

LINK ACADEMY TRUST EASTER 2022 NEWSLETTER



A Happy Easter to All

FROM NICKY DUNFORD, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dear Parents and Carers,

I think this may have been one of the hardest terms we have all had to manage, with staff and pupil absence hugely increased as a result of the Covid restrictions being lifted, however I have to say staff across the Trust have been brilliant. One example, an Administrator on her second day of employment, swapped with a Teaching Assistant at another school to ensure they had Paediatric first aid covered and the school could remain open. This level of dedication just illustrates the strength of the Trust as small schools working together and doing the very best they can for children and families. As you will also see from the school summaries below, every school has resumed their approach to providing a range of learning experiences that enhance learning and make good use of our wonderful school locations.

In this newsletter I would like to make a point of mentioning our Academy Heads who work so hard to deliver the best they can for families. Every single one of them 'goes the extra mile' and are always seeking to do more and ensure we are providing the best possible experiences for our children. I know sometimes we do not get everything right for everyone, but please can I ask parents to support our leaders, as I know you do. It has been very difficult for them to keep schools open safely without have recourse to supply teachers, as there now appear to be none available! Academy Heads have been under a lot of pressure juggling all aspects of running their schools and I know this has had real pressure for them. I am just hoping that with Covid cases appearing to reduce we can have a productive and 'normal' summer term that we can all enjoy. Alongside this, I would just like to thank parents for being patient with the seemingly ever-changing staffing arrangements etc, it is so reassuring to know you are there supporting every school.

I would also like to mention our PE team, who have worked closely with secondary schools with real passion to adapt the curriculum they deliver ensuring our pupils are well prepared for their secondary PE experiences. They have brought our schools together for some brilliant sporting experiences which I am sure you have all followed on Facebook.

Finally, I would like to say a huge thank you to all the children, staff and families that have raised funds and gathered donations for Ukraine. It is hard to begin to understand the experiences and pain families are going through; we can only do our small part, but I would like to acknowledge one of our parents who organised a trip to actually go out to the Ukraine border and help take people to safety, all we can say is well done to such bravery.

I hope you all have a restful Easter holiday and enjoy some real family time

Happy Easter!

Nicky

Bearnes Primary School

It has been an amazing term at Bearnes with lots of fun and exciting activities taking place - many of them for the first time in a couple of years.

The first big event saw many of our pupils taking part in the Academy Cross Country at Stover, they had a fantastic day competing, representing Bearnes and for many trying a new sporting event. The feedback from pupils was very positive and they particularly liked the fact that they got extremely muddy throughout the day! A big thank you to the P.E. Team for hosting such a great event.

Our EYFS pupils also went out on their first field trip since starting Primary School. We embarked on an adventure to Dartmoor Zoo where they got up close and personal with a number of big cats including a beautiful Jaguar! All of the pupils did extremely well in showing what Bearnes stands for and made one of the keepers days by singing a rendition of 'We Don't Talk About Bruno' to a Tagu Lizard after it had finished its bath in order to see if it liked music. This was a very important question they needed answering.

From everyone at Bearnes we hope you all have a brilliant Easter!



Broadhempston Primary School



It's been a full and busy term at Broadhempston we've had visits from a dentist and local author, a music specialist has taught KS2, with Ukulele lessons for all, and the Devon CAP team taught all children about being Safe, Strong & Free! Oak class attended a fair-trade conference - leading to running our own fair trade coffee morning for the local community.

All the children have been to forest school for two full days of adventure. Topic based educational visits have included Paignton Zoo, Ocombe farm, Exeter Mosque, Torquay Museum and our artwork is on display in the village shop. Add to this a full range of sporting activities both individual and Trust wide, we think the children have had a great time. Finally, we've introduced a courtesy cup this term. Each week it is awarded to a pupil who has been spotted living out our values and going the extra mile. Hard work? For sure. But the children's enriched learning and consideration for their families and local community has really hit the spot!



Cheriton Bishop Primary School

At Cheriton Bishop this term we have enjoyed making the learning as real, purposeful and engaging as possible. The children have built their resilience and teamwork at Forest School, each half term a different class visit the fantastic Crofters Mead which is an incredible environment for the children to explore. They have supported others both within our community and further afield by fundraising for the NSPCC (through a 'onesie funsie runsie'), Red Nose Day and our whole community pulled together to quickly donate items to support the crisis in Ukraine.

We have had lots of meaningful experiences inside of the school building as well. Our Science Day hooked the children in as they worked in mixed age groups to discover which member of staff had stolen the cake from the staffroom! They tested for the presence of glucose in solutions, identified fingerprints and handwriting which all helped them to whittle down the list of suspects!



Diptford CofE Primary School



This term has flown by, it's been a busy time with lots of exciting events happening, helping to make school feel a 'bit more normal!! Year 5 and 6 have really stepped up this term, coming up with lots of ways to fundraise for not only the school but other charities as well, they should all be extremely proud of the bring and buy sale they organised in aid of supporting the people of Ukraine, as a school we raised over £150.

School trips have meant the children have managed to get out and about, Little Dippers have been to Dartmoor Zoo, Dippers visited the Golden Hind, Kingfishers went to Kent's Cavern and Hawks have been to lots of sporting events. Our Easter service was welcoming to all and it was wonderful being able to open it up to friends and parents after such a long time.

Although there have been a few obstacles in the way this term all of the children and team have been a credit to Diptford, their 'can do' attitude has not gone un-noticed and the resilience in the children has really shone through. Everyone is looking forward to the summer term, we already have lots planned including residentials, Healthy Living week and much, much more. But for now, I hope you all enjoy your Easter break.



Drake's CofE Primary School

We have had a very exciting time at Drake's recently and the children have thoroughly enjoyed themselves. We celebrated World Book Day 2022 by sharing our favourite books with other classes, dressing up as book characters and participating in quizzes and competitions. We also watched the live world book day feed and listened to lots of fabulous stories! We had a parade and great fun was had by all whilst further developing our love of books! We had an amazing and informative morning learning about all kinds of different animals with Chris AKA 'The Animal Man' from South West Animals. The children were fascinated with the Armadillo, the Tenrec and the baby Boa Constrictor! They were also amazed by all the fascinating facts and the opportunity to hold these different reptiles and mammals. They were wowed by the size of the Indonesian Blue Tongued Skink. The children were inspired by Chris' passion and enthusiasm for his animals. Thank you to the PTFA for making his visit possible. The children in Otters Class (YR, 1 & 2) are looking forward to a trip to Paignton Zoo for their topic on Reptiles. Kingfishers (Y5 & 6) are excited about their chocolate making workshop to finish off their topic on Mayans.



Harbertonford CofE Primary School

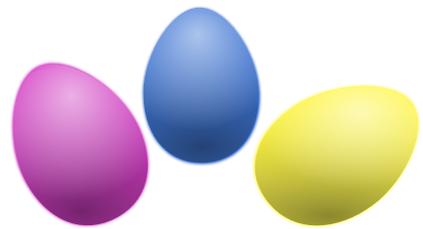


During the Spring Term pupils and staff at Harbertonford have been busy developing our Global Citizenship curriculum. Our World Explorer Days have taken us to Japan and Canada and, thanks to the Sports Grant, we were also able to offer the children the opportunity to explore Japanese culture through dance. The children explored a range of diversity issues through books including influential women of colour, the challenges faced by people forced to migrate, climate change and equity of opportunities for both genders. In March we held our first Global Citizenship Day, using Oxfam's planning as a basis to explore issues relating to water and its availability throughout the world. We explored a variety of issues such as inequality in access to clean water, how some communities have had their access to safe water affected by flooding resulting from climate change and how we could conserve water supplies. All in all it was a very thought-provoking day that encouraged the children to empathise with and understand the challenges faced by people in other parts of the world. We are looking forward to exploring a different global concept in the summer.



Hennock Primary School

We have enjoyed a busy Spring term where the children have been able to venture out of school to enrich their learning experiences and enhance the curriculum. Ash Class visited Dawish Warren where they were able to contextualise their learning and experience first-hand: erosion, tidal defences and other activities linked to their topic 'Extreme Earth'. Birch has had several trips and visitors this term linked to their rainforest topic, but the drumming workshop has to be a highlight. After a whole day of exploring various percussions instruments and composing a piece of music to tell a story about a rainforest, the children were then able to perform their piece to the whole school. Willows visited Bygones and got to see what life was like for a Victorian child. They were able to compare their toys from today to the toys a Victorian child got to play with, a real eye-opener for them! Saplings have also been out and about, with Haldon Forest the setting for their Superhero adventure. Their mission...to find Superworm! Having Parent-Teacher consultations, in person, has helped considerably rebuild those personal home-school relationships that have been missed for too long. During science week we invited real scientists into school for the children to explore professions with science at the core such as GP, Aeronautical engineer, Hydrologist and Pharmaceutical scientist. Attending the Trust-wide Cross Country event was immense! Set in the spectacular grounds of Stover, the children experienced a true off-road, mixed terrain event. Our children battled against the elements and showed strength of character.



Ilington CofE Primary School



This has been a term that has been both challenging and exciting. The challenge has included absence due to Covid and damage to our internet connection caused by Storm Eunice. However, the challenges have been mitigated by the friendship and support that we have received from a number of our sister schools across the Trust and from the Executive team. We've had help with lunchtimes and to cover the School Office. We have been given support in many ways and have really benefited from being a part of the Link. This term has also been one of growth as we have been reflecting on and adapting the curriculum strands across the school. This has been coloured recently by our visit to Harbertonford primary, where we found out more about the Oracy Project. Now we have begun our own journey into oracy and already have our very youngest children playing with their use of ambitious language such as scrupulous or tempestuous and enjoying the richness that it brings to their speech and writing. We have introduced the use of the word of the week and are beginning to experiment with class debates too. At the same time we have also begun to develop our school's sensory and spiritual garden together with the children. Their ideas and designs and their hard work and enthusiasm are helping us to create a special corner of our grounds designed to allow quiet time and reflection within the busy school environment.



Landscape CofE Primary School

Landscape has embraced the Global Neighbours project and have been looking to make a difference to our immediate environment. After writing letters to Mrs. Dunford and gaining permission, KS2 children set about working with our parent body who sourced and helped Class Three to plant more trees on our school field. By doing this, we are playing a small part in reducing atmospheric CO2 and limiting Global Warming.

Landscape children have been introduced to the delight of full forest school day adventures at the Beacon, Broadhempston. This has been made possible by Landscape and Broadhempston working closely together, and Gaby providing forest school leadership and fun!



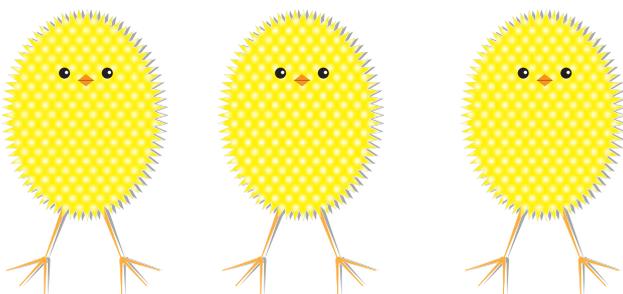
Morichard Bishop CofE Primary School



As spring approaches our thoughts have been on developing our garden project. In late January, the school held a tree planting morning when we had well over 30 volunteers made up of parents, children, staff and friends of the school. The morning was very successful with a hedgerow planted at the bottom of the school field and a group of fruit trees were planted to provide supplements for our school dinners and long term shade. Our Year 6 children have supported the project by fundraising through a sponsored sports week in conjunction with FOMBs (Friends of Morichard Bishop School). During the week the children set up playtime events which combined throwing, aiming and catching skills, testing their fitness and endurance. The money raised from this event will pay for a storyteller's area which is an integral part of the garden.

During March, we have been focussing on the kitchen garden. Storm Eunice took its toll on part of the fence and the shed door which some of the older children helped to repair. The beds have been filled with homemade compost which has been made from a mixture of paper towels, fruit waste from playtimes and vegetable waste from the kitchen as well as garden waste from general weeding. Seeds are now being planted to provide home grown flavours to our school dinners.

The most popular part of these afternoons is the roundhouse fire and the S'mores that we cook at the end of the session, so everyone leaves with a smile on their face.



Moretonhampstead Primary School

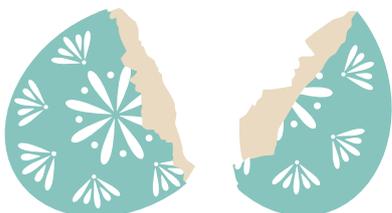
We have had a busy spring term at Moretonhampstead. Our younger children have been learning about Knights and Castles which they celebrated with a Medieval Banquet. The children made bread, soup and ginger bread and there were even Medieval games such as jousting! Parents came in to join the celebrations. We had a wonderful science week with a special science day. The children worked in their House Groups (mixed across year groups) to learn about Space and the possibility of alien life; using forces for bridge building; chromatography and optical illusions. It was so lovely to see siblings and our youngest children working with our oldest children. Thanks to all of them for their enthusiasm and great team work. Our Year 6 children performed at South Dartmoor Community College as part of their Primary Body Language Festival of Dance. The theme of this year's festival was COP26 and the children chose to choreograph their performance around restoring and protecting ecosystems with a focus on regenerative solutions to agriculture which included elements inspired by the COP26 Glasgow protests. The children performed twice to sell-out shows. Throughout the day, the children participated in music and art workshops, learning a song for a grand finale along with the other primary schools involved.



Otterton CofE Primary School



It has been a busy time at Otterton in the run up to Easter, the children have been out and about on trips and visits and have taken part in a number of sporting events. Otters Class and Hedgehogs (our pre-school children) went on a visit to Otter Farm in Colaton Raleigh, welcomed by the Clinton Devon Estates team and had a brilliant visit. They loved learning all about the cows, hearing how much they eat and how they make milk for us to drink and they were even treated to some delicious milk shakes! On World Book Day, dressed in their pyjamas, the children at Otterton enjoyed spending the day with their friends and the classes came together to share stories and ideas. They were even treated to hot chocolate and biscuits the afternoon, what a wonderful way to celebrate our love of books and reading. Some of the KS2 children took part in a Dance Festival organised by the Dartmoor School Sports partnership, they learnt lots of new dance styles and techniques and were part of the finale dance with all of the children from the other schools taking part. On Wednesday 9th March 2022, England Football and Barclays put on the biggest EVER football session for girls in school and we signed up to be a part of this. We did some fundraising for Comic Relief, the children came to school wearing red and we held a cake sale after school. In April, the children from Otterton and Drake's will be doing a sponsored walk for the people of Ukraine.



Stoke Gabriel Primary School

The pupils at Stoke Gabriel have had a busy term and it's been wonderful to take part in Trust sports events. Cross Country was an invigorating day where we saw so many of our children push themselves to new levels. Our Sports Leaders have developed their role over the term resulting in an array of games on offer for younger pupils as well as leading a cricket event with Mr Tanner and Niall from Devon Cricket.

Pre-school and Reception have enjoyed several joint welly walks around our beautiful village to delve into their theme of 'Our Wonderful World' whilst Year 5 and 6 carried out a charity litter picking event. During our International day, Key Stage 1 produced some vibrant artwork depicting Stockholm and impressed us all with their new knowledge of Sweden!



Tedburn St Mary Primary School



The Spring term has been a tricky one to navigate, but Covid hasn't stopped lots of amazing learning going on in all classes across the term. The children have enjoyed some super learning opportunities to support their work in class, including exploring space with a visit from the Planetarium, learning about animals with a hands on visit from Animals 2U South West and a Tudor visit to the Priory in Exeter. These experiences have certainly enhanced the topics covered in class. As well as this the children have had lots of opportunity to represent the school at a host of Sporting events, including Cross Country at Stover, Hockey here at Tedburn and Inclusion games at QE. All enjoyed by those who took part. Lots of fun has been had along the way this term too, with World Book Day, Red Nose day and a TT Rock stars day. We finished the term with a grounds day which has made a lovely difference to the school and started a huge fundraiser to redevelop our old swimming pool area. A big thank you to everyone once again this term and we look forward to the summer being just as exciting!



Widcombe-in-the-Moor Primary School

This term has been full of the joys that spring brings. One of the highlights was to fulfil one of our 5-Star Pledges.

During their time at Widcombe, the children will have the opportunity to see a lamb being born! On a sunny spring afternoon, Reception, Year 1 and some Year 6 pupils visited our friends at Blackawton Farm and were lucky enough to see lamb triplets being born. Within 15 minutes the lambs were walking and feeding- it was an incredible experience for our pupils to witness. Our topic, "Why Are There No Rainforests on Dartmoor," also took us out of school with Lower and Upper Dart classes visiting the Eden Project for the day. The trip enabled the pupils to add an extra layer of depth to their learning experience and it was a pleasure to receive feedback from Eden staff saying that our pupils were already deeply knowledgeable and impeccably behaved. Our youngest pupils, in the Webburn class, went on a trip to the theatre in order to inspire their writing. They visited the Princess Theatre, in Torquay, where they watched the book they had been reading in class, "The Tiger That Came To Tea," brought to life on the big stage. They were so inspired that they came back to school to produce some wonderful writing. We would like to say thank you to the Link Academy Trust PE team for hosting a fantastic cross-country event at Stover School. Years 2-6 attended the event and collectively they came second. We have all enjoyed getting out of school this term and look forward to even more fantastic learning opportunities during the summer term!



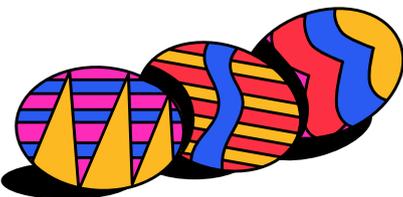
Yeoford Primary School



Neither the storm nor Covid could dampen spirits at Yeoford! Our first school trip in 2 years took place this term and we have had visitors in to bring learning to life. The children embarked on a whole school project about roots this term, launched by investigating the mystery of 'The Seed'. Across the curriculum the children have gone on to explore what is beneath our feet, how things grow and how roots of different cultures can impact on us. Beyond the classroom we have celebrated events such as World Book Day, Red Nose Day, Holi festival and St David's Day. Sports teams across the age range have been in action and the Year 5 and 6s have taken part in a hockey and netball tournament at other schools.

The highlight of this term was the addition of our new outdoor shelter to the playground. The PTA fundraised to create a space where children could enjoy play and lunchtimes and it has been a huge success! Our next project starts over Easter where the library and kitchen space will be revamped so lots to look forward to!

Happy Easter from everyone at Yeoford Primary School





**KEEP
CALM
EASTER HOLIDAYS
ARE
FINALLY HERE**

Happy Easter