



Faringdon Learning Trust External Newsletter

Introduction



We at Faringdon Learning Trust would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas!

This is the first issue of the FLT newsletter, it highlights all the great achievements across our schools during 2022, the tenth year of the Trust.

We will be sending these out three times a year from 2023 and hope you enjoy them.

Sarah Nichols

Marketing and Communications



1 - Sarah Nichols

Newsletter Editor

Trust Update





2 - *Duncan Millard*

2022 has marked the 10th Anniversary for the trust and as Christmas is often a time of reflection we look back on our past and how we shape our next ten years.

The trust began life in 2012, when the three schools in Faringdon (Faringdon Community College, Faringdon Infant School and Faringdon Junior School), formalised their close links by creating a multi-academy trust (MAT). In 2013, five other schools within the catchment of Faringdon Community College joined the trust. These included:

- Buckland Primary School
- Longcot and Fernham Primary School
- John Blandy Primary School
- Watchfield Primary School
- Shrivenham Primary School

A multi-academy trust (MAT) are a groups of academies that have come together to form a charitable company, with a single group of 'members' (who have an overview of the governance arrangements) and a single board of trustees. The Trust is responsible for the running of the academies within its group.

All eight schools that currently make up the trust had previously worked together as part of the Faringdon Partnership. The trust was known as Faringdon Academy of Schools between 2012 and 2020, when it changed its name to Faringdon Learning Trust.

In September 2019 we created the Alliance membership whereby local schools Ashbury, Longworth and Shellingford joined. This was followed shortly after by Uffington. 2022 saw further growth of the Alliance Membership with Stanford in the Vale and Westrop Primaries joining.

2022 has also seen further growth in the form of Faringdon Infant and Junior Schools adapting and becoming Primary Schools, now known respectively as Folly View and The Elms. Folly View recently had their official opening and we look forward to the official plaque arriving. Shrivenham School is also having a new site with a planned relocation for early 2024.

This year has seen our schools and pupils learning how to adapt post covid and it has been truly wonderful to watch the return of school events including the upcoming nativities, school trips, visitors and all the exciting events that make schools so vibrant.

I hope you enjoy this edition of our newsletter and it gives you a flavour of the schools within the Trust.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Duncan Millard

CEO

Faringdon Learning Trust

Watchfield Primary School receive visit by HRH The Princess Royal







Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal visited Watchfield Primary School on Wednesday 9th March 2022 as part of her visit to Oxfordshire and the Defence Academy.

The Princess Royal was received by her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, Mrs Marjorie Glasgow, who presented:

The Deputy Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, Ms Jane Cranston

The CEO of Faringdon Learning Trust, Mr. Duncan Millard

Former Headteacher of Watchfield Primary School, Miss Georgina Wintle

Chair of the Board of Governors, Watchfield Primary School, Mr. Ian Wright, who presented:

Station Commander, Defence Academy Shrivenham, and Associate Member of Governing Body, Wing Commander Leonie Boyd.

The Princess Royal enjoyed a tour of the school and meeting the pupils. The tour gave her the opportunity to view the facilities including:

- Library/Sensory room
- Attending the English as an Additional Language (EAL) classroom
- She visited groups of children in the main hall who excitedly told them about the programmes and activities they have been working on that embody the 'Aspirational' part of the School's vision
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Finally, she was invited to plant a tree for The Queen's Green Canopy. The Cherry Tree was planted with the help of three pupils from the School's Eco Council;

The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) is a unique tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 which invites people from across the United Kingdom to "Plant a Tree for the Jubilee". Find out more here¹.

Watchfield Primary School is part of the Faringdon Learning Trust.

CEO of Faringdon Learning Trust, Duncan Millard said:

"It was wonderful to welcome HRH Princess Anne to Watchfield School so that she could see and experience what a very special school it is. You could easily see how proud the staff and pupils were of their school and how much they wanted to share this with Princess Anne. What a lovely memory for everyone involved".

Former Headteacher of Watchfield Primary School, Georgina Wintle said:

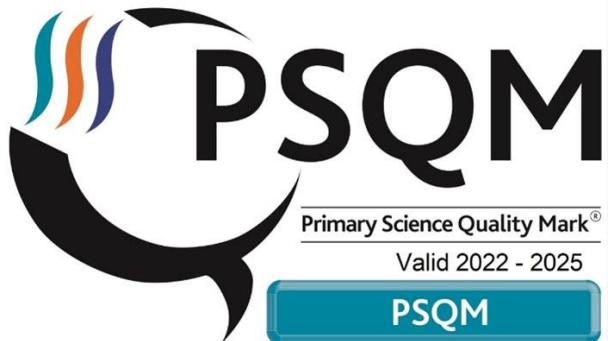
"It was a privilege to welcome HRH The Princess Royal to Watchfield Primary School, to learn more about our unique and wonderful school and to find out exactly what it is that enables us to 'SOAR'. We were very proud of all the children who were able to showcase how they are Successful, Original, Aspirational and Resilient".

Following her visit to the school, The Princess Royal proceeded to Shrivenham Memorial Hall where she was meeting the COVID-19 Resilience Group. As part of that she was presented with a posy by two Shrivenham Primary School pupils.

¹<https://queensgreencanopy.org/>



Shrivenham Primary Awarded PSQM



Shrivenham is one of the 400 schools this year that have been awarded the PSQM, which celebrates their commitment to excellence in science teaching and learning.

The PSQM is a one-year programme that provides professional development to enable confident, knowledgeable, and reflective leadership which leads to improvement in the way science is planned and taught. It raises the profile and quality of science and shows that children are engaging both in and outside the classroom.

The reviewer stated that it was “great to see pupils enthused by science and teachers growing in confidence in the teaching and learning of science.”

Shrivenham's Haven

The Haven

We are delighted to have opened 'The Haven' as a nurture space for all our children. It is wonderful for Pastoral sessions, a quiet sensory calming area for children who need support to regulate and a space to run Interventions during the school day for social, emotional and wellbeing as well as academic achievement. The children are delighted to be able to attend sessions such as Lego Therapy, Draw and Talk and many more. The Haven also enables us to provide high quality extended provision with our new breakfast and After-school club. Both have been incredibly positive, and the children have reported on how much they like the sessions!

We have also enhanced our playtime provision with the introduction of zones. So far, we have opened Forest School, organised games on the MUGA and a quiet zone for reading and mindfulness colouring. We have already seen such a positive outcome from these with the children and outside visitors commenting on how positive the play and interactions are. Over the coming months, we are looking forward to developing this even further!



Relocation of Shrivenham School update

Faringdon Learning Trust (FLT) are pleased to share an update with the Shrivenham community regarding the relocation of Shrivenham Church of England Primary School to within the new area of houses being built to the North of the village.

This move will provide the school an opportunity to grow to a 1.5 form entry (45 pupils per year group) increasing from its current one form entry (30 pupils per year group). The site will also be future proofed to expand further, to meet the needs of the village. We are hoping to include a nursery provision for up to 75 pupils and to take children from two years old (this is subject to approval from the Regional School's Commissioner (RSC) expected in the new year).

Background

Under section 14 of the Education Act 1996, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places and fair appropriate access to education for all. Faringdon Learning Trust has worked closely with OCC to meet the growing need for pupil places in Shrivenham.

With increases in housing in Shrivenham and the increasing numbers of pupils FLT needs to create further capacity to meet this need, as per its strategic plan.

As part of the relocation proposal, FLT undertook a statutory consultation with key stakeholders affected between July and September 2021. Pupils' views were also sought in November 2021.

Rationale

Appraisals of the current school location make it clear that further expansion is not possible.

An opportunity arose, as new houses were being built, for OCC to use appropriate funding streams to project manage and fund the relocation of Shrivenham Primary school, in conjunction with the Faringdon Learning Trust.



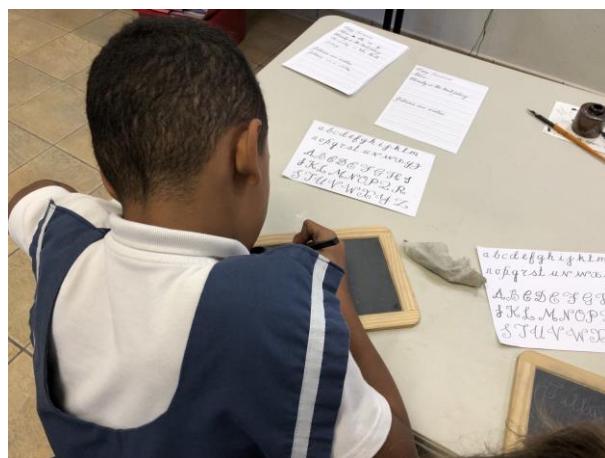
Key Dates

- Land transferred to Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) for constructing the new school building – November 2022
- Contract finalised between OCC and the main contractor, ISG – November 2022
- Construction starting on site – December 2022
- Planned relocation of Shrivenham CoE Primary School – February 2024

A year at John Blandy Primary School

A key focus for John Blandy this year, following the pandemic, has been two-fold; enhancing the curriculum for our children and also making face-to-face connections with our families again.

This year, there has been a vast array of trips and experiences on offer to our children to help bring the curriculum to life and deepen their understanding of what they have been learning about in class.





Visits have included trips to Crocodiles of the World, where classes in KS1 learnt about reptiles, linking to their work on Australia. Year 2 visited the Story Museum in Oxford and our Year 4 children took a trip to Woodstock to become Victorian school children for the day. Whilst children in Year 6 and Year 3 visited Hill End for both a World War 1 day and a Stone Age day respectively. This year, we also were finally able to take children in Year 5 and Year 6 on a residential trip where they learnt new skills, increased in confidence and also developed their independence and team work.











Whilst visits outside of school are a great experience for our pupils, Wow experiences days are just as valuable in helping children to further engage with the curriculum. This year, we had visits from explorers telling children about Ancient Egyptian times and the children in Year 2 as part of their topic on India, had a visitor teaching them Bollywood dancing and how to make diva lamps. They also took part in food tasting and creating a range of different fillings of samosas.



Our Year 4 children held a Mexican Day, taking part in dance, art and cooking to gain a deeper understanding of Mexico and the Maya civilization. Our Reception and Year 1 children have been very much in touch with nature this year! In the first term, they had a Falconry Visit to the school and the children were able to experience being close up to owls which linked to their text - *The Owl who was Afraid of the Dark*.



Highlights of this year have also been re-establishing the close links that we have with our school community. We have invited our parents back in for school productions including nativities and Mystery Plays, Harvest and Easter celebrations as well as sports' days. But one that will remain in our memories was the Queen's Jubilee Celebrations. The weather was impeccable for such a celebration. We held a whole school Street party on the playground, which ended with everyone up and dancing! Parents were then invited in to watch the children perform songs and watch Country dancing, a Ceilidh, Morris dancing and Maypole dancing by our Year 6 children. The Jubilee Celebration was a wonderful event bringing the whole school community together to mark the Queen's reign of 70 years. We were all blissfully unaware that we would be marking the Queen's death some four months later. We are pleased to have marked her extraordinary reign on the throne in such a fitting way that will remain in our memories for years to come.



Dyson project at Longcot and Fernham



There was great excitement when the pupils of Toucan Class arrived in class to discover the Dyson Engineering Box. Not only did it look impressive –the box was huge – but it contained a range of exciting equipment that would keep everyone busy for the next few weeks.

After learning about how the new Dyson cordless vacuum cleaner was designed, the pupils had great fun exploring how it worked as they cleaned the carpet, hard floor and ceiling, trying out all the attachments. One pupil suggested that this might be a sneaky way to get children to do more chores!

Dyson included lots of resources in the pack and Toucan Class were interested to learn about all the different types of engineering roles involved in the design and production of the vacuum cleaner. However, the highlight of the project was when each pupil, armed with screwdrivers, disassembled two different attachments and had a good look at the insides (staff were very relieved when the pupils managed to reassemble the parts afterwards).

Toucan Class would thoroughly recommend loaning the box from Dyson – the resources were fabulous and are a real treat for anyone who likes vacuum cleaners!

Longcot and Fernham visit Science Oxford Centre



Monkey Class at Longcot and Fernham primary School had a fantastic visit to Science Oxford Centre in Oxford. During the day they took part in three activities.

These were in the water area, a woodland walk and the science exploration zone. The children had adult-led activities and also time to explore and experiment on their own.

They all thoroughly enjoyed the day, learnt lots and want to go back again.





Trust Public Speaking Competition



The Faringdon learning trust (FLT) Public Speaking competition has taken place with seven teams competing for the trophy.

Yet again the judges were amazed at the professionalism and confidence of the students who took part.

The winning team were from Longcot and Fernham CE Primary School discussing 'Do video games rot your brain?'.

Claire Mellor, Headteacher at Longcot and Fernham CE primary School said:

"The standard of all the teams was incredibly high this year and is testament to all the hard work from children right across the trust. Congratulations to Bobby, Dexter and Ethan, we are very proud of you"

Magical Matilda Production at Faringdon Community College

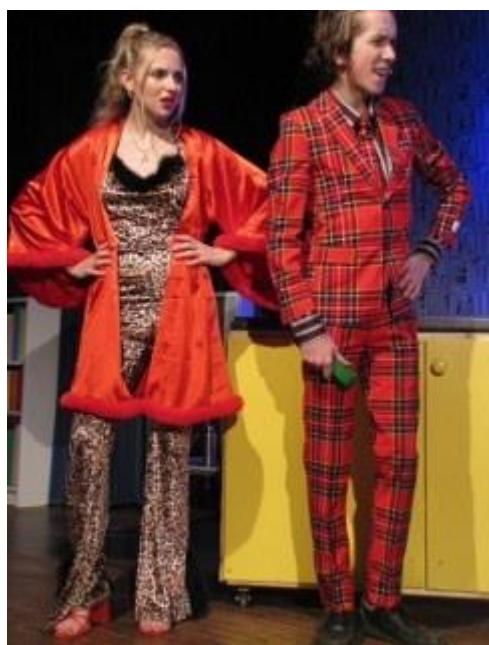
I cannot put into words how happy we were to finally be performing on stage to a live audience again. The passion and enthusiasm from this cast to create a show they are proud of has been amazing and we couldn't be more thrilled with how they have done. The show has reminded

everyone how amazing our FCC community is and how talented our students are. I would like to say a huge thank you to absolutely everyone who has been involved in the show from the amazing drama department, to the music teachers, the tech crew, the office staff, the PTA and the site management team. Thanks to you all. A final thank you to the parents for your support with costumes, lifts to and from rehearsals, helping with line learning and no doubt seeing previews of the show in your living rooms!

Here are some comments from audience members:

- *Just wanted to pass on my congratulations and to say how amazing the Matilda production was. I've seen many productions over the years here at FCC, but this one topped it like no other - and how professional it was ! Matilda has always been one of our family favourites to watch in the West End, and this was up to this standard - all students involved could be the understudies !!*
- *One word ...Amazing!!!!*
- *Congratulations to the cast, crew, and to all the hard working staff behind the scenes.*
- *I just wanted to say CONGRATULATIONS for last night - wow, I was so impressed, it was amazing!*
- *I'm so looking forward to seeing it again. I can't tell you how brilliant it was, well done to everyone!*
- *I've been a teacher at FCC for more than twenty years, now, and I've never felt more proud to be part of it than I do after seeing the fantastic show everyone put so much heart into tonight. It was stunning.*
- *After two years of restrictions and hyper-cautiousness, the sense of joy and celebration generated by that amazing production has provided an antidote to some grim times and I'm so grateful for that. 'Matilda' was a great choice because of its fun and its values.*
- *Everyone involved deserves to feel proud of themselves. I'm greatly impressed.*
- *I will make particular mention of Mr. Coles, though. That blue one-piece...fantastic!*
- *Really, really well done! I'm staggered.*
- *We just wanted to email to let you know how much we enjoyed the school play! The quality of the production was just wonderful and it was clear that every single person on the stage was having a ball! You managed to get some very complicated technical things out of the children and were came away entertained and proud!*

Tara Whenray









Return of the Annual Primary Cross Country at Buscot Park



This term saw the return of the annual Primary Cross Country at Buscot Park. All the Primary schools in the Trust were represented with children from Year 3-6 running the course. Many thanks to the marshals from Years 10, 12 & 13, especially Matthew who ran the course four times to make sure all the children were looked after.

Also, a huge thank you to Lord Faringdon and his family for allowing the Trust to run the event at Buscot Park and their groundsman, David for mowing the course!

Official opening of Folly View



Pupils are now able to enjoy learning and playing in their new purpose-built school at Folly View Primary, which officially opened on Thursday 24 November 2022.

Oxfordshire County Council delivered the new £9 million school building for Faringdon Learning Trust to replace and expand Faringdon Infant School.

The school – for children aged between two and 11 years – consists of 17 classrooms over two floors, a spacious hall and studio, library, and several staff work rooms and group rooms, ideal for breakout spaces to maximise learning opportunities. There is also a covered outside play space, playground and sport pitch.

As well as the traditional playground, there is a small habitat area where pupils can study and experience nature, gaining a better understanding of the world around them.

Sharon Farrell, Folly View Primary School's Executive Headteacher, said: "We are delighted that the opening of the wonderful new school has finally arrived. When the children and families stepped into the new building, for the first time, their faces showed it was worth the wait."

Duncan Millard, Faringdon Learning Trust's Chief Executive, said: "I am delighted, that after many years in the planning, staff and children have access to a brilliant learning space."

Cllr Keira Bentley the Mayor for Faringdon Town Council and Cllr Bethia Thomas, Oxfordshire County Councillor for Faringdon were in attendance.

'Green level' Modeshift STARS accreditation.

Folly View Primary School has been awarded a green level Modeshift STARS accreditation.

A Travel Plan is a population wide strategy for travel behaviour change that can be applied to any setting (Education, Business, Community), that includes the evidence and rationale to secure commitment and funding to support the promotion of sustainable and active travel.

Specifically, a Travel Plan is a package of measures that aims to reduce car use to and from any given site. This may target a place that people travel to (e.g. a workplace, school, place of worship, transport interchange, stadium), or a place that people travel from (e.g. residential housing development). The Travel Plan should be based upon research and consultation with the users of the site and should also include:

Essentially, a Golden Thread must run throughout the Travel Plan to ensure that it is well connected and can be picked up by a reader with no prior knowledge of the site, and fully understood.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)² sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied. The NPPF sets out that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of the plan-making and development proposals.

Vitally, the NPPF sets out that 'all developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a Travel Plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.'

In practice, this means that Travel Plans are being created across the country for a range of development types and land-uses. However, the way Travel Plans are secured, monitored and implemented nationally is sporadic at best, for too long, in too many areas, a Travel Plan is just seen as a tick box exercise. Modeshift STARS wants to change that, ensuring that all Travel Plans are worthwhile and effective, switching the emphasis from Travel Plan documents to Travel Plan delivery.

Well done Folly View!



Buckland remains 'OUTSTANDING' school



Buckland Church of England Primary School has once again achieved an 'Outstanding' rating from Ofsted.

The school is only one of a handful in Oxfordshire to receive the impressive accolade under the new inspection framework.

In their report, Ofsted remarked:

²<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-plans-transport-assessments-and-statements>

"Starting in the early years, pupils learn to take responsibility for their behaviour and actions really effectively. They have high expectations of themselves and each other that are reinforced consistently well by staff. Pupils know how to stay safe, looking after and caring for one another. They learn to be kind, considerate people.

Pupils have an impressive work ethic. They focus extremely well in lessons and often tackle extra challenges that teachers provide. Pupils dress smartly, are polite and are rightly very proud of their school. These characteristics develop because staff establish and maintain high standards for pupils' achievement and conduct successfully".



Louise Warren, headteacher at the school expressed her delight, saying:

"It is with great pleasure and pride that we received the report from our recent Ofsted inspection. We are truly fortunate to have the amazing staff team that we have but also to be supported by our dedicated governor and parent bodies who always help us to achieve the best for our pupils. And of course, to our children..... who really make Buckland what it is".

CEO of Faringdon Learning Trust, Duncan Millard said:

"Buckland is one of only a handful of schools in Oxfordshire that has achieved Outstanding under the new Ofsted framework, a true testament to Louise's leadership and her teams unrelenting focus on providing the very best education".



Buckland receives Platinum School Games Mark



Buckland School received some exciting news in September. They have achieved a Platinum award in the School Games Mark. This is a government-led awards scheme to reward schools for their commitment to the development of sports competition across their school and into the community.

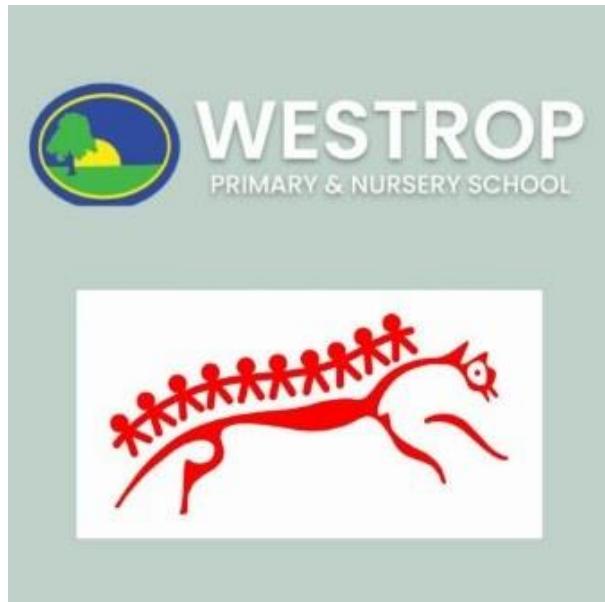
For five years running, before COVID struck, Buckland School received a Gold award. They were invited to apply for a Platinum award for 2021-22 and are over the moon to announce that they were successful!

The School Games Mark assesses individual schools on several factors, namely whether the school focuses on PE above and beyond the requirements of the National Curriculum. They judge schools on their commitment to physical activity and competitive sport. Buckland School provided evidence of their intra-school sporting activities, their inter-school netball and football matches and their participation in Academy events such as the netball festival and Quad Kids. They were also able to tell them about the excellent external coaches who assisted with their PE lessons, the sports equipment they have available to their children at break times and their extra-curricular clubs. This was sufficient to maintain their Gold award level. To stretch to Platinum, Buckland School were given a number of topics to choose from, to go into much greater detail of why they feel worthy for recognition. They chose to demonstrate how they are engaging those young people that need it the

most and to evidence how they know they are benefiting. Not only were they successful, but their Sports Games Officer was especially impressed by the standard of Buckland School's results.

Josie Miller

Two new schools join Faringdon Learning Trust alliance



We are delighted to announce that Westrop Primary School and Stanford in the Vale Primary School have become Alliance Schools as part of Faringdon Learning Trust.

Alliance schools are not formally part of the trust. They can attend academy leadership team meetings, have access to headteacher leadership training and the central team for support and advice, and can attend professional development courses provided by the trust.

Alliance school pupils can take part in trust-wide activities led by the curriculum enrichment leader.

We warmly welcome them to the Trust and look forward to working together.

Cindy Acres, Headteacher at Westrop Primary School said:

"We are delighted to have the opportunity to join the Faringdon Learning Trust as an alliance member."

"We are keen to join collaboratively with like-minded schools to share good practice, expertise and gain support in a professional context."

"Westrop has already greatly benefitted from the support of both Louise and Duncan who have kindly worked alongside many of our staff in preparation for our next inspection. It is clear that they both share the same clear vision, values and inclusive ethos which are so important to us at Westrop. We feel the alliance will be a great step for our school and we are very much looking forward to working together in the future".

Amanda Willis, Headteacher at Stanford in the Vale Primary School said:

"Stanford in the Vale CE Primary School are excited to be joining the Faringdon Learning Trust as an alliance member.

We are looking forward to working with other schools who share a similar vision to ourselves – ‘Where we aim for everybody to flourish in a loving community, with all achieving their individual potential to be the best they can be through the values of Love, Hope and Community.’ We believe it will benefit our staff and pupils, as well as the staff and pupils in the other Trust schools, through sharing expertise, good practice and creating further opportunities”.

Find out more about the trust alliance here³.

Remembrance artwork on display

The children from The Elms Primary School worked together in their classes to produce some wonderful and very thoughtful pieces of work based on Remembrance Day.

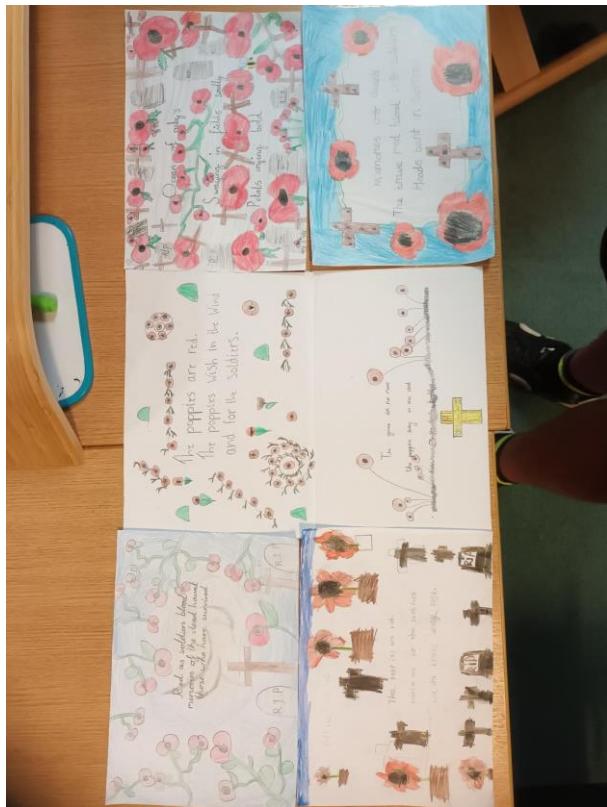
Charlotte Mitchell, Head of School for The Elms said:

“The exhibition place took the Old Town Hall as part of their Remembrance Exhibition. We are so proud of them.

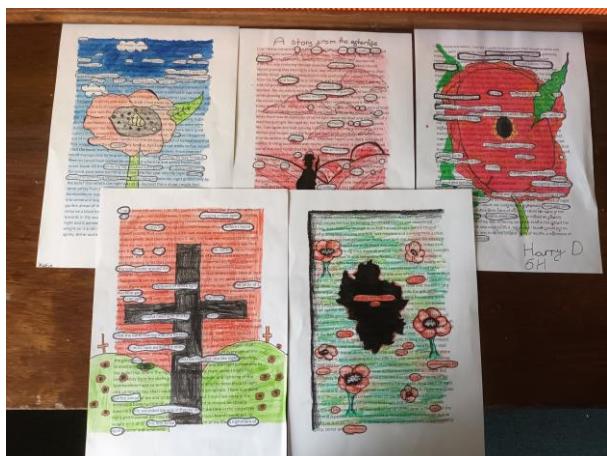
The children from The Elms Primary School worked together in their classes to produce some wonderful and very thoughtful pieces of work based on Remembrance Day. We are so proud of them. The exhibition took place in the Old Town Hall as part of their Remembrance Exhibition”.

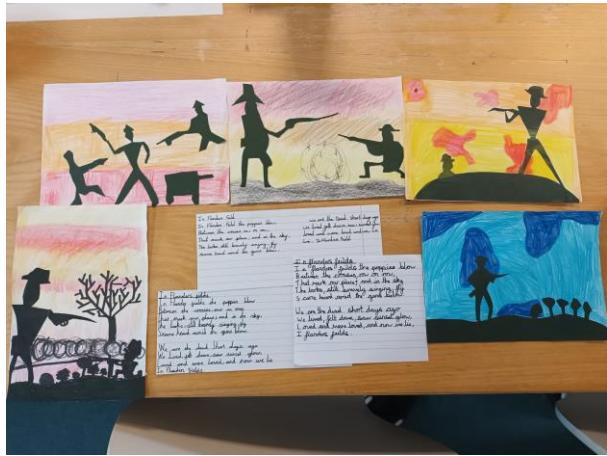


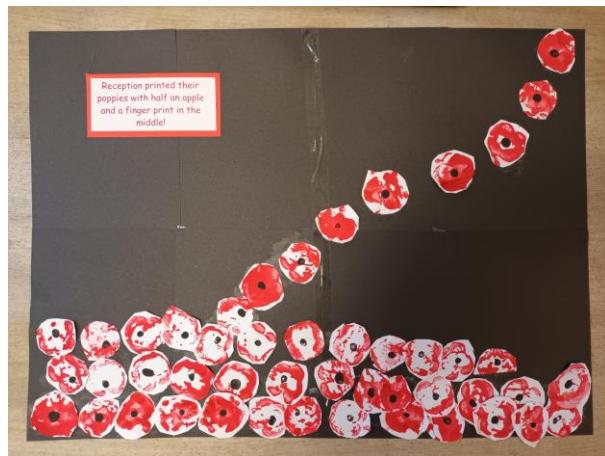
³<https://faringdonlearningtrust.org/join-us/>



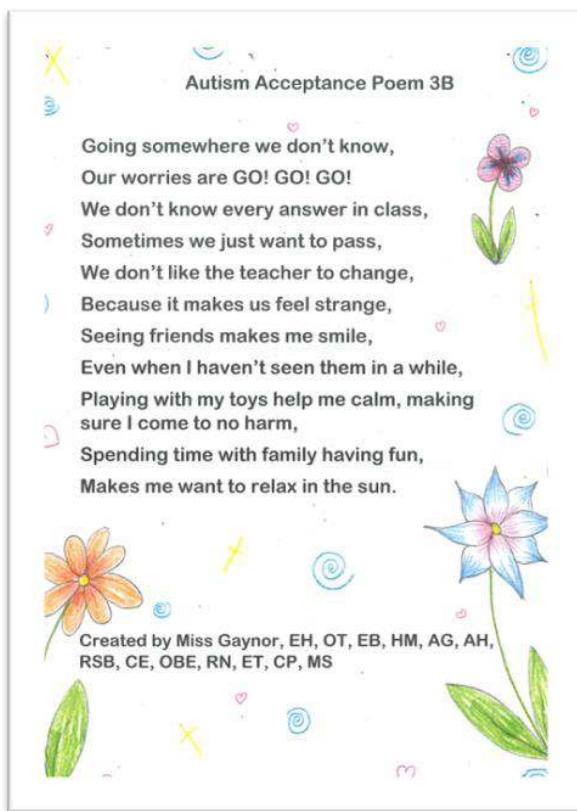








Autism Acceptance Week at Faringdon Junior School





During Autism Acceptance week, as part of raising awareness at FJS (now The Elms) the children had a whole school Autism awareness assembly and then took part in various lessons in their classrooms. It really put Autism at the forefront of lots of conversations. Many children identified that they have superpowers as part of their condition making them extremely talented in specific areas. Autism was really celebrated as can be seen by this brilliant poem written by one of our year 3 class.

We also welcomed parents to an autism awareness coffee morning, which offered them some training in sensory circuits, which is a technique that we use regularly in school to help children to regulate their emotions and a presentation from our communication and interaction advisory support teacher. There were lots of cakes and biscuits on offer and this was held in Faringdon Junior Schools Nest (still open and available at The Elms).

The Nest is a nurture base that we have opened this year to support children when they need some time out of class or to regulate their emotions, it has been used to deliver interventions and emotional support to lots of children. Mrs Spence, who successfully runs the nest, sees over 160 children a week and these numbers seem to be growing over time. It has proven to be a hugely

valuable resource and investment which is having a significant impact upon the behaviour and wellbeing of the children across the whole school.

This is a provision that I am keen to try to roll out across all of our trust schools.

We are very proud of our nest and what we have achieved.

Helen Cox Trust SEND Lead

Merry Christmas



We hope you enjoyed hearing what all our schools have been up to during 2022.

Have a wonderful festive break,

Sarah Nichols

Marketing and Communications

[Academyqueries@faringdonlearningtrust.org⁴](mailto:Academyqueries@faringdonlearningtrust.org)

⁴<mailto:Academyqueries@faringdonlearningtrust.org>