

THE LINK ACADEMY TRUST NEWSLETTER



EASTER 2020

By Nicky Dunford, CEO

What an end to term - none of us ever expected such an unprecedented final week to the Easter term and as we continue into these very tricky times it is difficult to make plans for when we will all be back together again. We are however going to support home learning as effectively as we possibly can after the Easter break. As soon as the announcement was made by the Prime Minister that schools should be shut down to all pupils except the vulnerable and the children of key workers, the Link worked extremely hard to operate 'hub' schools which we could then staff sustainably into the future for these eligible children.

Teachers all prepared Learning Packs to cover the last missed week of learning which we hope you have enjoyed. Opening throughout the holidays has been an additional challenge for us, especially when numbers are low but geographically spread and staff are also self-isolating. As a result, we have reduced the number of 'hub' schools for this period and will review this after the holidays when we know the number of pupils we need to accommodate going into the summer term. It is our intention to ensure that every child that is eligible for and requires a place in school can access it. At this point I would like to thank all our staff for their continued dedication and ability to 'go the extra mile' in delivering this additional support. The children in school seem to be having a brilliant learning experience, using the outdoors while all learning together with no concern for which school they attend or the age-group with which they are normally part of. I am sure as a result of this, great new friendships will be formed.

After the Easter Holiday break we will be keeping in touch with families. Teachers will be contacting you to make sure you are all managing well and will be offering anything we can do to ensure life is as acceptable as possible given the current, ever changing position. Distance and online learning will continue to be a priority and we will endeavour to support children as best we can, which I am sure, given the staff we employ, will be highly effective! All schools were issued with a new mobile phone which Academy Heads will man throughout this period for emergency calls, you should have this number. Emails are a great way to contact your Head as this allows preparation for answering your questions or issues. We hope you will all remain safe over this period but please don't hesitate to call if you have any needs that we can help you with.

The Link Academy Trust want to support our families as effectively as they possibly can and so we have taken other actions that we hope will impact positively on you all. Mr Matthew, the Trust Business Manager, immediately got to work and ordered a huge amount of food from our catering suppliers to create hampers of basic food, for some of the families we know will be finding things particularly difficult in this tricky time. A team went out on a delivery round last Saturday, all organised by Matt. He has also organised deep cleans in all our schools as well as ongoing rigorous cleaning in the schools we are using to reassure you all that schools are safe for your children. We are also aware that while the cancellation of SATs is no great hardship, we do recognise that some children have worked really hard to do well are probably feeling a little disappointed that they cannot prove just how well they have done. I would like to make it clear to all our pupils that your teachers are fully aware of the effort you have all put in and the brilliant progress you have made, all I want to do is urge you to keep learning as it will really help you when you move on to your secondary school.

Also, obviously depending on how long we will need to remain in isolation, some of our Year 6 pupils are unlikely to be able to have their usual end of year celebrations and this too is a disappointment. If possible, and again depending on when we return to 'normal' school hours, we will try to set up a special day for year 6 pupils to enjoy the rites of passage afforded when they move up to 'big school'!



To ensure you still feel connected throughout this period of being at home together I have suggested you all take part in the Mrs D Challenge - it looks like this.

To keep you all busy and creative I am going to set a fortnightly challenge for all pupils in the Link Academy Trust. Each challenge will give the winner a brilliant prize which will be available as soon as I can get it out to you, this one is a surprise but sometimes I will tell you what you will be aiming to win. This challenge starts on Friday 27th March and will close on Friday 12th April. Your entry needs to be emailed to me by Friday 12th on NDChallenge1@thelink.academy I will set a new challenge next week and you will have a fortnight to complete that challenge. This will continue throughout the summer term, so keep watching and having a go!

The First Challenge

Write a poem - it can be any poetic form, have a look at some different examples: blank verse, rhymed poetry, haiku, limerick, acrostic, narrative etc. The subject of your poem needs to be 'My family and the lockdown' but it has to be fun! See what you can do, I am going to really look forward to being cheered up by your efforts. Get the whole family involved and I will put some examples up on Facebook as they start coming in. I would like a record number of pupils taking part so 'have a go' and keep me smiling! Good luck.

I have already had a great entry which I have included a section of to get you all inspired!

Lockdown - Through the eyes of two of our pupils and their family

We're in lockdown but no need to frown,
We are saving money because we're not going to town!
One thing we love to do is bake
Mum's going to get fat with all of this cake!

Not to worry, Joe wicks P.E!
Mum didn't manage it unfortunately
We drag her out to play football
We played for hours - it was so cool!

We've played so much football we've ruined Dad's lawn
He grew it from seed, he's a little forlorn...
So now he has made us a basketball court
We are learning to slam dunk - it's such a fun sport!

Another thing we love to do
Is sing along to Alexa too
Mum plays 90s, pop and cheese
We say change it to Coldplay please!!

We dance around and sing really loud
Pretend we're performing in front of a crowd.
Mum tells us she's sung in lots of plays
"Stick with day job mum", we say.

More verses ending with.....

What's happening right now, we're in a bit of a mess
How long it will go on for is anyone's' guess
Now we're not religious but dear Lord please bless
The amazing staff working in our NHS!

The Prize for the best effort, whether long or short, family generated or an individual effort is a £25 Amazon Voucher, donated by our payroll system provider.

Please, please have a go! Now for what our schools were doing during the Easter Term.

Bearnes Primary School

By Alice Eeles, Academy Head

At Bearnes our term has been filled with many achievements, exciting trips and sports events with Mr Tanner all of which highlight the children's dedication to learning and challenging themselves. We are thrilled to be expanding our school with a new purpose-built Key Stage Two classroom, just as soon as things get moving again. This has been long awaited and means that the hall space will return to its full capacity where the children's PE lessons, lunch times, performances and whole school celebrations can really come to life!

Our newly established Toddler group has gone from strength to strength this term with growing numbers of children attending with their families. We hope that this provision will continue to expand through recommendations. This group will benefit hugely from the hall and the improved EYFS learning space which we can't wait to share with you all.

The staff at Bearnes wish you a safe Easter break in these very unusual circumstances, keep safe and let us know if you have any concerns as we continue to stay open for eligible pupils.



Broadhempston Primary School

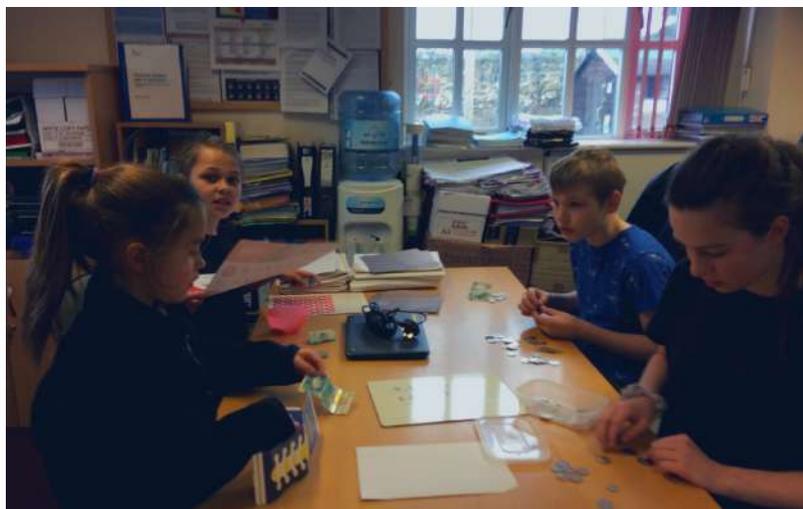
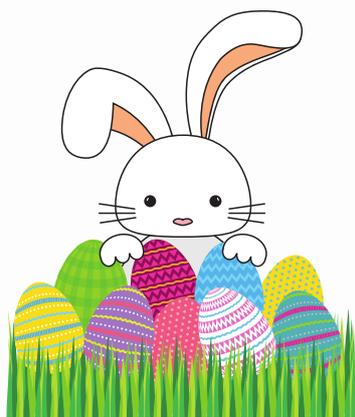
By Dan Turner, Academy Head

Well it is hard to believe that we have come to the end of another exciting term at Broadhempston.

This term we have had a big focus on communities and have been fundraising for a variety of different charities. On 14th February we decided to raise money for the British Heart Foundation, a charity that is important to so many of us. We decided on a non-uniform day 'Wear Something Red', a bake sale and a number of children completed an all day skipathon. It was brilliant to see the children complete their skipathon, supporting each other throughout the entire day. They really did do themselves proud! During the day the children raised over £200 for this worthwhile cause. As well as this, children also supported Sports Relief 2020 by dressing up as sporting stars and taking part in a number of sporting activities at lunch time; including a penalty shoot out against Mr. Turner and a skipping competition. It was a great day and was fantastic to see how the school came together for such an important charity.

World Book Day was another highlight, all the children and staff dressed up as their favourite book characters and were visited by a local author to talk about her work and offer advice to our young writers. It was clear that the children enjoyed this experience and took a lot from it.

All that's left for me to do is to wish everyone a happy and safe Easter, please take care and look after yourselves.



Cheriton Bishop Primary School

By Alex Waterman, Executive Academy Head

Cheriton Bishop had a rather special Grand Opening and World Book Day event. This included the official opening of the two new outdoor play areas. The first of these is a castle and a ship, designed for imaginative play; the second is an agility trail designed to further develop the children's physical skills. All of the funds needed for these projects was raised by Cheriton Bishop's wonderful PTFA.

The PTFA had bid and received a number of grants and run some super events including a successful Summer Fun Day. The event started with a visit from an illustrator, Owen Williams who taught the children skills to help them enhance their stories. We also had visiting author, Sam Goddard who shared her books with the whole school. The children took part in a week-long sponsored read raising further funds. They also dressed as book characters, this photo showing Roald Dahl characters, can you guess who they are? Well done to everyone who helped to create such a wonderful day.

What a great achievement for the term which we are looking forward to making the most of when we return to school.



Diptford CofE Primary School

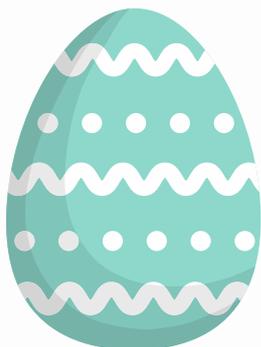
By Lizzie Lethbridge, Executive Academy Head

Diptford have been thinking globally! Since our 'Lights Out' day last November, we have been undertaking a range of activities to help us think about global climate change and our place in the wider world of sustainability. Our beautiful surroundings are a huge part of everyday life at Diptford and we believe it is vital that we know how to help look after our wonderful world. So, we have been learning how, as individuals and as a school, we can really have an impact. As well as planting our new Magnolia tree, turning off our lights and recycling plastic, we visited a local farm to help plant some new hedgerows – it was hard work but very rewarding!

We also visited a local solar farm and are now investigating the possibility of having our own solar panels. Sustainability has been woven into many of our lessons this term; for example, in Science we have been learning about everyday materials and how to recycle them effectively. Art and History lessons have been made interactive by recycling old newspaper to make historical masks, and we planted our own vegetable seeds to grow in the garden spaces outside our classrooms.

Our fantastic PTFA helped to fix our pond and we have since been investigating how it helps to nourish our local environment and wildlife. We have big plans to link with our local community's 'Sustainable Diptford' project too. We have also been thinking globally with the charities we support and had a fantastic day wearing sport mufti and raising money for Sport Relief.

A great term which has inspired us for the future.



Drake's CofE Primary School

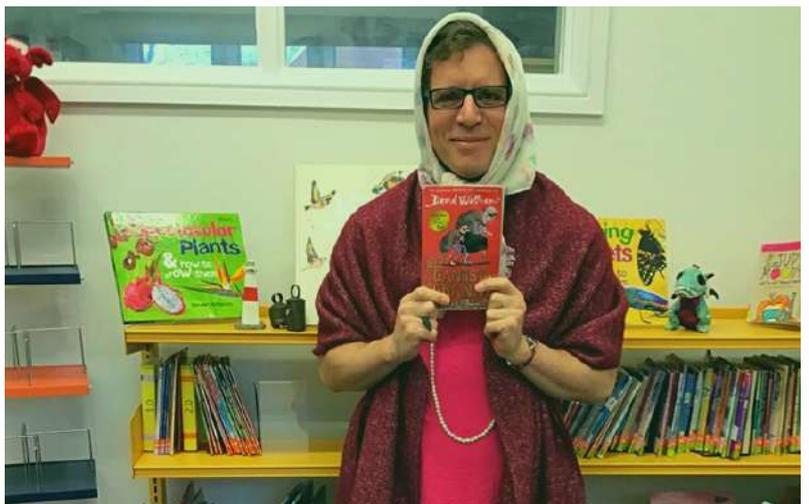
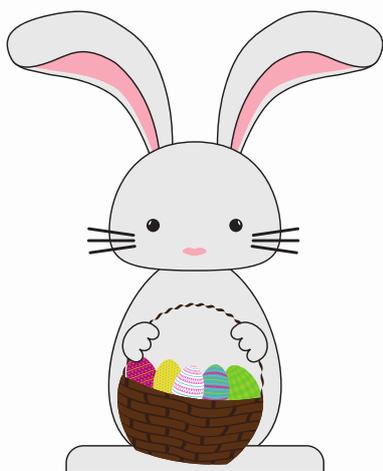
By Peter Halford, Executive Academy Head

Even though this has been a relatively short term the children at Drake's have managed to pack in a huge amount of learning and really fun activities. Some children from Year 3 and 4 (Dragonflies Class) attended a Netball tournament and performed brilliantly against some much bigger schools in the Exmouth area. Their attitude and sportsmanship were second to none and they were an asset to the school.

Every class enjoyed a visit from Animal Encounters where they got to meet a 20-year-old turtle, a gecko, a python and a Tenrec (a small hedgehog like creature).

World Book Day was a huge success with a DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) Day and children came in dressed as their favourite book characters. For Sport Relief the school council organized activities for the children throughout the day including a penalty shootout and a whole school long distance run.

Some exciting staff news too, Mrs Claire Appleby has been recognized by the Literacy Team at Babcock for her excellent work in Literacy and has been asked to become an English Ambassador teacher. She is able to offer support to other teachers from across Devon and within the Trust. Well done Claire!



Harbertonford CofE Primary School

By Richard Charley, Academy Head

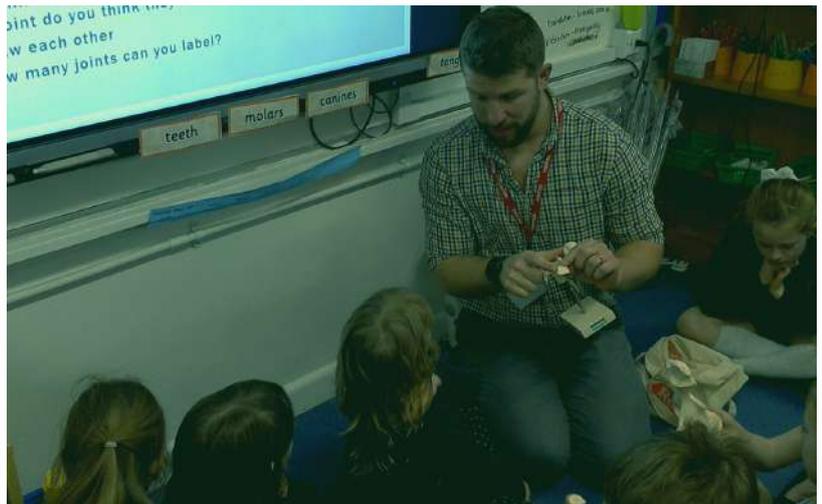
At Harbertonford this term the children have enjoyed many enriching scientific opportunities led by expert visitors to the school. Dr Darren Thomas visited Kestrels class to speak about skeletons and joints using equipment from his surgery. A STEM Ambassador, Jessica Jones, led a fascinating nuclear session with our Year 5 & 6 class and a dental health workshop with Year 3 & 4.

Our Reception class had the opportunity to explore medical equipment with a local GP and they learnt about germs and staying healthy which is very important in the current situation.

The whole school also took part in a physical interactive assembly with a local sports coach, Alastair Hudson, with a focus on a healthy lifestyle. We had a paramedic visit our Reception class to teach us about his job of keeping us safe and healthy. Warburtons visited Kestrels class to lead a healthy diet and food hygiene workshop and the children made their own healthy sandwiches.

Owls class also learned about dental care from a local dentist who has begun a dental care programme with the class. The many scientific experiences were engaging, interactive and memorable for the children.

A term of really exciting learning at Harbertonford!



Hennock Primary School

By Vic Pooler, Academy Head

At Hennock, we've had a huge focus on sport this term, getting outdoors and active no matter the weather. All the children have taken part in a range of festivals, tournaments and events to give them broader opportunities and experiences.

Year 5 & 6 have entered a competitive Tag Rugby tournament with some other Link schools and have competed with other local schools in gymnastics. Year 3 & 4 have also participated in a gymnastics tournament but also took on roles in scoring and news reporting for the event. Reception and Year 1 have been swimming each week building their skills and water confidence, and they are attending a festival day to learn about Olympic sports.

A weekly skating and scootering club has been running for Key Stage Two at the Lodge in Newton Abbot and recently children baked their own healthy snacks to sell and did a range of fun fitness challenges throughout the day for Sports Relief.

We've also been celebrating sporting achievements outside of school, such as participation in football and rugby teams, a gold medal winning dance performance, 'swimmer of the month' winners and an orange belt in Karate.

I'm really proud of all the children's achievement in sport this term and hope to see this continuing at Hennock as soon as we are all back together.

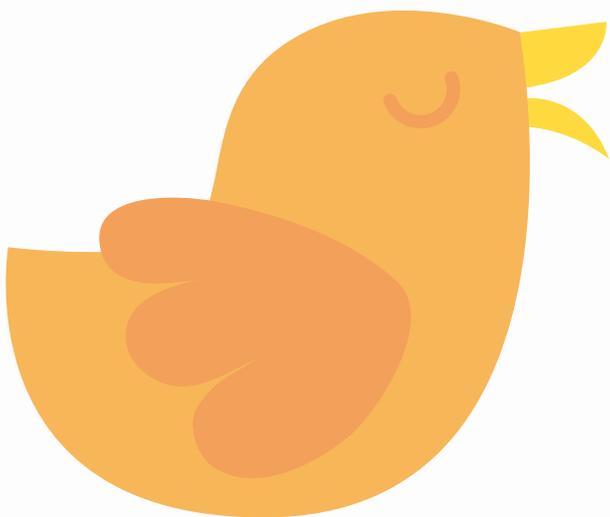


Ilseington CofE Primary School

By Des Stokes, Academy Head

During the spring term, in all sorts of weathers, our Outdoor Learning in Sims Woods has continued to develop our pupils' resilience, team building and problem-solving skills. Over the term, the pupils used a range of tools to make a willow woven fence around our fire pit area. The children have learnt how to coppice trees to gain lengths of wood using a saw. Using axes, these lengths were then whittled to make wooden stakes. The children hammered the stakes into the ground using a mallet, before weaving willow rods in between the stakes to create the fencing. The children were extremely proud of their finished product.

We have also taken our science investigations into the woods. Children in Key Stage One have had great fun setting up their rain gauges and wind vanes in our woodland area. They chose two clearings down by the stream and compared the rainfall there to that collected back in school, we have certainly had plenty of rain to measure this term! The children have built up a great love of the woods and our local environment through our sessions. We have all noticed the signs of spring approaching and we cannot wait to carry on our Science investigations and outdoor learning next term.



Landscape CofE Primary School

By Jill Ryder, Academy Head

It's been a really busy term here at Landscape. We began the term with our Well-being "Kindness" week and CAP workshops. Being "Safe, Strong & Free" as well as nurturing and kind have been the buzz words and actions from everyone~ children, staff and parents! From shared reading to Wild Woodland Learning; working together with kindness has been a privilege to see.

A really successful Ofsted left us exhausted but happy as we strive to meet our targets and continue to gain the very best for our special little school.

Science week has concentrated on Our Diverse Planet; parents have been in; working with children to ensure our immediate environment is encouraging diverse wildlife to take root. Seed bombs and planting have been the order of the week. At one point, it felt a bit like mud pie heaven in each class!

We were looking forward to ending this term with our annual Mothering Friday celebration and Easter service, unfortunately these were unable to go ahead but we still had a very busy and fulfilling term.



Moretonhampstead Primary School

By Will Bentall, Academy Head

Our school has been buzzing with science activity this term launching with an inspirational Science Show. Activities have included creating clouds in cups, exploring density and filtration, making unpopable bubbles and model water striders. It's not very often that you can say that you built a house at school, but that's exactly what some children did when they learned about medieval construction techniques. Mardon class explored fascinating activities at We The Curious in Bristol and all our children had a fabulous opportunity to learn about local history when a replica of Richard Trevithick's 'Puffing Devil' visited the school.

Our learning culminated in our Water Fair. The children had the opportunity to share their discoveries and also take part in bucket lifting and water propulsion challenges, there were some fantastic entries made by our community!

We were actively involved in Fairtrade Fortnight; a cocoa farmer from Ghana visited us and we discovered how different his work is from that of our own farming families. Our Sport Relief effort included a hula marathon, an inter-house relay competition and a speed challenge. Year 4 children had a great time at the SDCC Gymnastics Festival and we hosted the Year 1 Dance Festival which was great fun. Year 6 performed their WW2 themed dance brilliantly at the Body Language event reducing many audience members to tears! We were very proud of them.

Despite these challenging times, our Year 6 children were also able to enjoy their residential at Skern Lodge. Every single child achieved something special and tried something new.

Our new exciting partnership with the Link Academy Trust will support our continued commitment to deliver the greatest opportunities for all our children.



Otterton CofE Primary School

By Peter Halford, Executive Academy Head

All Otterton children have enjoyed an amazing re-vamp of their library. The staff have worked tirelessly to get Accelerated Reader up and running and the children are enjoying the challenge of the new reading system.

The children in Otters Class have been writing letters in their Literacy as part of their topic and they wrote a letter to the Queen and went into the village to post it. Let's hope they receive a response.

For World Book Day the children dressed up as a word. Children came in dressed as: unique, hoarse, sleepy and memory to name a few. The children's imagination was fantastic and the range of costumes was truly spectacular.

For Sport Relief every child came in dressed in sports kit with staff leading active sessions throughout the day – at the end of lunchtime the children enjoyed a HIIT class!

Every class had a visit from Kate Ponting who is a Learning Officer, who often takes our classes out and about around the village who, along with a representative from Devon Birds, spoke to the children about how to feed birds throughout the year as well as sharing some fantastic images of local birds and wildlife.

Another great term of learning, despite having to finish early.



Stoke Gabriel Primary School

By Matthew Medd, Academy Head

Three things stand out from the Easter term at Stoke Gabriel Primary School which reflect our values of Community, Courage, Character and Creativity. In February our Year 5 and 6 children performed at the Princess Theatre in Paignton as part of the Torbay Dance Festival. Their dance was inspired by their Enquiry Journey based around the Spartans of ancient Greece. It told the story of the battle of Thermopylae where three hundred Spartan warriors repelled a vast invading Persian Army for three days. The children worked with a professional dance teacher to choreograph the dance in only five weeks and their performance was breathtaking. It was so rewarding to see the whole class taking part and you could feel the sense of pride and achievement from the children as they performed on a professional stage in front of a live audience.

Year 4 had a great time on their winter overnight residential with Spirit of Adventure at the Dewerstone Cottage. They even saw some sunshine on their first day! Finally, our older school council representatives met with staff at Churston Ferrers Grammar school to discuss a link with a primary school in Peru. Churston have a well established link and we are hoping to forge our own with a primary school near Cuzco. It will also ensure that we are able to fulfil one of our five star pledges; to contribute to the international community.



Tedburn St Mary Primary School

By Andy Keay, Academy Head

Lots of exciting activities and events have happened across the spring term at Tedburn. Visiting Paignton Zoo for our KS1 classes has really enhanced their learning of plants and animals. A planetarium coming into school to support KS2's study of space brought the solar system to us.

The opportunity for Oak class to perform at the Great Hall has certainly been a real highlight. The children performed their songs 'What a wonderful world' by Louis Armstrong and 'Sing, sing, sing' by Louis Prima, with an accompanying dance routine.

Reading has continued to develop across school and the addition of 100 new nonfiction books to our Library has helped broaden children's reading experiences. World Book Day saw many children come dressed as their favourite book characters and share their favourite books with each other.

Our sports partnership with QE saw all our KS1 children take part in a Multi Skills event and Ash class attended a gymnastics event there too, as well as a gifted and talented event attended by several of our year 5 children. Twelve of our children represented the school at the Credenham swimming gala and all swam brilliantly.

Once again, a really fun and exciting term for all our children, this on top of all the amazing learning that goes on every day!



Widcombe Primary School

By Des Stokes, Academy Head

This term we have been learning to understand our climate and looking at the differences we can make. We had a workshop delivered by Devon Recycling and we have explored the world's resources and how we can conserve them. Every child in the school has been to a local conservation site and planted native trees to support local wildlife.

Through our topic, we have had a big focus on geography. Our Reception and Year 1 children were inspired by an information text about the Antarctic and created a penguin dance, which they performed in a dance sharing festival with five other schools. It was fantastic! They also put their map skills to the test with a great day out at Heatree learning to orienteer.

The older children have been looking at the geography of the planet and of the United Kingdom. They have been learning about counties, landmarks and physical features of the UK. By looking at contrasting locations around the world, the children have compared them to our own environment. On a class trip the children visited Belever to look more closely at our local physical geography and landmarks. They also looked at river systems and traced the River Dart back to its source. An outcome of their studies was to make a model of a river system, which they filled with water.

In Literacy, the class followed 'Shackleton's Journey' through the Antarctic pack ice and are planning an exhibition of writing and art inspired by the book.



Yeoford Primary School

By Alex Waterman, Executive Academy Head

This term the Year 5 and 6 children at Yeoford Primary School have been learning how to play the trombone and trumpet. With a focus on jazz music, they explored the genre and began to work on two pieces by Louis Jordan, 'A chicken ain't nothing but a bird' and 'Choo choo ch' boogie'. The children did a tremendous job of learning these pieces which are quick paced and full of words! They then added trumpet and trombone accompaniment. Working closely with children from Cheriton Bishop, they perfected their singing, playing and presentation of the pieces and performed them in front of hundreds of people at The Great Hall in Exeter. Their recital was perfect! Not only did they sing and play brilliantly, they also thoroughly enjoyed themselves, performing with enthusiasm and energy!

It was an absolute delight to watch. Fabulous work Yeoford Primary School!.



Inclusion and Improvement Hub (IIH)

By Rebecca Humphreys, IIH Lead Practitioner

The Link Academy IIH have run many successful courses this term supporting children with anxiety and managing self-esteem. We are seeing a greater increase in parents attending our courses and the feedback has been great. "that was impressive," one Dad commented. "I reckon this course is as powerful for the adults as for the children."

In one of the sessions the children made jellies. Nikki, our leader, had noticed a lot of the pupils described their worries as 'wobbly like jelly'. The pupils stirred their jellies and watched their worries dissolve. The use of metaphor and social stories is truly powerful when supporting pupils with Social, Emotional, and Mental health needs.



Finally to get active with your learning and enjoy some celebrity teachers if you go to these sites to find out more:

PE with Joe Wicks Youtube. 9 am every day

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sX05HHni9Wk&list=PLyCLOpd4VxBvD7ogmmPLJXYA1q0gFF3pe&index=2&t=0s>

Music with Myleene Klass <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=azjq7jh94Cw>

Science with Maddie Moate on youtube.com

Dancing with Oti Mabuse on Youtube.com/otimabuseofficial

Carole Vorderman is doing maths lessons for all ages on: <https://www.themathsfactor.com/>

History with Dan Snow- although I am not sure if there is anything for KS2 <https://tv.historyhit.com/>

English with David Walliams. If you read a David Walliams book you can find an activities pack to do. Go to the activities button.

<https://www.worldofdavidwalliams.com/activities/>

Jamie Oliver with Food Tech

<https://www.channel4.com/programmes/jamie-keep-cooking-and-carry-on/on-demand/71360-001>



Have a lovely Easter break
and Stay Safe

