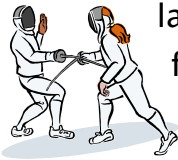


# PILGRIMS POST

UP TO DATE NEWS FROM PILGRIMS PRE-PREPARATORY SCHOOL

ISSUE DATE:  
22 MAY, 2009

The children (and staff) who visited the Kingswood Centre in West Runton last week are finally starting to look human again! We all had a fantastic trip and it was a pleasure watching the children as they tried new things and gained in confidence and self belief. We were very lucky with the weather which was forecast to be torrential rain. We escaped with some light showers and the children were able to take part in all of the planned activities. Their behaviour was exemplary and it really was a pleasure to take them. I would like to say an enormous thank you to the team of staff who went along with the children. It is great fun but hard work and they all now deserve their half term break.



Earlier on this term Year 3 visited Ironbridge in Shropshire as part of their work on the Victorians. They were all inspired by their visit to the Victorian School and exhausted by their long cycle ride. They produced some wonderful watercolours of the Ironbridge which they painted in situ sitting on the banks of the gorge. The children were away for 3 nights, our longest residential yet. Thank you to Mrs Waddington and the staff team who went with her and who made sure that the children had a brilliant time.



Year 2 has also been to Pavenham this term as part of their geography topic, considering the features of different localities. The residents of the village are incredibly generous with their time when the children visit and are able to tell the children much about the history of the village and the different ways in which the land is used.

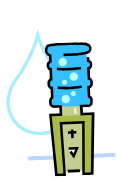
Reception has also had their summer term visit to Wimpole Farm. In the past the trip has attracted more than its fair share of rain so it was with great delight that they managed to stay dry. The children had a great time and have completed some fantastic writing about their visit.



Year One's topic this term is Houses and Homes and the children enjoyed their trip to the Chiltern Open Air Museum immensely. They had an opportunity to make a clay brick and explore the different types of house. We are hoping to arrange a bricklayer to come in later this term and show the children how brick walls are made.



In addition to the major visits the Year 3 children have also been to Bedford Modern School to watch a production of Annie and to Cambridge to watch the BFG. It sometimes seems as if the children are never in school!



Year 3 recently presented a case to the Bursar to have a water cooler in the school. Mr Frater was so impressed by their proposal that the cooler is now installed next to the hall and everyone is enjoying its benefits.

Today is Friendship Funday and the children have been raising money for our chosen charity, Save the Children. It is an opportunity to celebrate friendship whilst raising money to save children's lives. The children gave a donation to bring in their favourite toys to share with their friends. They discussed the different games children play around the world and focused on the importance of how every child has a right to play.



The cake sales organised by Pilgrims Parents have proved very popular and parents have been very busy making a variety of delicious delicacies. The cakes prove so popular that they are sold out within minutes of going on sale. Pilgrims Parents will let everyone know how much has been raised once they have all been held. Don't forget that 2LH and 3SW will be holding their sale today at 3.30pm.



It was a pleasure this week to take Lottie Shaw and Kirsty Stark to Oxford to collect the school's Challenge Award. We were one of the first schools nationally to reach the required standard of provision for gifted and talented children and NACE, the awarding body, invited us to the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford to collect our certificate. Fifteen schools attended the ceremony. Each school had two children to represent them, collect their certificate and

make a speech. Kirsty spoke for Pilgrims and a copy of her speech is on the school website. The children there ranged in age from Lottie who is 5, to sixth formers. Kirsty stole the show as she spoke with eloquence and humour about Pilgrims. She was the only child to talk without reading her speech and she was inspirational! Thank you Kirsty and Lottie for representing the school so brilliantly.

**W**e have now appointed three new teachers who will join us in the autumn term. Mrs Laura Baxter is currently teaching Year 3 at Laburnham Lower



School in Sandy. Mrs Jacqueline Morales is currently teaching Year 2 at St Mary's Lower School in Clophill and Miss Alyssa Holdgate has just completed her BEd at the University of Bedfordshire. We had an excellent field of applicants to choose from. Miss Baxter and Mrs Morales will both be joining us on all change day at the end of term. Miss Holdgate will be spending several days in school this term learning about the way in which we work and meeting the children and staff.

**C**ongratulations go to Beth Smith, Shadow Manager in Little Pilgrims, on her recent exam results. Beth has worked extremely hard during the past two years to gain her Early Years Foundation degree. Well done Beth.

**W**e will be moving to the planned structure of four classes in each year group from the beginning of the autumn term. This is 12 months ahead of schedule and due to the demand for places. This means that the three current Year One classes will be split into four classes in the autumn. Our Reception classes for 2010 are now full and we are operating a waiting list. If you haven't yet registered a younger sibling please don't panic. We apply a sibling preference policy so if you register now I am confident that we will be able to accommodate your child!

**T**oday we have our second Grand Parents' afternoon. As I write this we have 170 visitors planning to join us. This is a phenomenal response and I am sure that the children will have an enjoyable afternoon with their grandparents. So many of the grandparents today play a huge role in school life that it is lovely to be able to welcome them into school and offer them some hospitality.

I am sorry that we had to cancel the Family Fun last week. The games are designed to be played outside and the field was too wet to hold the event.



We have rescheduled for Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May. If you are now able to come to the event tickets can be bought in advance from Pilgrims Parents. The afternoon costs £5 per family and is a noisy, messy occasion.

It has been a while since I made a 'car park comment' in the newsletter! The new car park lines have allowed more parking and the system is working well. Many of our parents are good friends and enjoy an opportunity to catch up at the beginning or end of the day.



Could I ask parents if they are having a chat with friends in the car park that they don't block the route round. The cars parked at the end of the rows mean that the turning space is quite tight and a parent chatting through a car window can stop the whole car park from moving. May I also remind you to take care when driving through the car park and keep your speed down to 10mph.

Sports Day is being held on the Wednesday after half term. I hope that I will see many of you there. This event is very dependent on the weather. If it



does rain we will use the text service to notify parents. If we don't have an up to date mobile number for you then please do drop one in at your convenience. We have made a decision this year to only provide a picnic to children whose parents request one. In the past we have provided a picnic for every child and there has been a huge amount of waste as parents provide picnics as well. If you would like the school to provide a picnic for your child please let the class teachers know.


Many of you will have heard the orchestra playing at a school event.

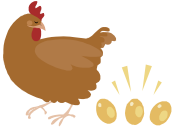


We have some incredibly talented children in school and we are delighted to be the current holders of the Music Festival shield for the Under 9 Orchestra category for the fourth year running. On Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June at 2.30pm parents are invited to meet with Miss Prockter to discuss the options for children to learn new instruments in the Autumn Term. Although aimed at Reception, all parents are invited to see a demonstration of instruments available and learn a little bit more about the peripatetic music service.

Thanks to the generosity of Pilgrims Parents we are in the process of building an outdoor classroom. The foundations have already been laid with the help of a wonderful groundforce team and more news will follow on its progress.

On Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June we will be welcoming the inspection team into school for our long awaited inspection! The three inspectors will look at every aspect of our provision for children in Years 1 and above. The report will be published approximately 6 to 8 weeks later which in reality will be in the autumn term. We also feel it is highly likely that we will have a separate Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) inspection at the same time although we have had no confirmation of this. The Early Years inspections are carried out with 5 days notice. I will, of course, let you know immediately if we are to have such an inspection and parents of children in the EYFS will be asked to complete and return a questionnaire in a short time scale.

Some news, hot off the press, that Marc Patching's wife, Claire, gave birth to  a baby boy this morning at 9.30am. Mr Patching is our peripatetic guitar tutor and tells us that the baby weighed in at 7lb 2oz and will be called James. Congratulations to Claire and Marc.

The summer term is full of opportunities for parents to visit the school. One good reason is the arrival of the Living Eggs after the half term break. This will be the third time that we have had the scheme in school. The eggs will arrive on the Monday after half term and they should begin to hatch by Wednesday. Please do feel free to pop in and see them over the fortnight that they are with us. 

I hope that you all have a good half term.

Maxine Shaw  
Headmistress