



Kingfisher Newsletter

October 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

What an amazing start to the new academic year we have had. We welcomed 15 new pupils and lots of new members of staff into our Kingfisher Family. They have all been made to feel very welcome and have engaged in lots of opportunities for learning and getting to know each other.

We have had quite a few trips out to the community and our older pupils have been cooking lunches for staff as part of their Enterprise opportunities. The jacket potatoes were amazing and the bacon roll for lunch today was cooked to perfection. Albatross and Pelican Class also hosted a Coffee Morning in aid of Mcmillan in September where we raised a substantial amount of money.

Simon, Tess' husband, cycled around Oxfordshire to raise money for the PFSA, this along with other fundraising so far this year has raised almost £2000. Thank you to everyone who has donated, also a big thankyou to those who shared links with friends and family to build up the funds. On the fundraising note, the staff wore shirts that 'Shouldn't be in the wardrobe' today, we haven't finished counting the money from this but here is a picture showing the shirts. Eleonor and Tina won the prize for the best (worse) shirt.

If you have any fundraising ideas, or you would like to join the PFSA, please give the office a call and we will pass you information over to Natalie, the Chair of the PFSA and the team.

The School Council also met today and received their badges, it was lovely to see the smiles on their faces. Some of our brand new pupils were involved in this and they really enjoyed the opportunity and experience to meet with other School Council members.

If you could, please click here to give your views about our school [Give your views | Ofsted Parent View](#)

Dates for your Diary

Return to School	Monday 30th October
School Photo Day	Tuesday 7th November
Coffee Morning	Friday 24th November
Break up for Xmas	Wednesday 20th December 2pm Finish
Return for new year	Tuesday 9th January

Have a great halfterm

Best Wishes

Lorraine



Sensory Pathway



Flamingo Class

We have really enjoyed exploring our theme of “Hot Countries” this term and the pupils have been working really hard! In our Sensory story we have explored four different places in Madagascar including the Baobab Avenue where there are tall trees and all sort of birds! The pupils have also loved the resonance board sessions where we share songs and work on developing a sense of rhythm together (and get to make a real mess with some rice!).

All the pupils have been working hard on their movement too – they have been using their standing frames daily and we are encouraging them to move as much as possible to develop their independence, especially during our swimming session. We are also doing daily Hand Function sessions after lunch where we warm up and massage the pupils’ hands and then practice using our hands. Squeezing and poking Play-Doh is a particular favourite in the class!

In Maths the pupils have been engaging really well with our Attention Bucket sessions and some particular favourites are the dancing robot and blowing bubbles. We have also been using switches to work on Cause and Effect, including a disco light and a dancing sloth. It has been great to see how motivated the pupils are by seeing the effect they can have on the toys and we will continue this work into next term.

We have shared a lot of music together this term. The pupils always enjoy having their say and choosing what music they want to hear in class, with This is Me from the Greatest Showman being a class favourite. They also love to share music with the school community in our group music and singing sessions as well. We were very lucky to have a visit from some musicians from Music for Autism who shared their folk style music with us, and all the pupils loved moving to the rhythm of the drum or watching the musicians as they played.

Well done to all the pupils for such hard work term and we hope you all enjoy your half term week!.

Eleanor, Kerryann, Sally, Emily and Emma



Toucan Class

It has been wonderful to welcome back everyone to Toucan Class following the summer holiday and we have welcomed some new adults as well. Everyone returned happy and with lots of enthusiasm for the new term. We had a wonderful day in September with our visiting musicians, listening to them play and sing to us.

It has been an exciting few weeks with our 'Madagascan' themed focus. We have thought about the habitats on and around the island of Madagascar. We focused on the rainforest and in our theme sessions each week have experienced elements of a rainforest, such as the feel of the tree bark and leaves and the rain, the sound of the birds, the taste of the fruits and looked at the animals which live there. We painted some lovely snakes in Art and discovered that the Madagascar Kingfisher is native to the island and enjoyed decorating our own kingfisher pictures with feathers. When looking at the origin story from Madagascar we have explored the plants and animals living in the Indian ocean with lots of interest and enthusiasm.

We have been doing well with our maths this term, working on our new targets and our container play sessions have been very successful exploring hand function and groupings. We really like the 'I left my boat out in the bay' song and are all very good at feeding the animals the fruit.

We are all making good progress with our physio targets and enjoy going for walks during break times to engage with other pupils around the school and explore what is happening. Dance with Gina has been lots of fun with African themed music. We have also had some wonderful themed singing sessions with a lovely lady called Karina, with 'In the jungle, the mighty jungle' song being a firm favourite with all and makes us all play instruments with lots of enthusiasm.

We are really looking forward to next term which will be focused on the Hindu festival of Holi and Christmas, as part of looking at different religions around the world and how we celebrate. There will be lots of activities filled with colour. We hope you all have a lovely week.

Julie, Tor, Lynette, Maria, Sarah, Helen, and Hannah.



Robin Class

We have had a very busy first term in Robin class. Our theme this term has been Hot Countries. The pupils have enjoyed learning about Zimbabwe, listening to some captivating drumming. Some of Robin class did their own amazing African drumming using both the ocean drum and the resonance board. We also looked at some of the animals that live in Zimbabwe with elephants, giraffes and lions being firm favourites. The pupils have been doing super work at choosing between clothes to wear when the weather is hot e.g., sun hat and T-shirt. We also looked at clothes to wear when the weather is colder e.g., woollen hat and scarf. The sunhat proved to be a firm favourite with the pupils. We also looked at the weather symbols for sunshine and rain.

In our phonics lessons we have been listening to the “m” and “a” sounds. Robin class have been doing fantastic listening to the sounds and they have loved looking at our Objects of References for the different sounds with the acrobat, astronaut, Maisie and the mouse being particular favourites. We have been so impressed by the level of engagement and how closely the pupils are looking at the pictures from our phonics story.

In our Art sessions the pupils have been busy using a variety of tools e.g., paintbrushes and rollers to produce a beautiful African backdrop for our classroom. This week, Robin class will place their favourite African animals on the backdrop which will then be displayed in class. The pupils have also been busy using glue sticks to glue and rolling the frame of a drum in a pattern that they selected to produce beautiful African drums (which we will send home at the end of term 2). They also chose which colour they would like to have their elephant. We now have some beautiful yellow, pink and multi coloured elephants to name but a few, which were all created by Robin class working hard with their gluing and tearing skills.

In Sensology, the pupils have been doing some good choosing work. They have been looking closely at the “more” and “finished” symbols to communicate their choices. They have also been looking closely at the symbols for each of their senses to communicate their favourite smells, sounds etc. Very impressive communicating from Robin class.

This term, Robin class have enjoyed a wonderful singing session with Karine. The pupils have enjoyed listening to the sound of the ukulele and some of them loved it so much that they decided to strum the ukulele independently-well done! The sound of the castanets was another firm favourite and a few of the pupils loved having the castanets close to their ears as they listened intently to the sound that they created. Our favourite song with Karine was “In the Jungle” with the different animal sounds creating lots of smiles and vocalizing. We also had a visit from “Music for Autism” which Robin class really enjoyed. They all listened intently, particularly when listening to the sound of the prayer bowl.

In our P.E sessions we have been working on rolling and/or throwing balls. We have also been focusing on turn taking and individual physio targets.

Wishing you all a great half term.

Siobhan, Jen, Amanda, Katia, Tracey, Liza, Julia, Lorna, Tina and Dawn



Robin Class cont.



Core Pathway



Owl Class

This term Owl Class have been so busy, with lots of new learning and exploration taking place. The children have been mark making, painting pictures using the bright colours of India and Thailand .

We have enjoyed our new theme this term 'Hot Countries', learning lots about the different countries and why they are hot. The children have explored the bright colours of both countries, the animals that live there, the food they eat and the music they create. The children have labelled different clothes that would be worn in a hot country and a country that gets cold. They have eaten and experienced different foods from each country, playing with kitchen utensils and mixing the foods together. They particularly enjoyed the rice. The children have been learning the song, 'Down in the Jungle'. We have looked at non-fiction books looking at the two countries we have studied.

In maths the children have been counting from 0-20, they have been grouping objects, learning 1 more, and most recently the children have been grasping the concept of 1 less. They have really enjoyed acting out the song 10 Green Bottles. In RWI the children have been learning new sounds and matching the pictures to the sounds. We have had lots of good looking and listening and the children have enjoyed taking part in the sound activities.

This term the children have experienced lots of exciting things: they have travelled through an airport to go on holiday and experienced the process from start to finish, they went through the metal detector and looked at suitcases and the clothes that go inside. The children sat on the plane and experienced taking off and landing. Also, this term Owl Class attended Hollywood Bowl where they took part in a Bowling Panathlon. The children very much enjoyed bowling and were able to choose the ball they wanted to bowl with. They particularly enjoyed the brightly coloured bowling balls.

In swimming we have been learning to float on our front and our backs and we moved backwards and forwards in different ways. The children enjoyed pouring water on their heads using the water can and jumping in.

As we approach the end of term, we have some exciting news. Macaw and Owl Classes will be working very closely in term two, joining for phonics, maths and some afternoon activities. This planned merge is to allow the pupils to work to the best of their ability providing each pupil with more opportunities for individualised learning that meets their needs. We are very excited to be able to work closely together and feel that it would offer the best possible outcomes for all pupils.

Take Care, Best Wishes

Jo, Tina, Kim, Charlotte, Emily



Hawk Class

We have come to the end of our first half term in Hawk Class and what a brilliant one it has been! The children in Hawk Class have come back eager to learn and have learnt new class routines and expectations very quickly. We have even had new starters that have adapted to their new school environment very quickly. Well done to everyone!

This term our thematic learning has been around 'Hot Countries' and as a class we have focused specifically on India. We have explored a number of different texts including fiction, non fiction and poetry. 'Aladdin' and 'Rumble in the Jungle' were very popular with the children! We have practised our writing skills using colourful semantics to construct simple sentences about the story. We have also made simple character descriptions to describe characters and been very accurate in our thinking! We have continued to follow the RWI Phonics programme. It has been wonderful to see that the children have retained their learning from last year and already started making progress against this years targets.

As part of our 'India' focus we have made a variety of artistic pieces and cooked some delicious dishes. This term we made naan breads, exotic fruit salads, mint and cucumber dip, samosas and chapatis. Through our Cooking we focused on different skills including mixing, chopping, spreading and rolling with a rolling pin. Cooking has been a clear highlight this term and the children have looked forward to it each week. In Art this term we focused on using different tools to create multi sensory art. We made sunset pictures, rangoli patterns, magic carpets and jungle scenes. We also used junk modelling to make our own versions of the Taj Mahal. As part of our thematic learning, we had a special visit from Fly to Help. They offered us a sensory experience of travelling on an aeroplane which was enjoyed by all pupils.

In Science this term we have been learning about Materials. We learnt about different materials used in clothing and buildings and went on material hunts around school to identify materials in school. Some of us were even able to respond to specific questioning around materials. E.g. Find me something made from wood. We also learnt about changes of state in simple terms with a focus on melting and freezing. We conducted our first science test to find out which materials melt. I was very impressed with the engagement and focus from all pupils throughout this. In Maths this term we had a strong focus on Number, Place Value and Calculation. We practiced counting, numeral recognition and addition in our sessions.

It has been wonderful to see friendships forming this term. The children have shown a real understanding of making good choices, being a good friend and helping each other. It was a pleasure to see so many of you at Parents Evening this week to celebrate the achievements of your child.

We are all very much looking forward to next half term!

Katie, Megan, Nicola, Julie, Kate

Hawk Class cont.



Eagle Class

Welcome to the very first Eagle Class Newsletter. What an exciting start to the term. Our very first trip together was to the 'Making Tracks in Construction' HS2 Project/School Gala, in Bicester. We were invited to go along and experience the sorts of jobs that were open to us in the construction industry. We had the most amazing time. We were treated like royalty, there were 'goody' bags, sweets, drinks and toys to take home too. The children got to have a go at so many activities; there were simulators, materials to explore, big vehicles to climb in and out of, high-visibility outfits to wear and radio-controlled equipment to operate. All the teams were so friendly and supportive. The whole gala had been very carefully thought out and the children could explore all the activities independently and return to their favourites for extra turns. The children themselves were incredible, so polite, well behaved and interested in all they saw and experienced. A truly, fabulous day.

Our second big adventure of the term was visiting a Speedway meeting at the stadium in Cowley. Most of the children attended and some parents and siblings came too. It was lovely to have our family members there with us. We were treated like VIPs. We had a tour of the pits, where we got to sit on the motorbikes and talk to the riders. Henry Atkins the team captain was so friendly and took time to answer all the children's questions. We then had a VIP dinner in a special area. The food was delicious, and the children really enjoyed it. They even had free drinks. After the meal we went outside to stand by the racing track and cheer the racers on. It was very exciting; the racers went really fast and they do not have brakes. The children learnt how the races worked, what all the flags meant and how to fill in the programme with the scores and the rider's names. We were asked to watch the racing very carefully so that we could choose 'the man of the match'. The children unanimously chose Henry Atkins, the team captain as he raced really fast and won all of his races. It was very exciting awarding the trophy and having our photographs taken by the press! If you would like to see more about our trip there are plenty of pictures on the speedway Facebook page.



Eagle Class

Most recently we have had some drama workshops with a pupil from the local secondary school. Anur came with his teachers, Tom and Caroline, to meet us and then planned some drama activities for us to enjoy. The children were amazing, listening really carefully and being brave enough to have a go at all of the activities. The children were great at acting, using their voices in different ways and using their imaginations to develop ideas for little plays to show their friends. It was such great fun, we are hoping that Tom and Anur will come back again in the New Year to do some more drama activities with us.

We have of course had lots of lessons in class too. The children have all made an excellent start to the new school year and settled brilliantly into the new Eagle class. We have been particularly impressed with their hand-writing and letter writing skills. We have also seen some amazing art and drawing work across the term.

Lorna, Becka, Laura, Jo, Michaela and Tess.



Communication Pathway



Macaw Class

What a wonderful term Macaw Class has have. We have had a really strong start, especially with RWI phonics. Pupils are making really great progress and we have heard some excellent sounding out and word formation from the majority. Writing seems to be the favourite part of phonics at the moment and most pupils have made good progress using their new individual writing 'iPads'.

We have introduced our new iPad software, Grids, and pupils have really enjoy exploring, learning and communicating with new methods. We have been doing a lot of reading on the iPad and then the pupils have written incredible book reviews using the software. Is really lovely to be able to see their opinions in such a clear way and see them respond so clearly to what they are saying. We have also been using this method in Good Morning and Afternoon routines and Maths lessons, particularly in practical activities, and also for phonics.

We have been learning a lot about Asian countries and the hot weather. Dressing up and dancing to their cultural music has been their favourite part. Leann has also created some outstanding cooking and art lessons in which the children have used different utensils to create some of the most common Asian plates and scenes.

As we approach the end of term, we have some exciting news. Macaw and Owl Classes will be working very closely in term two, joining for phonics, maths and some afternoon activities. This planned merge is to allow the pupils to work to the best of their ability, providing each pupil with more opportunities for individualised learning that meets their needs. We are very excited to be able to work closely together and feel that it will offer the best possible outcomes for all pupils.

Have a wonderful half term!

Macaw Class Team

Jamie, Marie, Ali, Amy, Leann and Gal



Woodpecker Class

Our theme this term has been Hot countries and we have been learning all about countries in Asia. In English the first story we read together was 'Rumble in the Jungle'. In this story we learnt and identified all the different animals we might find in the jungle, we also listened to the sounds they make. The second story we read together was 'Let's go to China'. In this story we learnt all about the music, clothes and food in China and explored lots of interesting objects too. Our final story this term was 'A Gift for Amma'. In the story Amma goes to a market in India, we loved smelling all of the different spices that she finds and tasting some of the food she comes across too.

In Maths this term we have been learning about number. We started by matching objects and pictures that are the same, we were all really good at matching symbols to the photos of the real objects. We also learnt about sorting into groups, we are all really good at sorting by colour so we have been learning to sort objects and pictures in different ways. We practised sorting by type of object and some of us practised sorting by the first sound of the word.

In Geography this term we have been learning all about the weather. We have spent lots of time looking and identifying the weather outside. We have been watching videos of the weathers we don't see as often, like snow. We have also been thinking about the clothes that we need to wear in these different types of weather and learning that we need to put on our wellies when it's wet outside.

In Science we have been learning all about different materials and textures. We have been exploring materials in Tac Pac along with set pieces of music. We all really enjoyed this session and enjoyed interacting with the adults and our peers with the objects. We have also been exploring wet textures including corn flour, this feels really strange on our hands and we really enjoyed dripping it from our fingers onto the table.

Alicia, Heidi, Rebecca, Sophie



Penguin Class

It's been a real rollercoaster of a first term as we have settled into our new class with new peers and staff to work with and even a new room for some of us. The weather has been incredibly unpredictable, but we seem to have dodged most of the rain!

It has been lovely getting involved with and getting to know Penguin class youngsters these past few weeks. Their wonderful communication and interactions with both staff and peers have blown us away, particularly in messy play and communication sessions where we have sought to home in on the clarity and complexity of our communications using aided language boards. As you might have guessed, much of our learning has been centered around our theme 'Countries in South America'.

Pupils have made marvelous inroads with their learning in Literacy lessons with clear engagement in our sensory stories/texts 'Animals of the Rainforest', 'Where's my Mum' and 'Roaming through the Rainforest'. Using these texts as a springboard we have already seen pupils engage with sentence construction and comprehension tasks as well as mark-making mirroring our phonics learning which has picked up where pupils left off last year.

In numeracy we've had a fantastic opportunity to baseline where our pupils are at with lessons focusing on place-value and 'number' (i.e. counting and numeral recognition). In this last week we have begun to explore calculation and we look forward to carrying this on next term.

Swimming, as ever has been brilliant and every single pupil in class has demonstrated just how capable they are in the pool. For some pupils this has meant working on front crawl and breast-stroke whereas for others it has been good to see them settle back into swimming routines and build their expectations for learning activities in the pool.

In cooking and art we have kept to our theme with South American based creations and our theme lessons have had a geography slant with work on other countries, comparing climates and investigation into maps.

Last of all, in science we have explored weather, solids and liquids (bring on the ice play and melted chocolate!), and the physical properties of objects e.g. soft/hard.

Whatever you get up to or wherever you end up, have a brilliant half term and we will see you all soon,

From Amelia, Kate, Verity, Teresa, Leann and Richard



Heron Class

Our theme this term has been Countries in South America, we have been focusing on traditional foods, artwork, objects, places and traditions in South America.

Within Storytime, the pupils enjoyed reading the poem 'Roaming through the Rainforest', a non-fiction story of 'Animals of the Rainforest' and a fiction story called 'Monkey Puzzle'. Each of these stories focus on animals that could be found in South American rainforests. Pupils have enjoyed exploring the sensory props around the story and role play with these props as if they were in the South American rainforests. Pupils have also enjoyed comprehension tasks which retell the story, using visual cues and aided language boards. Pupils have enjoyed taking part in mark making activities based around retelling the story, tracing or copying key words from the text.

Within theme lessons we have been learning about South America through sensory experiences, comparing it to the UK. We have been learning about maps and trying to locate items in the school using hand made maps, especially on the field. We have also made our own map and started to learn about grid references. The last week we had to find treasure on the field, following a map with some pupils following grid references. The pupils were over the moon with their chocolate surprise!

We have been focusing on Careers within this term, learning new skills that we can transfer to adulthood. We have been making squash, sandwiches, and rice crispy cakes. We have made a Heron Class tuck shop, to encourage pupils to exchange the snacks for a fake coin. The pupils really enjoy doing 'chores' to prepare for adulthood, they have been very excited to go up to the Independent Living Centre to take part in these activities, as well as wash up and clean plates and dishes.

The pupils have had a great start to the school year which involved Amy's birthday party, amazing progress and get settling in. We hope you have a great half term break, let us know what you get up to on Evisense!

Jemma, Amy.Y, Amy.A, Angus, Kate & Leann



Transition Pathway



Albatross Class

The start of the new academic year has passed by in a flash! Pupils have all settled really well into their new class and adapted to the new routines. All pupils have followed their individual timetables and have had a great term. As well as all our usual activities like shopping, OXSRAD and cycling, we've managed to fulfil all our termly plans (including a cheeky visit to the fair), as well as move into our fabulous new classroom and take ownership. Check it out! We've looked and thought about important events over the term and took responsibility for collecting Harvest donations – many thanks!

The Theme for Term 1 was '*Hot Countries*'. As young adults, we have had a general look at the World and considered why the countries closer to the equator are hottest. We've looked at the various continents and tried to familiarise with the names of more countries. We've considered temperatures in more detail and the hottest country appears to be Mali in Africa.

The class hosted a very successful first Coffee Morning in support of Macmillan and the room was buzzing with chat and activity. We are looking forward to hosting another!

The Enterprise Group also hosted a Jacket Potato Café and some pupils were surprised with the amount of work involved and how hard it is to run a cafe. However, we are now considering and planning to host a café for parents & carers – how exciting! Some pupils have engaged in work experience offsite, and this will increase in the coming terms. A group also attended the Aspirations Fair in Oxford to familiarise with job opportunities and what is available post school.

Tess has led our PSHE sessions which has recapped on our various emotions and strategies the we use to manage these effectively – recapping on the Zones of Regulation. Tess is always on hand to support our pupils and they all know they have her support to guide them.



Albatross Class cont.

We have now moved permanently into the new Independent Living Centre at the front of the school and we look forward to our new and exciting opportunities. Our final week of term has concluded with a Drama workshop hosted by a Radley College student. Our pupils engaged well using their imagination! A group attended the Young Person's Forum for Supported Internship at Oxford College and all really enjoyed it. We even saw some past Kingfisher pupils there. We concluded our Whole School Theme with a visit to the Living Rain Forest, which was a really interesting experience with some very strange and wonderful sights & sounds! (apart from the snakes). Lastly, Albatross hosted a Bacon Roll Day as a special well-deserved end of term treat for staff!

Quotes: *"The JPC was really hard to run and I was glad when it was over. We also learned about the Jewish Harvest Festival Sukkot and we went to Wallingford Fair. I enjoyed it at the Young Person's Forum at Oxford College – it was fun!"*

Happy October Half Term!

Albatross Class - Leah, Sharon, Lisa, Ellie, Esther and Tess



Pelican Class

It has been lovely to welcome staff and students to the new Pelican class. In the transition Pathway, our focus is to encourage independence, provide learning opportunities to support with the preparation for adulthood, support to develop students' communication skills and allow learners to make choices about their programme of study based on their likes and dislikes. Where possible, we embed learning into practical and meaningful contexts so learners can generalise their skills across different settings. In addition to this we provided targeted Maths and English lessons linked to ILPs to support pupils to make progress in the areas that are important for them to thrive.

A large part of our curriculum is aimed at off site/community learning. This term, Pelican class have been lucky to participate in a variety of weekly trips including: Functional Maths/Shopping trips at Tesco- Students have used visuals to produce food/ingredients for weekly cooking sessions.

OXRAD- Students have had a gym induction and been able to access the facilities available. Students have participated in group games, for example Boccia and group stretching activities.

Wheels for All- Students have attended Horspath Athletics Club where they have been supported by volunteers to improve their cycling skills.

In addition to our weekly timetabled trips, a highlight this term was definitely our trip to the Wallingford fair. It was such a lovely leisure and learning opportunity for our pupils to make choices based on their likes and develop friendships within the post 16 cohort. The photographs are a testament to the fun that the students had. Next term our class will start working at a local allotment which we are really excited about.

In class we have been equally busy. Students have been using colourful semantics and aided language boards to comment on their weekly activities. In group, we have been learning to sign the songs 'Shotgun' and 'Dance Monkey' with instructional videos from the DSO choir. We have built choice-making into a large range of learning activities, for example Deep Pressure, Sherborne movement and Music and Art sessions. We have a job wheel in class and pupils have been practicing daily chores including table setting, plant watering and table wiping. We wish everyone a lovely holiday. Please keep in touch with what you get up to, and we look forward to seeing everyone after the break.

With best wishes

Cathy, Sarah, Sian, Adriana and Leann

Pelican Class

