

## Welcome

# Strength, courage and resolve

Dear Children and Families

**As we draw to the end of this academic year, we cannot help but look back and reflect on what we have all achieved together in what has been quite a remarkable year!**

The strength, courage and resolve of our families has been nothing but inspirational. The past 12 months has impacted on us all in different ways. We have listened, with sheer admiration, to the ways in which you have all adapted to the demands of this year. We know that some families have lost people close to them; we know that some families' working circumstances have changed in unforeseen ways; and we know that many of our families have fought on the front line and committed so much personally and professionally. We would like to take the opportunity to say thank you for this and for the swell of support given to the school from our community. The tremendous support of our families, governors, PTA and the local community enables us to feel like we can continue to push boundaries in ways which are right for our families and children.

Although we set the challenge to push these boundaries, it is our staff who champion this in ways which the profession has never before seen. From live lessons to remote parents' evenings, to sports days and open evenings, they have made it all happen, even when the easiest, and often most advocated solution was to do none of these. We wanted to do these things because they were right for the children. The staff have used the curriculum as a solution to meet the needs of our children, adapting it where needed to offer experiences such as 'Me Time' and more recently 'Adventure Week'. Their creativity and dedication is truly inspiring - nothing is too much trouble if it is for the benefit of the children!

When the children said they wanted a beach, they got a beach and so much more! We have learnt so much as a profession and as a staff team over the last 12 months, which will continue to make our school a happy, thriving and 'beyond outstanding' place for all to learn.

What continues to make our school the happiest place to be is the children. There isn't a day we come to school and don't remind ourselves of how privileged we are to teach and work with your children. When we look back over the past 12 months, it is the children who have surprised us the most. Their incredible adaptability, ability to reshape and upmost, their trust and faith has been humbling to watch. In a time where the world has felt strange, unknown and a bit frightening, they have remained buoyed and happy - they are the most incredible learners. Lots of things have changed for them, in ways that mean perhaps they cannot remember what it looked like before. What the past 12 months has reminded us of (which is something we have always believed strongly in) is that children have the knowledge, creativity and skills to find solutions. We are excited for what next year will bring, because whatever happens, our children will continue to lead the way.

Enjoy the most wonderful summer break.

Mrs McManus and Mrs Norman

## Fairwell our fantastic Year 6!



## Nursery

### Wild and Wonderful

We are extremely proud of all the nursery children. Despite such an unusual year, they have continued to grow and shine and have remained energetic and positive. They have come so far this year and they should be very proud of all they have achieved. We have had so much fun together and their enthusiasm has been commendable; they really have kept us smiling.

A highlight for this year has been the way the children became engaged in our 'Under the Sea' topic. Their knowledge about sea creatures and their thirst to know more was impressive and they were particularly inspired with our 'Somebody Swallowed Stanley' story, showing empathy and a mature attitude in wanting to care for, and protect, their world and its creatures. What a wonderful quality to have at such a young age.



We know that the children will continue to thrive in their reception classes and we wish them a very happy transition.

## Reception



### What does it mean to build?

We are so very proud of all of our amazing Reception children for the resilience and adaptability that they have shown this term and throughout the whole year. From exploring the skills needed to build to making their ideas into reality, their imaginations came to life in everything they did.



The highlight of this term has to be the amazing work we did when we looked at the question 'What does it mean to build?' The children explored and investigated different materials and used their learning to predict which would sink and float. They absolutely loved showing off their determination as well as their collaboration skills.

We were thrilled to be able to invite our families to our amazing sports day where the children were able to share their first school event with parents. They absolutely loved showing off their determination and collaboration skills.

We have had a wonderful year in Reception. Each of our children has flourished and all the staff are so very proud of you. What a fabulous start to Gatley Primary each of you have had and we are sure you will continue to wow your teachers as you move to Year 1!



## Year 1

### What came first?

What a wonderful final term we have celebrated together in Year 1. Exploring the question 'What came first?', we discovered how music is created across different historical periods, ordering a range of artists and their known songs in chronological order. Becoming historians, we also learnt about different kings and queens in history, and applied our creativity whilst designing beautiful portraits of our chosen monarch.



Enjoying the outdoors this term, we participated in sessions with Commando Tim! He supported our learning about Queen Elizabeth II and we applied our problem solving skills when completing an exciting assault course.



As the school has been growing, so has our understanding of the building process. We followed the cycle as we designed our very own diorama classrooms, using 'Plan Do Review' to support us with our projects as we worked collaboratively to enhance our learning.



## Year 2

### Is there anybody out there?

**Year 2** have had a wonderful term, exploring the question 'Is there anybody out there?'

We have been busy exploring the whole solar system, from the planets to the sun. We learnt all about the movement of the planets and their relationship to the sun and moons.

We have done a lot of creative work this term; we found out about lots of different artists who have created space artwork, and we created our own pieces in similar styles. We have also explored Holst's musical suite 'The Planets' and this inspired us to think about conducting our own musical piece using a range of instruments.

During our science lessons, we have been finding out about the basic needs of humans and animals. We used this knowledge to work out whether there could be life on Mars.

We have also spent a lot of time outdoors! We have been lucky enough to have the opportunity to be involved in Forest School, have a cricket taster session and worked with Commando Tim to build our teamwork skills.



## Year 3

### How powerful is the earth?

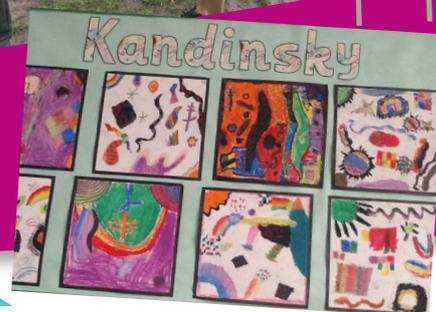
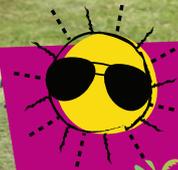
**We've had a fantastic final term in Year 3** exploring our topic question "How powerful is the earth?"

This topic has allowed us to explore the formation of the earth, from the tectonic plates to the continents of the world. We've been fascinated with the forces that are present all around us such as gravity and we thoroughly enjoyed designing our own science experiment about magnetism!

During this topic, we've also dug deeper by looking at powerful people throughout history. We travelled back to the Roman times and discussed what it was that made the Romans so powerful and how they used this power to conquer Britain. Not only this, but we've harnessed our creative skills this term and created our own Kandinsky inspired artwork, complete with his iconic bright colours and eye-catching patterns.

We've taken the fun outdoors too and took part in a fantastic virtual sports day, complete with bottle flips, 3 minute planks and even a clothes relay! Our Forest School sessions have also developed our team work and problem solving skills, as we worked together to create a wheel-based invention using only natural resources.

We've had a wonderful year and feel ready for Year 4!



## Year 4

### Do animals need humans?

What a brilliant final term it has been in Year 4. The dedication and perseverance from the children has been exemplified at every turn, especially when working from home, and their independence has grown from this.

We have had a wonderful final term in Year 4 exploring the question 'Do animals need humans?'

Our topic question has given us the opportunity to develop our geographical knowledge when locating different animals and their habitats around the world. Researching endangered species, we considered both the positive and negative impact of human activity on different habitats and the animals that live there.

Bringing our learning to life at Forest School, we had the opportunity to explore the area around us for different habitats and eco-systems. The children enjoyed the immersive opportunity this presented and embraced the hands-on experience as they identified different insects and animals. Using their creative skills, the children then sketched in great detail what they found and identified how they have adapted to their environment and the food chains they are a part of.



The children have enjoyed taking part on swimming lessons this term and have made fantastic progress developing their overall swimming skills and water safety.

Our virtual sports day presented the children the challenge of completing different challenges that they all enjoyed. The alphabet relay was a definite highlight as the children ran on to the camera with everything from apples to cats to hairdryers!

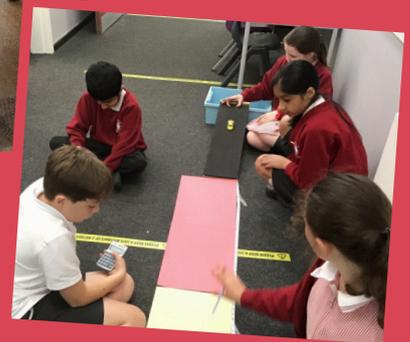
## Year 5

### Are we the decision makers?

What a brilliant final term we have had in Year 5! As we've explored our philosophical question, we've had plenty of opportunities to consider decision-making in a wide range of curriculum areas.

To think about things that are out of control, we became experts in both natural and man-made disasters, using our research skills to find out about the Chernobyl power plant explosion and the sinking of The Titanic. We used these findings to influence our writing projects in literacy, creating newspaper articles and a balanced argument about whether you should live in a tsunami danger zone. We also made lots of our own decisions, devising our own friction and air-resistance experiments in science, and composing a piece of music only using body sounds, influenced by our listening. Our RE unit led us to ask questions about Buddhists and what their views on decision-making are.

We also had fantastic fun learning outside the classroom, including a memorable virtual sports day and sessions with Commando Tim and our sports coach to build upon our physical abilities, as well as a visit to Kingsway for a chicken wire workshop. We are now more than ready for life in Year 6, and can't wait to make the most of our final year at Gatley Primary School!



# Our final steps at primary...

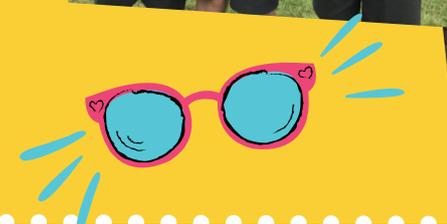


Year 6 have had an incredible term and have made the most of their final few weeks at Gatley Primary. A highlight has to be the residential trip to Kingswood where we all had a wonderful time and relished the chance to try our hands at a range of adventurous activities.

A top favourite was the 3G swing- some of the children's screams could be heard across the whole site! The whole trip was amazing and it was fantastic to spend quality time together and to make lots of new memories.

Before this, Year 6 were working hard towards their end of key stage exams and we could not be more proud of all they have achieved. All of the children performed to their very best and can go onto their new schools full of confidence and with a great sense of achievement.

This term, we have also been expanding our horizons whilst answering the question 'Can the world change?' in topic. As a year group, we loved exploring evolution and finding out all about Charles Darwin. In addition, we became eco warriors when considering issues that affect our environment and we have all vowed to limit our use of products containing palm oil and to reduce our use of single use plastics!



PTA

# Thank you!

The PTA would like to say a big thank you to our Gatley families for your support this year during such challenging times. Despite these circumstances, we have found a way to support both school and our wider community through some innovative activities.

The PTA designed and organised Easter activities, which included an 'Easter Egg Hunt' across the village, a colouring competition and a quiz. We held regular collections for Gatley Foodbank in return for the children having funky hair, crazy socks and Christmas jumpers. The response to our plea for specific items was overwhelming and certainly gratefully received by the foodbank and in turn, the families who use it.

More recently, despite being unable to run our summer fair, we were able to sell raffle tickets and hold a chocolate tombola at the school open evenings. Needless to say, the chocolate was a sell out and raffle tickets sold like hot cakes! We raised nearly £650 across the two evenings.

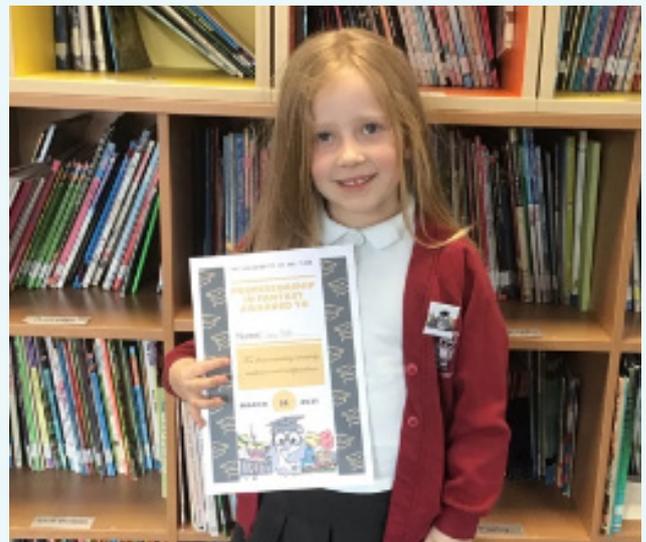
We are pleased to report that even without our regular activities generating a steady income, we have still been able to support the school with a contribution to the Year 6 leavers celebration (as we do every year). We would like to wish them all well this week as they see out their final few days at Gatley Primary School and embark on the next chapters of their lives.

We will be looking to recruit some new members to the PTA in the new school year, as we say a huge thank you and farewell to those stepping down. Your help will be greatly appreciated and makes a big difference in sharing the load.

Governors

# Wellbeing

The Governors have been so impressed with the strategies that the school has introduced to support the wellbeing of the children and staff during this challenging year - both through 'home schooling', and as the children have come back into school, and then out again in some cases!



During this last year, we have spoken to the staff, leaders and the children about their experiences - what has worked well and what we can continue to build on as a school.

It's been so lovely to hear that the culture of the school has really supported everyone - where the staff and pupil voice is valued. We have seen how dojo has been a great tool to support communication between the school and families during home schooling, and that the children have valued the supportive videos, direct feedback from teachers, and the ability to take part in collaborative learning with their peers whilst remote learning.

The children have benefited from a focus on activities to support wellbeing this last term. This has built on the success of Wellbeing Wednesday and the Mental Health Ambassadors, and has been an opportunity for the children to do what they wanted to help them get back to enjoying being in school. The Me Time project has been a whole school activity, and boosted the confidence and skills of the children, giving them an opportunity to become 'professors' in various areas of their choosing. Children told us, 'I feel brilliant when I do Me Time' and 'I really want to keep doing Me Time because I look forward to it and it relaxes me a lot'.

It has been wonderful to see the positive impact of the focus on wellbeing, and to hear about the plans to continue this next year as it becomes more embedded across everything the school does. As the Mental Health Ambassadors told us 'wellbeing is a way to develop strategies to support positive feelings' and its important we don't lose sight of this.

**The Governors**

