

Newsletter



Bake offs

November saw four amazing House Bake-offs with Hugo, Milo, Effie and Annabelle being named Star Bakers. A huge will done to everybody for taking part and supporting the event.

Teacher-led clubs for Term 2

Monday

Choir

Tuesday

Christmas Craft Club

Wednesday

Champions of Antarctica
Geography Club

Thursday

Christmas Craft Club

Friday

Brass Band Club

Joseph Coelho

Class 3 had the privilege of being invited to join a webinar with the 22-24 Children's Laureate - Joseph Coelho. He discussed his early life of growing up in a tower block and how this developed into poetic anthologies such as Poems Aloud and Overheard in The Tower Block. He spoke about how ideas for stories and poems come from everyday life and how he always carries a notebook in which to jot them down. He read a poem from one of his books and kept the children engaged with his dramatic performance. The Children then participated in some shared tasks with schools from all over the country. Afterwards Joseph read an extract from his book Relic Hamilton Genie Hunter, which had been inspired by his time as a university student studying archaeology. The class were totally enthralled and excited by what they had listened too and didn't want the story to end, with many children commenting how much they wanted to read the book.

Stroud Book Festival Y5/6

Children in Class 3 had a great afternoon at the Stroud Book Festival, hearing from author Jasbinder



Bilan and all about her new book, Nush and the Stolen Emerald. Jasbinder shared her life story and we were amazed to hear that she was born in a stable on a family farm in India. Her books are inspired by the adventures she had as a child.

Time travellers

Children in Class 2 were fortunate to be invited to join Sufiya Ahmed's session from Stroud Book Festival. She spoke about her 'Time Travellers' series which is a way that children can learn about erased parts of our shared history and supports them to

understand a build a better society. During the webinar, children were challenged to develop their own blurb for their own time travelling story. They considered who their main characters would be, where they would time travel to and who would be in the villain in their story. The children came away feeling inspired to read Safiya's stories and have a go at write their own versions!

Stroud Book festival Y1/2 – bugs

The Children in Year 1 and 2 visited Stroud Book Festival on Friday 8th November to see poet James Carter. He shared some of his work, talked about how he comes up with ideas and even wrote a poem with the help of the children on the day! There were giggles throughout the event and the children returned to school desperate to write their own versions of his poems!

Micheal Rosen day

On the 12th of November, we took part in Micheal Rosen day for the first time ever to celebrate 50 years since Rosen published his first book. Each class embarked on a day filled with stories, poems and creativity. As part of our reading spine, the receptions explored 'We are Going on a Bear Hunt.' Their morning included their very own bear hunt around the school, followed by a dramatic retelling of the story to the rest of the class. The years 1s and 2s reenacted 'Chocolate Cake' after reading and discussing our favourite parts of the book. The children came up with their own scenes inspired by the story and we even watched a video of Micheal Rosen telling his own story to enhance our performances. Meanwhile, Class 3 joined a webinar with Rosen, hosted by MC Grammar.



Worship

Worship is always a special time at Down Ampney School as the whole school spends time together. Our worship takes different forms including singing worship, picture news and our celebration worship on a Friday when Peacock Awards are given out as well as TTRS certificates and any other awards that children have gained. We are also very fortunate to have regular visitors to lead worship. We enjoy our worship led by The Revd Swanton and are always excited when the Story Tellers come in. They tell us stories from the Bible and often we get the opportunity to join in with the acting. Another regular visitor is Chris Saunders who is a youth worker for the Church of England. When he came in this month he based his worship on our school value of Courage. He showed us some pictures of different sea creatures and then went on to tell us about two explorers who showed courage. William Beebe and Otis Barton undertook the first deep sea exploration in a human occupied vehicle called Bathysphere. Chris talked about how they had to show courage and because of their courage we have been able to learn lots about the sea ever since. He also reminded us that many people talk to God and pray when they need courage.



Visit from Diocese Director of Education

As a Church school, our Christian values underpin everything that we do. We think about how we develop our own beliefs through our core values of Courage, trust and respect as well as our motto of BEST – Belonging, empowering and succeeding together. On 14th November we were very pleased to welcome Jane Borgeaud to visit the school and to show her how we reflect our Christian values through what we do each day. Jane is the Director of Education for the Diocese of Gloucester. She had a tour of the school and was delighted to share our Vision and Values floor book with our Headteacher Mrs Gray, and Ms Henson CET trust lead. She was keen to find out about the work that we are doing in collaboration with other small church schools. She was delighted to hear that we are planning to support All Saints Church to obtain their Eco Church Status. Jane is looking forward to reading about our next shared event in the Diocesan Education Newsletter.

Alex T Smith

Our final author webinar of the month was listening to Alex T Smith, who is personal favourite of lots of children in Class 2. In our class library, we have a variety of his books including the 'Claude' series and 'Mr Penguin'. In this webinar, Alex was sharing his new book 'Murder by Narwhal!' which the children were able to listen to a preview of! We were very impressed to learn that Alex illustrates all his books as well by first drawing them pen to paper and then using digital technology to make them come alive. One message we took away from this session was the importance of making mistakes, as Alex said this is something he struggled with at school – mistakes are learning opportunities and it is ok to make mistakes as this is how we learn!

David Baddiel

The children of Class 2 were very excited to be involved in a webinar with the author David Baddiel. Lots of children in the class had already read some of his books such as 'The Parent Agency', 'Head Kid' and 'Virtually Christmas'. During the webinar, children were able to listen to David answer questions about his writing process and why he became an author. The children's favourite part of the webinar was when he read them a preview of his new book 'Small Fry' which the children cannot wait to read!



Sportshall

Some of the pupils from class 3 attended the sports hall athletics event on Tuesday the 26th of November at Cirencester College, for a morning filled with exciting activities such as relays, long jumps and even (soft) javelin throwing. The children had a great time competing alongside other local primary schools: Sherborne, Meysey Hampton, Leighterton, Ampney Crucis, Rodmarton, South Cerney and Kempsford. The morning was run by a team of sports leaders, from the college, who organised and facilitated the event, utilising a variety of athletics equipment such as rebound boards and javelins that we had never used before. The pupils had a great time participating and they worked brilliantly together to overcome challenges and literal hurdles!

Christmas craft

At Christmas craft club this term, the children have had the opportunity to take part in a Christmas crafting competition that involved painting three wooden snowmen based off a story. The pupils had great fun coming up with their own ways to enhance the snowman's magic, adding hats and sparkles to their design while listening to some of our favourite Christmas tunes to get fully into the Christmas spirit. We have also made great use of our Hama beads to create festive inspired ornaments, as well as our wreaths, which were crafted from paper plates and tissue paper. We explored some designs online to inspire our own wreaths



while also utilising the variety of crafty decorations that have been kindly donated. We are looking forward to the last few weeks of the club to test out more intricate crafts such as snowflakes made from pipe cleaners.

Geography Club

Children from across the school have enjoyed this brand-new club, using incredible video footage of Antarctica from our Geography partners, Oddizzi. Each week, we have watched one of their videos and created thoughtful and fun responses. We have written Haikus, created soundscapes using percussion

instruments and made a quiz about two important women who have contributed to the understanding and protection of Antarctica: Marine Biologist and Oceanographer, Sylvia Earle and Barbara Hillary, the



first African-American woman to reach the North and South Poles. The aim of the club is to instil a desire to protect this last wilderness when the treaty that protects it from mining and settlements, ends in 2041.

Class 1 in focus

In Class 1, we have been looking at how the seasons are changing and observing the different types of weather that we are having. We always try to link our learning to what is going on around us, so we have been on walks around the school looking for fallen leaves, frost and even snow!

In History this term we are looking at our local area and how it has changed over time. We were given some old pictures of the school grounds and went on

a hunt to find where each picture was taken and talk about what has changed, we also used 'digimaps' to look at the village and see how it has built up over time too.

We have started to rehearse the songs from the Nativity and are very excited to start practising our play 'Christmas Counts!' Something about please come and watch?

DT in focus

As part of our DT unit this term, Class 1 began by tasting different fruits and vegetables and describing what they tasted like and then voting for our favourite. We then explored the ways in which we eat different fruits and grouped them by feature, such as fruits that you peel, fruits with a stone at the core and fruits with a skin that you eat. We are very excited to get to the designing phase and to create our own fruit salads!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

3rd December - Dodge Ball

5th December - Experience Advent Class 2

5th December - Christmas Movie Night

12th December - Reception and Y6 height and weight screening

12th December - Christmas in the Community 5-7 p.m.

17th December - Christmas Jumper Day

18th December - Christmas Lunch Day

18th December - Carols in the Church at 2 p.m.

19th December - Whole-school Pantomime

20th December - Nativity Play at 1.30 p.m. all children must be collected at 2.15 p.m.

