsummer Nights Dream' which was performed at Stantonbury Theatre to outstanding reviews. It has been wonderful to see the skills and confidence and imagination develop through this production being transferred into the classroom and show in multiple different lessons.

Well done USS!

UJP

We have had a very busy start to our first term! The students are now following a new timetable and move to different classrooms and teachers for different subjects. The young people in UJP have shown maturity and Independence with the new system and they are enjoying the new approach.

The drama performance this term has been a highlight for many of the boys in UJP. They worked so hard in each of their roles and gained so much from the experience. It was a huge success and the boys all took great pride in their fantastic achievement.

In Maths this term, UJP have been focusing on Number. They have been solving sums using the four operations and have more recently been working with ratio and fractions. The increased hours of Maths each week has allowed for more in depth learning and the young people are enjoying Maths as part of their daily routine.

We've all been working so hard and are very much looking forward to the Christmas break for a rest. We hope you have a lovely break too.

From Jamie and the UJP Team.

USA

This term in English, we have been working on improving our communication skills; focusing on using SO, SVO and SVAO's to make request and to describe photos from a story.



Opportunities were created for the learners to follow visuals to sequence pictures from a story and to describe the picture.

In humanities, we learnt about different festivals around the world and the weather.

In Maths, we focused on developing our number skills and understanding of shapes and their properties. We continued to improve our community participation and independent skills by using local leisure centre week and encouraging the learners to be independent as possible. Team USA.

UDF

The UDF Autumn Term has been very busy and exciting. All the pupils have got on superbly well and have shown an enduring and excellent motivation regarding their learning and attitude towards others. We spent time in the first half of the term finding out about advertising and the history of Milton Keynes. Latterly, we have been preoccupied with the production of *The Midsummer Night's Dream*. The process of this has created a remarkable effect on many of the pupils. They have been highly animated, overcoming everyday anxieties whilst preparing for the play, whether working backstage, as one of the technical team or acting. Even those that were not directly involved could not help but be caught up with the spirit of the event as there were assemblies which saw early presentations and lessons that were adapted to make way for character and vocal development. We were delighted as a school with the pupils' performances. The wider community has been encouraged through their collective achievement and as a result their personal self-esteem has been edified. The class has also had great success this half term in offering an hour of Ultimate Disco Fun (UDF), and activities to classes. Well done, UDF!



SIXTH FORM

Hello from 6th Form

We have spent the autumn term building and developing new and old friendships across the Post 16 department. Students are adapting well to their new learning environments and are experiencing a variety of opportunities in new and unfamiliar locations.

We have grown an abundance of fruit and vegetables at our allotment this year which we have sold throughout the school and the local community. We also donated some of our grown crop to the infant's department harvest festival and a local charity to use in their crisis kitchen.

To protect next year's crop at the allotment we have created a merry band of scarecrows: Percy, Farmer George, Farmer Jack and Charlie, all of whom are settling into their new environment quite nicely too.

Wishing you all glad tidings for the festive season.—DELLA



We welcomed some new students into sixth form and they have settled into the routine. Practicing life skills and going out into the community daily. As part of using our community we also had the opportunity to go to the cinema. - JACQUIE

THE ARTS



We have had a very busy term! The classes have settled into art lessons well and are exploring a range of different mediums and artists.

Years 9/10/11 students worked very hard this term rehearsing our adaptation of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which we then performed at Stantonbury Campus Theatre on 8th November. The play was a huge success and the students blew us away with their amazing performances. We were so proud of them that we performed the play again two weeks later at Shenley Brook End School, so that we were able to film it. Well done to everyone that took part in the play, you are all amazing!

THE THERAPY TEAM

The Therapy team have had a busy term supporting classes and running courses for parents. The courses offered opportunities to make valuable visuals for routines, such as washing, as well as symbols for communication and were well attended. Thank you to those who came and shared their ideas, we all learnt something new. Please look out for our coffee mornings next term. These will give you an opportunity to gain and share ideas from others, as well as getting advice and support from the therapy team.



As always, we welcome you to get in contact with us if you have any questions.

Happy Christmas

FRIENDS OF WALNUTS—FOWS-YOUR PTA

Hello and a Merry Christmas from the Friends of Walnuts,

Firstly a big 'Thank You' to all the parents and carers who supported our Christmas Disco. The young people really enjoy this event and it is a great chance for parents to meet each other. While it was not a big fundraiser this time it really is a very worthwhile event. Another big thank you to all the staff who helped to make the disco possible Siobhan, Magda, Georgie, Sara, Clara, Kayleigh, Duncan and Jacob your help was very much appreciated.

We were given a kind donation of £2,000 in the summer by the Penn Road Street Party committee to go towards our Kitchen fund. The initial cost of the Kitchen was quoted at £16,000 this may change as plans are finalised but we now have £9,000 raised to start the project off.

Lastly we really are short of members at the moment and the continuation of the FOW is uncertain at the moment. We would love to hear from any of you who would like to join us so our charity can continue – it really does make a difference to our young people. This term we have donated money to each class to buy either a present for each child (lower school) or to go towards a party/Christmas treat (Main site and 6th form classes) we really want to keep these treats going for our young people as well as the bigger projects like the new kitchen. Please contact me at school if you are interested in joining us, our next meeting will be January 30th at 4.30 at the main site.

I really hope you all have a peaceful and Happy Christmas and New Year. Best wishes, Karen Salamon (Chair of FOW)

THE WALNUTS SCHOOL SCHOOL TERM AND HOLIDAY DATES 2018/2019

	OPEN FOR PUPILS MORNING OF	CLOSES FOR PUPILS AT END OF AFTERNOON ON	STAFF TRAINING DAYS - NO PUPILS	Holidays
SPRING TERM 2019	Monday 7 January 2019	Friday 15 February 2019		Half Term Monday 18 February 2019 - Friday 22 February 2019
	Tuesday 26 February 2019	Friday 5 April 2019	Monday 25 Feb 2019 Monday 8 April 2019 Tuesday 9 April 2019	Easter Monday 8 April 2019 - Monday 22 April 2019
SUMMER TERM 2019	Tuesday 23 April 2019	Friday 24 May 2019	Monday 6 May - Bank Holiday - No School	Half Term Monday 27 May 2019 - Friday 31 May 2019
	Monday 3 June 2019	Friday 19 July 2019		Summer Break Monday 22 July 2019

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

**YEAR 11 AND 14 LAST
SCHOOL DAY:
FRIDAY 28TH JUNE**

**TRANSITION WEEK :
8TH JULY**



PLEASE REMEMBER



**THIS IS A
NUT FREE SCHOOL**

Absolutely no form of nuts are to be brought onto the school premises - including coconut and any products containing coconut (e.g. sun cream) and any food items containing traces of nuts.

The allergy is airborne, extremely severe and life threatening.

IMPORTANT NOTICE — IF YOUR CHILD IS UNWELL OR NOT ABLE TO COME TO SCHOOL

School makes a lot of additional demands upon your child. If they are not well, they are unable to cope with the demands of a school day which can delay them getting better. In fairness to other children and staff, please keep your child at home if you suspect they are unwell.

Children with diarrhoea and/or sickness are asked to stay at home for 48 hours to help them get better and prevent the spread of the infection. This is in line with Local Authority guidelines.

If your child has transport it is your responsibility to phone and cancel the transport arrangements for the duration of the absence.

Thank you for your co-operation and understanding.



If your child has to miss school through illness/medical appointment / other reason, please let the school know as soon as possible with the reason that your child is absent by contacting the site that they are based at — Lower School on 01908 646119, Main Site 01908 563885, Sixth Form 01908 379208. If the school is not informed, you will receive a phone-call/text asking you to contact us and inform us of the reason of absence. We will continue to try to contact you to obtain the reason of the absence of the pupil, if no response, your home may be visited or police contacted. So please remember to contact us first.

Special Education Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service For advice and/or support, please contact:

Advice Line: 01908 254518

Email: mksendias@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Web: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/mksendias

