

Owl Post

Issue: 28 - April 2022



Welcome

Wellbeing is at the heart of Gatley Primary School

Dear Children and Families

During this Spring Term as a school community we have achieved many things. This term has seen us hosting our first face to face parent workshop which focused on Mental Health and Wellbeing.

In this workshop we shared our RSHE policy and the 'Golden Thread' of RSHE in our curriculum. Please take a look at our website under 'School Information' for more information and look out for our Personal Development tab on the website coming soon! We are also excited to share our new communication strategy which is being shaped in partnership with parents, pupils and staff. Thank you to those of you who could attend the meeting and please look out for additional dates in the Summer Term for further working parties. Thank you to all our families for your ongoing support of the school, particularly as we seek to resume as much of 'normal' school life as we can.

This half term also saw our PTA Winter Fair, Easter Egg collection for Bethany Church and Easter Egg Hunt- thank you to our PTA team who do a wonderful

job of providing these opportunities for the school and local community. Our governors continue to provide support to the school via ongoing school evaluation activities and I know the governors will join me in celebrating and congratulating the school, the staff and the children in their recognition as an SSAT 'Transformational' school for Wellbeing. This is an externally validated and nationally recognised award; not only this, we are the first primary school in the UK to achieve this! We continue to share and embrace external partnership involvement and are looking forward to the exciting plans we have as a Trust to develop opportunities for engagement over the next term.

Our staff team continue to achieve wonderful things. Their unwavering determination to prioritise children's safety, wellbeing and educational

development whilst being creative and innovative, in a climate where this nationally has been challenging for schools, never ceases to amaze me! I am so proud of the ways in which they enrich our curriculum, particularly in the additional time they give to extracurricular clubs and activities.

Finally, but always most importantly, the achievements of our children this term have been exceptional. From trips and visits, to performances RE: Badge Enquiry and play, the children really have showcased their excellent knowledge of the topics they study. I am sure that during parent's evening you were able to see just how impressive this is in their topic books. The care, commitment and determination they have as learners is so very impressive to watch in action. Their achievements beyond the classroom continue to show the breadth and ambition of our curriculum. For some year groups this has been through plays and productions or in sporting achievements and competitions, for others this has been learning how to light a fire in Forest School. Well done children on an exceptional term; with this approach, you will continue to achieve great things in summer too!

Mrs Norman

Sharing wellbeing to help us all

In January, we were delighted to be accredited with a national award for "Transforming" practice in Wellbeing from the SSAT following a rigorous assessment process. During our moderation visit, we had the opportunity to share and celebrate our approach to supporting wellbeing within our school community with Laura Burton, Senior Education Lead at SSAT. Various activities took place throughout the day, including a discussion about our vision and values, exploration of our unique learning environment and interviews with staff and pupils across the school. Most notably, our Wellbeing Ambassadors eloquently expressed how their role within school

impacts on pupils' understanding of wellbeing and the strategies that we can adopt to take care of our wellbeing. We were incredibly proud and grateful to receive the award and be recognised for our embedded and dedicated approach to wellbeing.

SSAT Framework for Exceptional Education

Congratulations to

Gatley Primary School

who have been accredited for transforming practice in Wellbeing within the SSAT Framework for Exceptional Education

This award recognises that their practice is amongst the most exceptional nationally

Sue Williamson

Sue Williamson
Chief Executive

This certificate is valid from January 2022 - December 2023

ssat the schools, students and teachers network

"Wellbeing is truly at the centre of all you do at Gatley and with such significant impact on the whole school community." - Laura Burton

Nursery

Do all animals need the same things?

During the Spring term, Nursery have enjoyed exploring our learning question, 'Do all animals need the same things?' We first looked at lots of different animals, named some of them and enjoyed exploring animals in our jungle themed role play area. This included using our safari hats and binoculars!

We then had a very exciting visit from some farm animals which led us to look at different ways in which we can look after different animals. We discussed that all animals need water, food and a place to live - just like us! This linked nicely to looking at how we can look after ourselves and keep ourselves healthy. The children investigated lots of different fruits and vegetables and created a fruit and vegetable face! We also spent lots of time in our outdoor area focusing on keeping our bodies healthy. We can't wait to find out more about explorers next term!



Reception

What Does it Mean to Grow?

During the Spring term, Reception have been searching to answer the question, 'What does it mean to grow?'. We started by thinking about how we grow ourselves, looking at the human skeleton and the importance of bones; we even had a visit from a local dentist who helped us to understand a bit more about how we keep our teeth, and our bodies, happy and healthy.

Moving through the term, we started to think about the life-cycles of plants, butterflies, frogs and chickens. The children worked together to plant cress, green beans, aubergine and tomatoes. As artists, we created paintings of Spring flowers inspired by Vincent Van Gogh. Excitingly, we have also welcomed new members to our classrooms - our very own caterpillars! We cannot wait to see them change and grow, just like us!



Year 1

Are all Stories Inside a Book?

We have had a wonderful spring term in Year 1. We have been exploring the question 'Are all stories inside a book?' Highlights from the term have been: creating some beautiful art work based on illustrators; writing instructions for making a potion; testing out the best ingredients to create a bubbly potion; learning about story telling across the ages and mastering the skills of tag rugby in P.E.

It was so lovely to have the opportunity for the children to go on their first ever school trip! They were so responsible and mature and they really enjoyed all the workshops. We were also incredibly proud of the children and how well they performed in our production. From writing the script, to rehearsing the scenes and delivering the lines, they demonstrated such great levels of creativity. The children are now so confident to answer the question 'Are all stories inside a book?' based on all the new knowledge they gained this term.



Year 2

Can we live without transport?

This Spring term, Year 2 have been exploring the question 'Can we survive without transport?' We enjoyed our exciting trip to Manchester Airport Visitor Park, where we were able to become a pilot on the DC-10 aircraft and visit Concorde.

We have also loved learning about important figures in the history of transport, such as Henry Ford and Amelia Earhart. We have developed our artistic skills and created beautiful pencil drawings of our favourite transportation methods. More recently, we have learnt how to travel from one place to another, using compass directions, an atlas and a key.

This supported us in learning the different continents and oceans of the world in our Geography lessons. We immersed ourselves into our computing lessons, creating PowerPoint



presentations about 'wants vs needs', and enjoyed learning technical skills such as inserting images and changing backgrounds on slides. We're very much looking forward to our summer term topic and in particular our production!

Year 3

Are Rocks Magic?

This spring term, Year 3 have been exploring the question 'Are Rocks Magic?' We have immersed ourselves in the exploration of rocks and fossils whilst also learning about the historical figure of Mary Anning and the significant impact that she made.

Our learning has been brought to life through various activities such as the starburst rock cycle experiment and we have even grown our own crystals in the classroom! This knowledge has transferred into our dance lessons, where we have created our own dance motifs which depict the journey of lava through a volcano. Our history study of the Stone Age has allowed us to explore how natural resources, such as rocks, were used in the past and how humans have evolved from nomadic hunter gatherers to arable farmers.



We're particularly proud of the amazing models that we have created in our DT lessons which show the development of shelters throughout the Stone Age eras. Finally, the Hogwarts Express made a special stop at Year 3 this term as we immersed ourselves in our class reader, "Harry Potter & the Philosopher's Stone" and decorated our door to demonstrate our learning for World Book Day!

It's been a fantastic term full of learning and we can't wait to discover "What's around the World?" in the summer term!

Year 4

Who Changes the World?

This term, we have been answering the question 'Who Changes the World?', exploring historical figures from a range of backgrounds including medicine, art, sport and civil rights. We considered which primary and secondary sources were reliable as well as developing our understanding of bias and chronological order.

In DT, we looked at the worldwide impact of the x-ray and how this inspired Marie Curie in her scientific enquiries. In PSHE, we looked at more recent times and were influenced by Rose Ayling-Ellis to learn some British Sign Language. We thoroughly enjoyed presenting all of our findings

through our year group production at Elm Road Church, discovering primary sources as we were taken back in time!

We also had the opportunity to visit the Bridgewater Hall and watch the Hallé Orchestra perform a variety of classical pieces. We even had the chance to join in as we sang 'It takes a certain kind of imagination' along with all the other visiting schools. For many of us, this was the first time we had heard an orchestra play live and was a wonderful experience! We are incredibly proud of how everyone represented Gatley Primary so well.

It has been wonderful to see everyone enjoying swimming lessons this term



and we have been amazed by the confidence and techniques that have been developed over the last few weeks.

Next term, we are excited to find out 'What Goes on Behind the Scenes?' as we prepare for our transition to Year 5.

Year Groups

Year 5

Is Faster Better?



We've had a fantastic term in Year 5 and have loved exploring our topic question: 'Is faster better?' Throughout this we have considered the human environmental impact of the fast fashion and fast food industries and have also given thought to the need for the speed and the impact this has on our lives.

We have had many memorable moments including a successful visit to Kingsway in this year's Spelling Bee as well as interschool sporting activities. A highlight has been the children's fantastic performances in our 'Poetry By Heart' competition.

We have loved exploring the outdoors during our Forest School sessions and

have brought this love of nature into the classroom where we have explored and composed our own nature poems.

Back in the classroom, we have also enjoyed learning more Spanish and building on our knowledge in music. We have loved conducting science experiments which explored forces and have also considered the process of designing sustainable packaging in DT.

Next term we have lots to look forward to including our class trip and production, as well as several visits to Kingsway for experiences in Science, MFL and Art.

Year 6

How Modern Are Computers?

Year 6 have had another really successful term and we have loved exploring our big topic question 'How Modern Are Computers?' Back in January, we began our study by considering how computers have helped people to win wars, with a particular focus on Alan Turing and The Enigma Code. It was fascinating to find out about a local significant figure and we capitalised upon the opportunity to make links to learn more about equal rights too. We even made our own Enigma machines and our own versions of Turing's 'Bombe'.

Following this, we learnt about Katherine Johnson and her role as a human computer. Again, we considered the huge impact she made and were inspired to see how she changed the path of history- we were so inspired we wrote our own biographies to celebrate her achievements! Next, we moved on to explore computers in more modern contexts. We have become experts in Kodu and have used this to write and de-bug our own 'race track' computer games and we have also mastered the 'design, make, review' cycle in DT. In this subject we have made our own 'toy cars of the future' drawing upon our scientific knowledge of electricity and circuits, alongside our market



research, to make our designs as successful as possible. Finally, we have explored how modern music is mixed, using Garage Band to create loops which were inspired by Ed Sheeran.

In addition to all of this, we have been continuing to work hard towards our End of Key Stage tests, which we are ready to tackle after our Easter Holidays and in PE we have honed our lacrosse skills and designed and performed our own dances inspired by the New Zealand Rugby Team's Haka! What a busy term we have had!

Governors

One of the key (and rewarding) activities for Governors is to support the school in its School Self-Evaluation efforts and provide feedback. It's a great opportunity for us to visit the school and see how much the children are progressing.

This term it was lovely to see how reading is embedded across the school. We saw how class readers are used to shape topic work and support the wider curriculum - whether it's themed science experiments or delving into history. It's always a joy to speak to the children and hear how reading sparks their imagination and builds on their overall learning.

Visiting is also an opportunity to see how school improvements are benefitting wellbeing and one that stands out is the Agility Track. It's been great to see the children using and enjoying it.

Have a safe and happy Easter,

Lisa Dennis
Chair of Governors

