



Dear all,

Here is the first Headteacher's newsletter of 2017-18. The start of this academic year has been particularly busy, not least for me personally with a residential visit to Woodlands with Year 5 and 6 and an even longer journey to Qugqwala, our partner school in South Africa – more details about both below. However, there is much more to share with you and, hopefully, this newsletter will do justice to the wide-ranging activities and achievements of our pupils in the Autumn Term. We will also provide some information about school 'admin' and upcoming events for the remainder of Term 2 and into 2018.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY : ACADEMIC YEAR 2017 – 2018 (see School Website for further dates)

SPECIFIC AUTUMN TERM DATES

November 2017	
Friday 17th	Children In Need
Friday 24th	Beech Class Sharing Worship
Thursday 30th	School Association Non-uniform Day
December 2017	
Friday 1st	School Association Christmas Fayre
Sunday 10th	Andy Reading Fun Run
Tuesday 12th/ Wednesday 13th	Lower School Nativity
Thursday 14th	Christmas Dinner
Friday 15 th (pm)	Christmas Service & Christmas Jumper Day
Tuesday 19 th (am)	Christmas Singing Around the Tree
Tuesday 19 th (3.10pm)	Break up for Christmas holidays
January 2018	
Thursday 4 th	First day back to school
Wednesday 10 th	Lower School Panto
Friday 19 th	Maple Class Worship
Wednesday 24 th	KS2 SATs Info Evening
Friday 26 th	School Association Film Night

Further ahead

Monday 14th – Friday 18th May

Monday 11th June onwards

KS2 Year 6 SATs

Year 1 Phonics screening check

ATTENDANCE

Attendance in 2017-18 is currently 97.76%, which is significantly above the national average and an improvement on this time last year. Let's hope that the winter bugs stay away and those children aiming for 100% attendance up to Christmas can stay fit and healthy. Remember: House Points are available for any children who achieve 100% attendance for the whole of Term 1 & 2.

The top two classes for attendance in Term 1 were as follows:

Ash : 98.28%

Oak: 97.87%

Well done to Mr Craven, Miss Mansfield and their resilient band in Ash Class!

Term 1 House Attendance:

Buckle: 98.93%	20 points
Jersey: 97.29%	10 points
Penrose: 98.04%	15 points
Squire: 97.01%	5 points

HOUSE SYSTEM

Our house competition has again been keenly contested throughout Term 1, with over 500 points gained through pupils being awarded a range of certificates, earning points from our class 'Going For Gold' charts, attendance, and through excellent reading at home. Term 1 champions were decided following the awarding of a number of certificates last week. It was a closely fought race with only 9 points between 1st and 3rd.

The final Term 1 leaderboard was:

1st: **Buckle (Emily Atkins / Miss Jones) 186 points**

2nd: **Penrose (Bobbie Brelsford / Mrs Leonard) 181 points**

3rd: **Squire (Zac Powell / Miss Gascoigne) 177 points**

4th: **Jersey (Emma Flintham / Ms Bailey) 151 points**

Points for Term 2 are reset to zero so everything is to play for in the run up to Christmas. Remember that you can keep up to date on the House Points page on the school website.



AWESOME ACHIEVEMENTS

Our gold certificates, which are awarded for outstanding effort, are given out at the end of each term. Two children were chosen per class and received their certificates on Friday. Each gold certificate winner earns 5 points for their house. Our chosen few in Term 1 were:

Maple Class: Harold Lane Fox & Ruby Blackman

Beech Class: Poppy Muddiman-Wickson & Harry Mew

Ash Class: Oscar Horwood & Jessica Honour

Apple Class: Toby Richings & Harry Leach

Oak Class: Jess Cresswell & James M





EXCITING ENGLISH

Our enthusiastic reading has picked up where it left off last academic year with parents and children putting in lots of effort to enjoy books together at home. Since September, many children have already earned Reading Raffle tickets for reaching a landmark in their reading diaries and the first draw of the year took place in celebration worship on Friday. Remember the more tickets, the more chances to win!

Winners of the first Reading Raffle Draw of 2017/18: **Honour Woodrow & James M (pictured)**

Each excited winner visits my office to choose their prize of a book from the large selection on offer.

Writing has also been celebrated this term, with our Amazing Author certificates for October

awarded. Congratulations to **Illija Petrovic, Harry Mew, Herbie Allmond, Anabelle Meek, Amy Miles** and **Katherine Carry** for impressing your teachers with your writing.

Look out for their work on the display board in the school hall.
Mrs Salter



MARVELLOUS MATHEMATICIANS

After our success at last year's competitions, Miss Regan and I have recently travelled with some of our keen mathematicians to Oxford for two Maths Challenge afternoons, where they competed with other pupils from across the county. All our teams performed impressively and enjoyed pitting their wits against pupils from both state and private schools in a range of mathematical problem-solving activities. Zac Powell, Connor Reeve, Tom Blakey and Seb Percival represented Year 6 at St. Edward's School, with Zac and Connor finishing 10th and Seb and Tom coming in 36th position.

At the Year 4 event, held at Summerfields School, both teams acquitted themselves very well. Josh Cresswell and Megan Allmond came 19th and Myiesha Khan and Jack Happell finished 26th.



THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

"The governors' role is not about fundraising, neither is it about cheerleading for the school - though governors might do both those things.

The role of the governing body is a strategic one, its key functions are to:

- * set the aims and objectives for the school
- * set the policies for achieving those aims and objectives
- * set the targets for achieving those aims and objectives
- * monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making towards achievement of its aims and objectives
- * be a source of challenge and support to the headteacher (a critical friend)

"The headteacher is responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the school and the implementation of the strategic framework established by the governing body."

(Taken from National Governor's Association website, <http://www.nga.org.uk/Be-a-Governor.aspx>)

The current members of the Governing Body of Chesterton School are:

Terry Smith – Foundation Governor (Chair of Governors)

Abigail Grenfell – Foundation Governor (Vice-Chair of Governors)

Lesley Harry – Local Authority Governor

Danny Steptoe - Foundation Governor

Luisa Summers - Foundation Governor

Sally-Ann Woodrow – Parent Governor

Mr Horner – Headteacher

Julia Reece – Foundation Governor

Rev. Brian Wood - Associate Priest

David Attwood – Foundation Governor

Katy Salter – Staff Governor

Our New Governors



Luisa Summers



Danny Steptoe



Lesley Harry

We currently have a vacancy for one parent governor. If you are interested in becoming a member of the governing body, please look out for further information, which will be distributed soon.

If you have an issue you would like to raise with a member of the Governing Body, then please contact us through the school office.

SCHOOL ASSOCIATION



A big thank you to the volunteers from the School Association (and the staff who helped out) for their organisation and to everyone who attended the Back to School Disco on Friday 29th September. There was a very good turnout to both discos and an impressive total of £360 was raised, which got us off to a good start towards this year's totaliser target of £6000.

Next up is the Christmas Fayre on Friday 1st December. The usual array of festive fun will be on offer, including Santa's Grotto, plenty of entertaining stalls and some much needed refreshments for the adults! Don't forget that the Thursday before (30th Nov) is non-uniform day. As mentioned in the recent email, all offers of volunteer support, large or small, will be greatly appreciated.

As always, keep an eye on the School Association noticeboard and website page for the latest news.

LOTS OF LOST PROPERTY!

As we are now about 9 weeks into the school year, the mountain of lost property is starting to grow! We are hearing from more and more despairing parents, whose children have misplaced, forgotten or discarded various items of clothing somewhere in school!

If we find named items left around school, then we should be able to return these as soon as possible to their owner. However, there is a large number of items (some very new and expensive looking) that don't have names in. These will be put in the lost property box, which lives in the left-hand porch outside Ash Class. As you may be aware, this is emptied periodically and displayed on tables in the playground. We are planning to do this in the next week or so to clear the decks before Christmas so please keep a look out.

If you or your children do spot any items left around school, or indeed find something unfamiliar in your washing basket at home, please send it in the direction of the owner (if named) or the lost property box (if not). Should your child be currently looking for a particular item, please let the school office know and we will keep an eye out for it.

HELPING OTHERS

This term, the whole school community has really been putting our school values of COMPASSION and GENEROSITY into action with many different fundraising events.



Macmillan Cake Sale

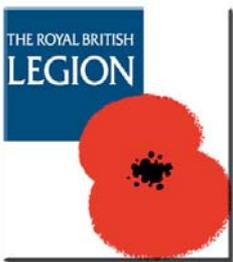
For our coffee and cake afternoon on Thursday 28th September, pupils and families again focused their baking efforts on providing a fabulous array of cakes, which were served with coffee and tea to raise money for a wonderful charity. The afternoon itself, run by our team of new school councillors, raised £211 for Macmillan, which, I'm sure you will agree, is a great total for a very worthy cause. Well done to our team of school councillors, who did a brilliant job of hosting our customers!

Harvest Service

On September 22nd, in the school hall, all of our children took part in a special Collective Worship to celebrate and give thanks for the harvest. Rev. Gareth led the collective worship and the pupils contributed with a range of readings and poems, interspersed with some fantastic singing. I would particularly like to thank all our families who donated items for the Bicester Food Bank as part of the day. We received a huge amount of dry and canned goods, which will be distributed to local families in need. Janet Ray, Project Manager, wrote to thank us: ***"A big thank you for supporting us again with your harvest collection. It was great to see the children so enthusiastic and excited to help load the van. The amount collected this year was 76.7 kilos and was the type of food that we are most in need of at this time."***



Remembrance Day



The work of the Royal British Legion is as important as ever. Funds raised annually enable the Royal British Legion to provide invaluable support and rehabilitation for injured servicemen and women, and support and care for the families of soldiers who have been killed in action – both in recent conflicts and in the past.

Chesterton continues to support this fantastic charity in 2017 and the school council are out and about this week selling the traditional poppies and some additional stationery items. The school will gather together on Friday for a special 'Remembrance' collective worship.

Operation Christmas Child

This week is the last chance to fill your Christmas shoeboxes. Thank you to those families who have already brought their colourful gifts into school. If you are still completing yours, please remember to deliver them to the school office by 9.00am on Friday (10th November) at the latest.

MARVELLOUS MUSIC

Music has always been a fantastic feature across school and we are proud of the musical and singing talents of our pupils. As you know, unfortunately Mrs Broadhead no longer works with us, so we have been extra keen to keep the wonderful singing going, particularly as we approach the festive season. Our new school choir of 35 children began rehearsals last week and we have a number of extra children now interested in joining! We will be focusing on Christmas songs for our annual 'Singing Around the Tree' on 19th December and the children have already impressed us with their singing of: 'The First Noel' and 'Winter Wonderland!' We will be practising many more traditional and well-known Christmas songs and hope to introduce a few new ones!



We have also been sharing our singing with Qugqwala, our partner school, by exchanging videos of both sets of children singing 'Marching in the light of the Lord', which you can watch on the school website. Plans are currently afoot for how we can collaborate for a Christmas singing treat, as their choir (see pic) is certainly enthusiastic and talented.



Unfortunately, we won't be attending 'The Big Sing', as we have in previous years, but we are looking forward to being involved in 'Children Singing for Children', held at St Edburg's Church in the Spring term. We also hope to be selected for the 'Festival of Voices' in the Summer term, which takes place at Dorchester Abbey. We will give you further details of these events once we have confirmation of them.

Our instrumental musicians have also been practising hard in recent weeks. Bethan has some young stars in the making in her Music For Schools cohort, who have lessons on a Wednesday morning and we have more guitarists than ever. Our individuals and ensemble are looking forward to showcasing their talents in their first performance of the academic year. Keep an eye out for the date.

We also enjoy hearing of many musical exploits outside school. A special mention this term to Toby Hutt (Ash Class) who sang evensong at Winchester Cathedral with the Radley College choir at the end of September. As one of the youngest members, Toby is fairly easy to spot as there are only a few primary school aged choristers who haven't yet got their white surplice. The choir had a tour of the cathedral before they went on to perform in the service. We hear that it was a really beautiful day. Well done Toby - keep up the good work. We look forward to hearing about your next performance.

Mrs Salter and Mrs Meaney



SCHOOL SPORTS UPDATE

As ever, we continue to benefit from the input of the North Oxfordshire School Sports Partnership, funded through a large proportion of our 'Sports Premium' funding. Through a visiting coach working with our pupils in lessons, staff training and inter-school competitions, our children have again made the most of a wide range of high quality sporting opportunities.

Chesterton pupils have enjoyed a busy and successful start to the competition programme this year. We have entered a number of partnership tournaments since September. Congratulations to all those who have taken part.

Date	Event	Year/s	No. of Chesterton teams/competitors	Results	Certificate Winners
4 th Oct 2017	Bicester Cross Country	Year 1-6	48 pupils	Isabelle Goddard 3 rd (Yr 1/2 Girls) Olivia Morgan-Griffin 7 th (Year 1/2 Girls) Meriel Woodrow 9 th (Year 1/2 Girls) Christian Carry 4 th (Year 3/4 Boys) Charlie Reeve 5 th (Yr 5/6 Boys)	N/A
11 th Oct 2017	Bicester Mini Football	Year 3/4	2 teams	A Team - 2 nd Place B Team - 8 th Place	Honour Woodrow Christian Carry (Teamwork)
1 st Nov 2017	Bicester Tag Rugby	Year 5/6	3 teams	A Team - 3 rd Place C Team - Plate 2 nd Place	Maggie Smith Toby Richings Toby Goddard (Respect)

Whole-School Cross Country

On Wednesday 4th October, 48 pupils from Chesterton represented the school in a cross-country competition at The Bicester School. The runners were competing in squads of 8, with the top 4 individual results counting towards the team total. Any children finishing in the top 10 automatically qualified for the district final on the 20th November, alongside the two best teams.

The Year 1 and 2 girls led the way with three top-10 finishes. Isabelle Goddard improved on last year's 4th place to make it onto the podium in 3rd position. She will be looking forward to her second consecutive appearance at the district final. Isabelle was ably backed up by a very impressive 7th place from Olivia Morgan-Griffin and Meriel Woodrow (9th), who finished in the top ten despite only being in Year 1! With a team score of 38 points, they qualified for the final in 2nd place. Joining them at the district final will be the Year 5/6 boys, with the Reeve brothers (Charlie – 5th and Connor – 16th) scoring well to help them finish as team runners-up. Thomas Grenfell, running against older children like Charlie, also warrants a mention for a well-deserved 14th place.

Last, but not least, Christian Carry will compete at the district final as an individual after a cracking run to finish in 4th place in the Year 3/4 race. I would also like to acknowledge his sporting behaviour after his mature reaction to an unfair intervention from another athlete that prevented Christian from making it onto the podium. He dealt with it admirably and is aiming to go one better at the North Oxfordshire final at Sibford.



Coming up on Sunday 10th December, is the Andy Reading Fun Run in Chesterton. I have already received a number of entry forms from keen runners and we are hoping to have our biggest ever contingent taking part. If your child would like to enter, but hasn't received a letter and entry form, then please pop into the school office and ask for one – the more the merrier!

Bicester Tag Rugby

On a very pleasant afternoon at the beginning of the month, Chesterton's three mixed tag rugby teams took to the field at The Bicester School to 'tag' and 'try' their way to victory. Coached by voluntary helper and Bicester Rugby Club player Hannah Gray, our A team finished 1st in their group, after winning every match, before being unluckily pipped in their semi-final match. However, they bounced back quickly to win the 3rd/4th playoff. Our B and C team, managed by Miss Gascoigne, Mrs Rotherham and Mr Goddard, were mostly representing the school at rugby for the first time, but still managed to score some great tries and certainly improved as the afternoon went on. Congratulations to the C team, who finished as runners-up in the plate competition. School Games certificates for respect went to Maggie Smith, Toby Richings and Toby Goddard.

Year 3/4 Football Tournament

On the 18th October, our mixed girls and boys football teams took part in the Bicester tournament, held at the Cooper School. Both the A and B teams showed great co-operation and teamwork in all games and improved throughout the morning. There were two girls and three boys on the pitch at one time. Miss Gascoigne, Mr Kirby and Charlotte Hayes helped with managing the teams.

Chesterton A team won every match in their group to make it through to the semi-final. Their highest score was an amazing eight goals in one match. Chesterton B team's highest score was two goals. The A team played against six schools and so did the B team. **Megan Allmond and Oscar Williams**

Girls On The Ball Hockey

Following the success of the football events organised by Oxford High School last season, the Chesterton girls' team have taken advantage of the new 'Girls On The Ball' hockey initiative and participated in a coaching afternoon at Oxford Hawks Hockey Club. Coaches from the hockey club, assisted by young leaders from Oxford High School, put the girls through their paces with a carousel of different activities. Equipped with their new mouthguards (see pic!), the girls learnt how to dribble, pass, tackle and shoot, in addition to learning some of the rules of the game. They then played some friendly matches alongside girls from other schools to put what they had learnt into practice. Well done to the girls for trying something new and also for giving a great impression of Chesterton with their behaviour and enthusiasm (not to mention having the most striking kit!).



Football Fixtures

Alongside the Year 3/4 tournament, other football fixtures have taken place this term, with an intra-school girls friendly and away matches at Bruern Abbey. A special mention to Holly Mclellan and Seb Percival for their first goals for Chesterton and to Bobbie (who knew that she was a secret footballer?) Brelsford for making a tremendous debut appearance for Thornton's Thunder in our girls' friendly match. There are more friendlies to come this term before our league campaign gets underway in the New Year.

Date	Competition	Home	Goals	Away	Goals	Chesterton Scorers	Player/s Of The Match
5 th Oct 2017	Friendly	Bruern Abbey A	5	Chesterton A	4	Grenfell 3, Ch. Reeve	Thomas Grenfell
5 th Oct 2017	Friendly	Bruern Abbey B	4	Chesterton B	2	Kirby, Percival	Sebastian Percival
9 th Oct 2017	Girls' Friendly	Thornton's Thunder	1	Cresswell's Cyclones	2	K. Carry 2, McLellan	Bobbie Brelsford, Kat Carry

The Lionesses Roar On!

You may remember me waxing lyrical about the victorious performance of our girls' football team at the Launton Ladies tournament back in June. Against all odds, the team of Year 6 pupils and Year 7 'alumni' reunited to defeat teams from established football clubs to lift the trophy. Well ... the story continues ... as the girls (Jessica Rotherham, Millie Mansley, Lucy Hayes, Inés Piaget-Thompson, Charlotte Kavanagh and Jasmine Kirby) have formed part of the first ever girls' football team at Chesterton Juniors FC and are now affiliated to the Oxford Mail Girls' League. Managed by James Kirby and ably assisted by Ian Mansley, Matt Thompson, Charlotte Hayes and Tommy Mansley, the girls have teamed up with some talented new recruits (Megan, Tilly, Lily, Maddie and Grace) and are competing in the Under 13 B league. I was privileged to be there to witness their opening match against Didcot Casuals, which they won 6-2; Jasmine Kirby scoring their first ever league goal. The following week, I saw them follow that up with a 5-2 success over Launton Ladies. Clearly not overawed by the more experienced opposition, Chesterton Juniors now sit proudly at the top of their league with 5 victories from 6 games! This weekend, they begin their cup campaign as they go in search of a giant-killing against Hinksey Park from the league above. Good luck girls!



PROFICIENT PEDALLERS

Terms 1 & 2 have seen two separate groups of Year 6 pupils undertaking Cycling Proficiency. Learning about various aspects of cycle safety, the Highway Code and bike handling, the children have progressed from sessions on the school playground to excursions onto local roads, where they have had to apply their knowledge for real. The children, assisted by a fantastic team of parent volunteers, have also had homework tasks to make sure that they were up to speed ready for the assessment at the end of the course. Group Two's practice sessions are now well underway and they are certainly on track to impress the examiner when their test comes round at the end of term. A huge thank you to our wonderful team of parent volunteers – without whom it simply wouldn't be possible to offer Cycling Proficiency to our pupils.



POLITE PARKING AND DROPPING OFF PLEASE

You should have received an emailed version and a paper copy of one of the School Council's leaflets that have been designed to encourage safe parking and dropping off near school. The message is also being reinforced by some parent volunteers and Parish Councillors. They are handing out leaflets to the drivers of vehicles parked/waiting unsafely on the yellow zigzag lines outside school, or on the solid white lines to protect junctions and entrances. Local Police have also made visits to monitor the situation.

Parking or dropping off on the yellow zigzag lines, whether before school, at pick up, or when collecting from after-school clubs, causes difficulties for passing traffic but, more importantly, for pedestrians leaving the school site and needing to cross the road. Reduced visibility and obstruction caused by these vehicles has already led to a couple of 'near misses' so far this academic year, and we really don't want it to take an accident involving a child for this issue to be taken seriously. From our morning observations, we have noticed that, even at peak times, there are spaces available slightly further away from the school gate, so please use these and walk the short remaining distance. We appreciate that the majority of parents do drive and park safely around school, so we would ask that if you do notice any unsafe or inconsiderate parking, please report it to the school office and we will endeavour to follow up wherever possible.

THINK Before You Park!

- If you park or drop off on the zig-zag lines the pupils cannot cross the road safely, because we can't see past the cars. This is still important at the end of after-school clubs.
- If you park on the white lines, it will also be hard to cross.
- If you block residents' driveways, they will NOT be happy.



This is for your children's safety and happiness, so please follow these instructions.



SAY HELLO, WAVE GOODBYE

To follow on from our presentation in Apple Class' celebration worship at the beginning of October, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Liversidge wholeheartedly for her wonderful contribution to our school over the last two years. We will all miss her, but wish her well for the next chapter of her career. We have heard that Jackie is enjoying her new role, but hasn't yet got used to working in an office that isn't invaded by children throughout the day! By now, most of you will have met or spoken to Lynette Pull who has taken over Jackie's role (working Wednesday to Friday). Lynette is an experienced school administrator and has certainly fitted in quickly alongside Mrs Durham. Thank you to everyone, staff, parents

and children, who have welcomed her so warmly to Chesterton.

You may also have noticed another new addition to the Chesterton staff. In September, Becci Cresswell (mum of Jess - Oak and Josh - Apple) joined Donna Rotherham (mum of Will - Oak), as a new recruit to our team of teaching assistants. Both have been working across the school at different points in the week and supervising at breaktimes and lunchtimes, so hopefully all the children have now got to know them - if they didn't already.



Mrs Cresswell



Mrs Pull



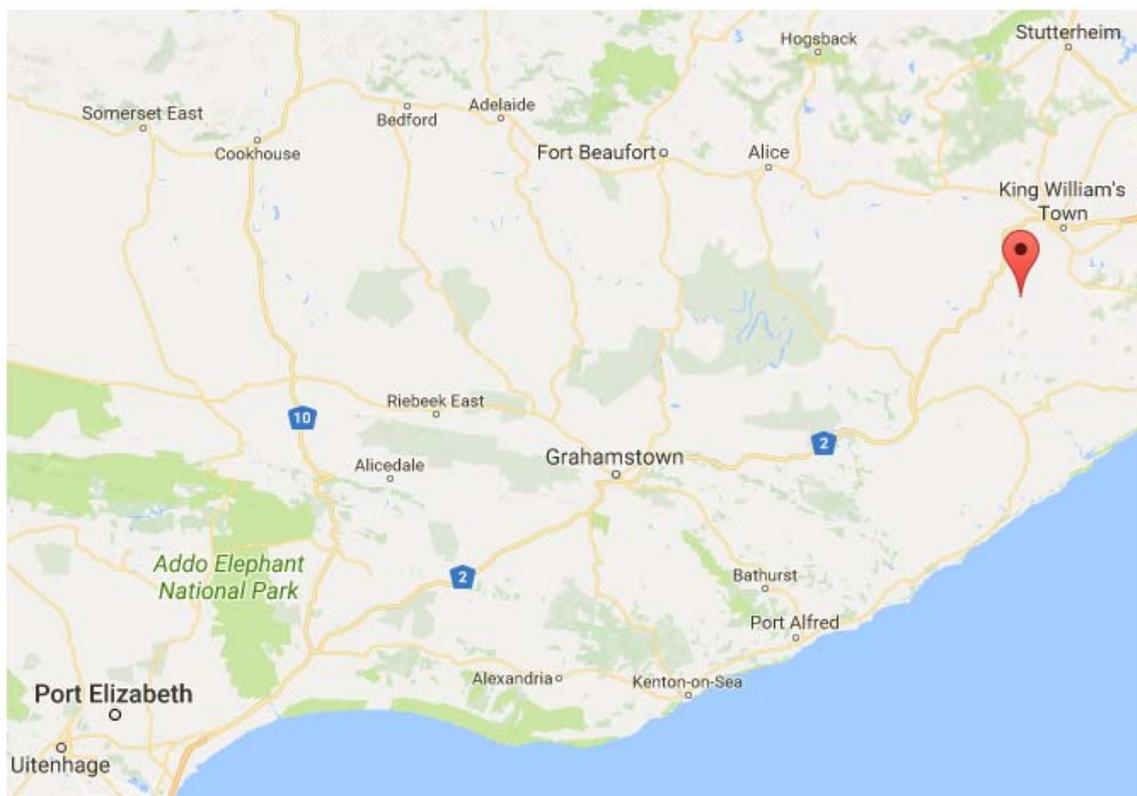
Mrs Rotherham

CONNECTING CLASSROOMS

As you will know, Mrs Meaney and I travelled to the Eastern Cape region of South Africa in the week before half-term to visit Qugqwala, our partner school. The funding for the visit was gained through the British Council's Connecting Classrooms project and with the support of the charity BEFSA (<http://www.befsa.org/>), whose aim is to 'Reduce Poverty Through Education'.



Our week was inspiring, humbling, eye-opening, fascinating, and many more things besides. I hope that through our visit, we have rekindled our link with this wonderful school, its staff and pupils, and that we have returned energised to strengthen our bond in the future. My primary aim is to involve both sets of pupils more actively in the link; be that through communicating, sharing work, projects or performances, fundraising or learning about what life is like for their peers 6000 miles away. Our children have already been 'treated' to some of the photos that we took during the week during collective worship on Monday and I have included a small number of them below to give you an idea of what we was involved in the trip. See if you can spot some of the places that we visited on the map below. Qugqwala is shown with the marker.



Friday 13th October – Fly from Heathrow to Johannesburg. Met Mrs Woods and Ms Bailey (also visiting their partner school) at the airport.

Saturday 14th October – Land in Johannesburg, before transferring to Port Elizabeth on a short flight. Meet the remainder of the BEFSA teachers and Catherine and Keith, who run the charity.

Sunday 15th October – Very exciting day visiting Addo Elephant Park for a tour and then taking a three hour drive north to Fort Beaufort, our base for the week.



A young Kudu in combat training



A captivating ten minutes watching mother and calf

Monday 16th October – Our first day at Qugqwala Primary School. A 100km drive each way, but through beautiful open countryside. We were welcomed by the Headteacher, Mr Sinuka and the local Pastor, who led a whole-school assembly.



The view from the road into the village



The whole school gathered for assembly

Tuesday 17th October – Our first day finding our own way to the school. We might have missed the correct turning onto the gravel road! The next turning seemed to be working out just fine until we met a problem (see photo)! We enjoyed spending some more time in the classrooms and meeting more of the pupils and teachers.



A small pothole on our journey to work!



Mrs Meaney working with Grade 1 children

Wednesday 18th October – Our most exciting day! A group of older pupils took us on a tour of the village to look at the vegetable gardens, as this would help us plan the project to introduce one at the school. The villagers were incredibly welcoming and happy to show us what they were growing. We saw cabbage, spinach, potatoes, onions, beetroot, carrots and many more. The children returned to school full of ideas for how they wanted to design the school garden. After school, we met the other British teachers for a visit to the spectacular Hogsback.



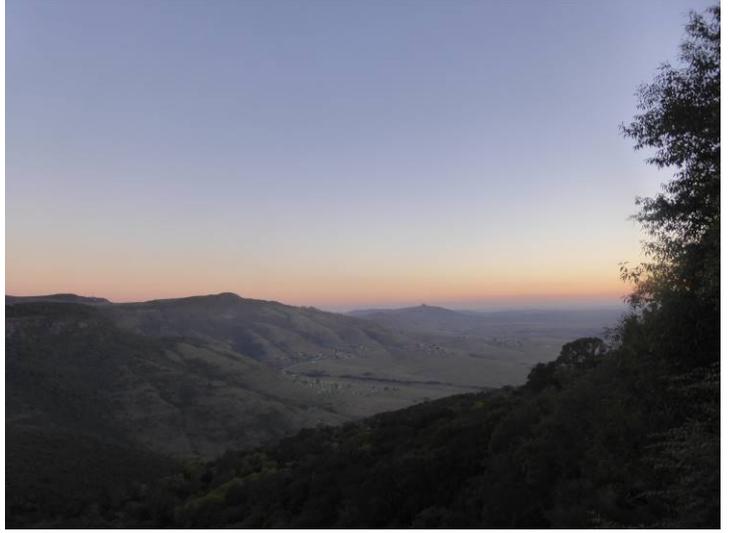
The slightly overgrown plot for the vegetable garden



Our guides for the tour of the village



The pupils planning their garden



Sunset in the breath-taking mountains at Hogsback

Thursday 19th October – Work began on the school garden. Some enthusiastic parents made a start on digging over the ground, before we were surprised by the arrival of a tractor to really get to grips with the site. In the afternoon, we drove to King William's Town to buy some seeds and plants, before attending the Connecting Classrooms conference at the Steve Biko Centre. It was lovely to catch up with Koko Dziba, previous head of Qugqwala, who had visited Chesterton in the summer of 2015, but slightly nerve-wracking to complete a presentation about our visit to the large audience!



The tractor ploughing the vegetable plot



Meeting Koko at the Steve Biko Centre

Friday 20th October – An emotional day! We left the hotel at twenty past six to make it to school before the bell went (7.50am) to make the most of our final day at Qugqwala. The school put on an incredible celebration assembly, attended by the whole school, parents and governors, that involved singing, dancing, speeches and culminated in a delicious meal (we shouldn't have had breakfast). I will shortly be putting some of the videos on the school website. It was sad to say goodbye after what felt like a short visit, but we promised to stay in touch and come back as soon as we could. As a leaving gift, we were presented with our own Qugqwala school shirts.



Talented singers from Grade Two who sang a duet



Mrs Meaney and I proudly sporting our new uniform

Saturday 21st October – Back to England (for me anyway, as Mrs Meaney joined Mrs Woods and Ms Bailey to extend their trip for a visit to Cape Town). One last chance to take in the stunning scenery and a bonus view of some wildlife on the drive back to Port Elizabeth.



As you can probably tell, it is not an experience that we will forget in a hurry. Watch this space for future plans!

A VARIETY OF VISITS AND VISITORS



Zoolab visit to Maple Class

On Monday 25th September, we had some very exciting visitors to Maple Class. Zoolab ranger, Lucy, brought a whole host of animals into the classroom. We met some giant snails, a cockroach, a snake, a millipede, a tarantula and a rat. It was so much fun being able to hold them and learn lots of interesting animal facts. Did you know that a snails' teeth are on their tongues?! **Mrs Leonard**



Year 6 go to IMPS

In October, our Year 6 children went to the John Radcliffe hospital to take part in IMPS (Injury Minimisation Program for Schools). The best part of the trip was the CPR training, when we practised for all different types of emergencies. It was funny because one person from each group acted like a vicious dog was guarding the fainted person on the floor. We practised CPR on Mrs Green (a dummy). Then we went to the emergency department (ED) to visit some surgery rooms. Some people got stitches on their forehead and everyone got a finger cast. We watched a video of accident that could happen and discussed how to react to it.

Zac Powell and Emma Flintham

Ash and Beech visit Sulgrave Manor

Our visit to Sulgrave Manor was brilliant! It was fantastic to be able to experience the past for ourselves, exploring the old houses, as well as playing some Tudor games and learning about the use of lavender, before making our own lavender bags. Even the teachers learnt a thing or two. **Miss Jones**



Wonderful Woodlands

To give you a flavour of Year 5 and 6's stay in the beautiful Brecon Beacons, here is our blog from the week. You will see from the timings that we packed plenty into our days before there was time to start typing!



Monday 4th September 10pm

We are currently 'relaxing' in the staff room having sent the children up to bed (hopefully tired enough to get to sleep...).

The coach journey went well and we arrived at the centre in good time. The children had a quick tour of the grounds before heading up to their rooms to make their beds and unpack. Then they divided into their four activity groups, had some lunch and then got cracking with the afternoon challenges. Each group had to co-operate and persevere to succeed at their chosen tasks, scoring points for their team as they went.

After a quick bit of free time and then fish and chips for dinner, we set out on a two-mile night walk up to the common near Woodlands. It was pleasantly warm and there were impressive views over the Black

Mountains on the way up. As the darkness closed in, we made our way back down to the centre through the bracken and trees - accompanied by a few bats!

Tuesday 5th September 10.30pm

We have had a great first full day at Woodlands.

After a hearty breakfast, including scrambled egg on toast, we held our first room inspection of the week! Miss Norman and I were checking for emptied bins, hoovered floors, made beds, tidied cupboards and folded clothes. There were some admirable efforts (Top Score 4.5/5 from three rooms) and some with room for improvement (pun intended!).

Then, we headed out for activities. Despite the unfavourable forecast, my shorts and flip flops kept the rain away as Groups 1 and 4 hit the heights of the jungle gym and Groups 2/3 made the short trip to the River Wye for canoeing.

Jack and Group 1 started on the climbing wall, before whizzing down the zip wire and finishing with the high ropes course. Lisa, their instructor, was impressed with their confidence and effort.

Group 2 and I had a great day on the river. We started in rafts (two boats joined together) to pick up some paddling and steering skills, before going it alone after lunch and finishing with an entertaining swim in the rapids.

Mrs Meaney and Group 3 also enjoyed the beautiful scenery and better than expected weather as they paddled down the River Wye for approximately 6 miles. They also graduated from rafts to individual boats and joined Group 2 for a swim just before the end. Both groups did a great job of carrying their canoes up the bank and loading the trailer, despite being tired at the end of the day.

Group 4's day on the jungle gym with Miss Norman started on the high ropes course, where some fears were conquered and determination shown. All the group then braved the zip wire, before finishing on the climbing wall.

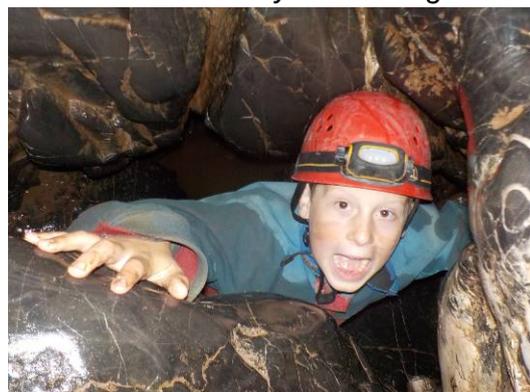
This evening, the children did fantastically well at photo orienteering around the grounds. Everyone was enthusiastic throughout and persevered to find as many markers as possible. Lots of pairs completed the first sheet and moved on to extra challenges. A special mention to Connor Reeve and Tom Blakey who emerged as overall winners with 28!

Wednesday 6th September 11.00pm

It's been an exciting (but long!) day in the Brecon Beacons.

After a delicious bacon sarnie to start the day and a (slightly) more impressive room inspection, we rejoined our groups ready for activities. It was slightly cooler than the first two days, but it still looked like we were again going to see our fair share of sunshine.

Group 1's caving expedition with Miss Norman went well and all the children did well at taking on the headline challenges. A number of them reported that it wasn't anywhere near as scary as they thought. Kyle Kernan, who wasn't looking forward to it at all, decided that it was



easily his favourite day so far! Rumour has it that Miss Norman was posted through the letterbox too. Group 2 began their jungle gym day with Mrs Meaney on the high ropes course. After working their way through the platforms, they abseiled down for lunch before moving onto the zip wire and climbing wall in the afternoon. They certainly improved as they day went on and every member of the team made it to the very top of the climbing wall! Mrs Meaney gave Bobbie Brelsford a special mention after she showed why she is house captain material with a determined showing all day.



Group 3 started their jungle gym day with me on the climbing wall. The children showed admirable teamwork as they belayed for each other to beat their own personal targets. A special mention to Emma Flintham who showed plenty of courage and determination to overcome jitters at the lower level to reach the very top via a difficult route. We then aced the high ropes course and zip wire with all children completing every challenge!

Group 4 and Jack excelled themselves in the cave. Despite plenty of nerves in advance, they all posted themselves through the 'letter box', flushed themselves down the 'toilet' and wiggled through the 'wormhole'. Courtney Matthews was one of the stars of the day and she exceeded her expectations and set the tone for the group.

This evening's activity was 'proper' orienteering. The children progressed through the increasingly difficult courses, with points hidden all over the site. Tom Blakey followed up yesterday's win in the photo orienteering by teaming up with Ollie Horwood and Zac Powell to come out on top. Connor Reeve (the other half of yesterday's winning pair) teamed up with James M for an impressive second place.

Thursday 7th September 10.30pm

It was hash browns and spaghetti hoops for breakfast today (a big hit on the teachers' table). Miss Norman and I were then back on room inspection duty. We handed out our first 5 pointer of the week to Katherine, Holly and Emma (the song and dance routine may have swayed us!) and there would have been a second top score if Emily Atkins hadn't accidentally confessed to the large bag of dirty washing hidden behind the door!

It was a bright start to the day as we set off on activities, although the rain did arrive later in the day.

Group 1 and Jack were canoeing on the River Wye. It was probably their toughest day so far as they found it tricky to keep their raft moving in the right direction. However, they did enjoy a swim in the rapids.

Group 2 and Mrs Meaney caved at Porth Yr Ogof. Despite some nerves at the beginning, they took on all the challenges. It was particularly impressive to see some of the least confident children taking the lead. Jess Cresswell showed great determination and gamely agreed to be the first to flush herself down the 'toilet'.

Group 3 had the pleasure of my company again! They had another cracking day, surpassing expectations; this time in the cave. There were a few tears when we all turned our lights off at the beginning which didn't seem to bode well for the rest of our expedition. However, from then on, every member of the group completed every challenge that Mark set for them. Definitely one of the most challenging and successful caving days that I've been on. A special mention to Charlie Reeve, who's been enthusiastic while remembering to help his team mates.

Group 4 paddled down the Wye with Miss Norman and Dylan. They had yet another successful day, with effort and teamwork all round. After starting in rafts, they proved that they had the skills to divide into individual boats and made serene progress to their final destination.

This evening, we have begun to scale the mountain of packing! Tomorrow, we'll be climbing the real thing.

We are aiming to depart the centre at 3.00pm. Keep a look out for any update e-mails if we hit any traffic. See you back at school!



AND FINALLY...

As we head towards the busy festive period in school, I am very much looking forward to welcoming parents and families into school on a number of occasions over the coming weeks; it promises to be a busy but enjoyable end to 2017!

Best wishes, Mr. I. Horner – Headteacher