#895
16 JANUARY 2026

MILLFIELD
PREP SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD



Dear Parents, Grandparents and Guardians,

It very much feels like we are back into the rhythm of term now as we approach the end of week two and, as ever, the breadth and pace of life here is something to behold!

On Wednesday, I thoroughly enjoyed seeing the vast range of different things going on in the classrooms as I took an hour to pop in and out of some lessons. One of the ongoing frustrations in my role, when things get busy, is that I can become a bit too office-bound and so one of my New Year's resolutions was to book more time in my diary to get out and about and into lessons this term. From fruit salads in food tech, spelling tests and reading in English and a discussion about medieval perceptions of hell in History, to laser cutting in DT, a debate on world beliefs in RS and coil pot making in art – I was blown away by the positive engagement and energy from the pupils and the expertise of the staff I saw. I'm already looking forward to my next 'bi-weekly wander'!

It has been a busy week for a number of our current pupils as they have been taking part in our scholarship process which also continues today and on Monday. It was a pleasure to welcome so many external as well as internal candidates yesterday and we are set to have even more undergoing assessments today. We wish all the children involved the very best of luck and, whatever the outcome, they should be proud of themselves for giving it a go.

Good luck to all of our junior singers who have already left on their epic trip to Young Voices today in Birmingham – it is always an amazing experience.

Finally, I do urge you to read and digest the newsletter entry written by Rev'd Stephenson, our Spiritual Lead, following on from the PCC parents' event last term which discussed building resilience in our children. 'Stevo' makes some powerful and valuable points about the values-based approach which is at the core of our methodology not just in sport but also in school life in general. It is a must read and is the precursor to more collaboration with you as parents on the topic.

Enjoy the rest of the week and the weekend when it arrives.

Yours,

Dan

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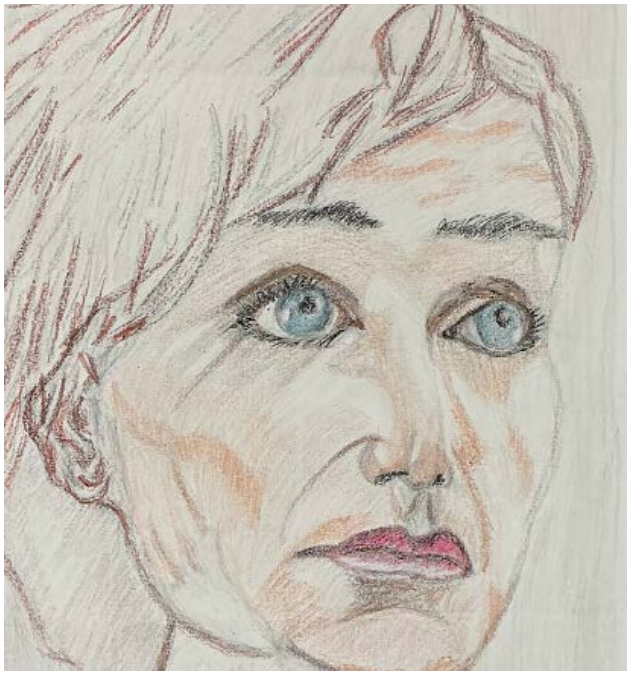
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PICTURE OF THE WEEK

This Week's Picture of the Week is this excellent colour pencil drawing by **Samantha M** 7SP.





PARENT NOTICES

Exeat Weekend Friday 23 January – Sunday 25 January

The school will shut at 3.45pm on Friday 23 January for Exeat WeekendThere will be no clubs, activities, games or provision for late stay etc. Traffic is likely to be high on campus so please try to arrive at your allocated time slots for year groups or it will block the site. Siblings are able to be picked up together at earlier time slots. Please make sure your children are aware of times and venues to avoid any confusion.

Pre-Prep - 3.15pm Top Car Park
Year 3 - 3.45pm Martins Lane
Year 4 - 3.45pm Martins Lane
Year 5 - 3.45pm Martins Lane
Year 6 - 4.00pm Martins Lane
Year 7 - 3.45pm Reception Car Park
Year 8 - 4.00pm Reception Car Park

The return for boarders following the exeat weekend is from 5pm onwards, boarding houses will not be open before then. If your child is due to return earlier, please ensure that they are supervised by a guardian.

CELS (Character Education and Life Skills) and Relationships & Sex Education (RSE)

Following on from last term's CELS consultation letter, we will be holding a series of age-appropriate CELS (Character Education and Life Skills) and Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) sessions that will be taking place for pupils in Years 5–8 over the coming weeks.

These sessions are designed to support pupils as they begin to learn more about puberty, physical and emotional changes, and growing up, in a way that is factual, reassuring, and sensitive to their age and stage of development.

What will be happening?

On Monday 19 January pupils will be taught in single-sex groups, with content tailored carefully to their year group.

Girls (Years 5–6 then separately Years 7-8) will take part in sessions focusing on:

- Puberty and body changes
- Periods and menstrual health
- Managing emotions and wellbeing
- Understanding and using period products

These sessions will be led by the Psychoeducation/RSE Lead at Millfield School, supported by nurses from both the Prep and Senior Schools, experienced members of staff, and trained Sixth Form mentors.

Boys (Years 5–6 then separately Years 7-8) will take part in sessions focusing on:

- Puberty and body changes
- Emotional wellbeing and Allyship
- Myth-busting and reassurance
- Asking questions in a safe, respectful environment

Sessions will be delivered by staff and supported by carefully selected and briefed Sixth Form mentors.

All content is age-appropriate, factual, and aligned with statutory guidance, and is delivered in a calm and supportive way.

Reassurance and Follow Up

We are very mindful that children develop at different rates, and that conversations about growing up can feel sensitive. Our approach throughout these sessions is to:

- Normalise differences
- Reduce anxiety
- Encourage pupils to talk to trusted adults
- Avoid unnecessary or inappropriate detail

Following on from Monday's session, CELS lessons will be supporting the pupils' learning and subsequent questions in small groups. If you have any questions or concerns about the content of this term's study, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Thank you, as always, for your support and partnership as we help pupils navigate this important stage of their development.

Positive Puberty - what we need to know – Fill in form

PARENT NOTICES

The Prevent Guy, David Chadwick

David Chadwick will be in school on Monday 19 January running a number of assemblies, covering the radicalisation process, misogyny, the extreme right wing, and the impact of social media algorithms.

You are warmly welcome to attend a seminar for parents by David Chadwick who has extensive experience in Counter-Terrorism and works to prevent children and young people falling victim to radicalisation from various ideologies. The parent session will take place in the Shayler Pavilion from 9-10am. Please let us know if you intend to be with us for this valuable session by clicking here.

Later in the day, pupils from Year 5 and 6 and then Year 7 and 8 will come together to hear from The Prevent Guy (read more about David Chadwick here), an experienced speaker who works with schools to support pupils' understanding of online safety, critical thinking, and recognising potentially harmful content online.

Sessions are tailored to the age and stage of each year group, and will be sensitive to pupils age and stage of development.

Working in Partnership with parents

We strongly believe that these topics are best supported when school and home work together. To support this, we are inviting parents and carers to take a few minutes to talk with their child about the upcoming sessions and to think together about any questions they may have.

We have created a short Microsoft Form which parents are welcome to complete, either on their own or together with their child. Questions submitted via the form will help us:

- Shape the sessions
- Address common worries or misunderstandings
- Inform follow-up teaching where appropriate

Questions can be submitted anonymously, and not all questions will necessarily be answered in the session itself; some may be addressed in later lessons or individually where more appropriate.

Positive Puberty - what we need to know – Fill in form

Signing Out Process

Thank you for your support whilst we trial the new signing out method for pupils at the end of the day. It is much appreciated.

Thursday 22 January

On Thursday, it will be a non-uniform day for the winning House for the Autumn Term which was **ANGLES.**



RESILIENCE IN CHILDREN

We are blessed at Millfield Prep to have children that love their sport. We're always trying to improve our offering. We know that performance levels will improve with well-being levels. We know that a values-based approach to sport rather than a competitive-based approach will result in children that grow in their character, are happier and are rooted in their great values that will be the foundation for everything that will come in life. We know this approach leads to best performance and prolonged enjoyment of sport and activities over their lives.

We held a wonderful parent forum and feedback session on the topic last term. One thing that you asked for was some practical advice about how to help engender this approach in your children so that they feel free to be as good as they can be, express themselves and be content.

An area that we are working hard on is our language around this topic. We'd love to work on and learn about this with you. An example is using the Millfield 99% positive and 1% negative rule (the 1% reserved for when we need to say stop for safety reasons!). It's always possible to frame things in positive language and we know that makes children (and us!) feel better. Asking what can be done, what can be improved on, what works well, what makes them feel good, helps our values-led approach to sport.

The questions you ask your child after sport can have a huge effect on how they view themselves, their performance and their sport. Values-based questions rather than results based questions always help (you'll inevitably discover the result at some point, we want this to be positive because we feel it increases our child's confidence. Results are fleeting whereas values will underpin their lives and their future performance).

Great examples of questions to ask your children after sport are:
"Did you enjoy yourself?". "Did you have fun?". "Did you empty the tank? (of effort)". "How did you feel?". "Did you feel proud?". "Did your team make everyone feel comfortable so they could play well?". "Did your team welcome the opposition?". "Was everyone's attitude great?".

Listening to the child express themselves will help them and all relationships.

We hear from countless psychologists that resilience is the key to success. But rarely do we hear how to improve resilience. This approach is a big step to growing resilience in young people. We also hope that it will help you enjoy more the space of sport, your child's relationship with it and your relationships with your children.

If you'd like to engage more on the topic then please don't hesitate to get in touch.

- Rev'd Stevo (Stephenson.J@millfieldschool.com)and the Sports Department

BEBRAS COMPUTATIONAL THINKING CHALLENGE

During the second half of last term, our Year 7 pupils took part in the national Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge, an exciting event designed to inspire young minds in the world of Computer Science.

Bebras is an international initiative that promotes computational thinking and problem-solving skills among pupils of all ages. The challenge consists of short, fun, and engaging tasks based on real-world problems that computer scientists encounter. These tasks don't require prior knowledge but instead encourage logical thinking and creativity.

What is Computational Thinking?
Computational thinking is the process of breaking down complex problems, identifying patterns, focusing on essential details, and creating step-by-step solutions that can be understood by both humans and computers. The four key cornerstones are:

- Decomposition – breaking problems into smaller, manageable parts
- Pattern Recognition – spotting similarities within problems
- Abstraction – filtering out unnecessary details
- Algorithms – designing clear, step-by-step solutions

Mastering these skills is essential for programming and problem-solving in today's digital world.

Our pupils rose to the challenge, demonstrating resilience and creativity. Congratulations to the following pupils who achieved a Distinction:

Hope L, Louis D, Barney G, Sophia L, Max C, Sasha Z, Sonia C-S, Maximillian D, Anthony W, Isla S, Freddie L, Tanner H, Trinity B Bea H-J, Cooper L, and **Sebastian E**.

This year, 156,558 pupils nationwide competed in the same category as our Year 7 and we are thrilled to announce that **Hettie H, Grace S, Raffy C, Edward R, Alberto D A, Maverick M, James H**, and **Cecily T** earned Gold Certificates for placing in the top 10% nationally.

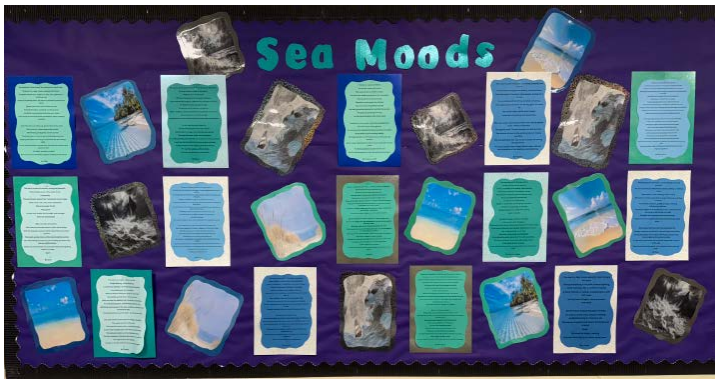
A special congratulations to **Hettie H**, who achieved the highest score among Millfield Prep pupils and received the 'Best in School' award.

ENGLISH

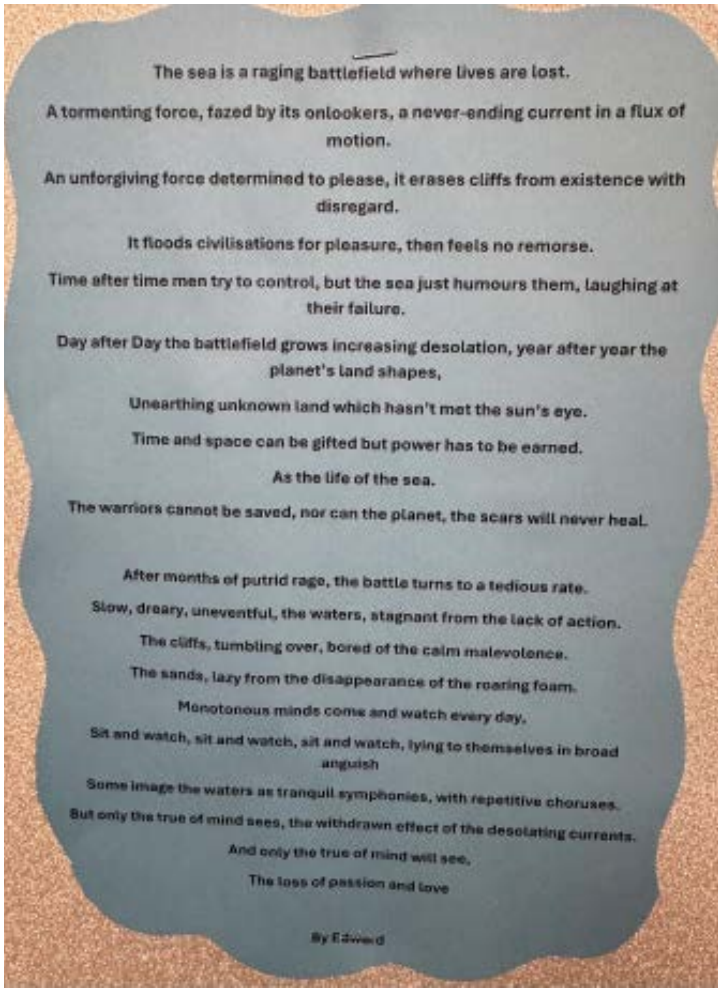
The English Department has burst into the new year with energy, purpose and a wonderful sense of busy creativity. Classrooms are alive with discussion and imagination, with students showing great focus and enthusiasm for their learning. Our staff have delivered some truly inspiring lessons, sparking curiosity and confidence in young writers and readers alike. Below is a snapshot of the fantastic work already taking shape across the department.











The sea is a raging battlefield where lives are lost.

A tormenting force, fazed by its onlookers, a never-ending current in a flux of motion.

An unforgiving force determined to please, it erases cliffs from existence with disregard.

It floods civilisations for pleasure, then feels no remorse.

Time after time men try to control, but the sea just humours them, laughing at their failure.

Day after Day the battlefield grows increasing desolation, year after year the planet's land shapes,

Unearthing unknown land which hasn't met the sun's eye.

Time and space can be gifted but power has to be earned.

As the life of the sea.

The warriors cannot be saved, nor can the planet, the scars will never heal.

After months of putrid rage, the battle turns to a tedious rate.

Slow, dreary, uneventful, the waters, stagnant from the lack of action.

The cliffs, tumbling over, bored of the calm malevolence.

The sands, lazy from the disappearance of the roaring foam.

Monotonous minds come and watch every day,

Sit and watch, sit and watch, sit and watch, lying to themselves in broad anguish

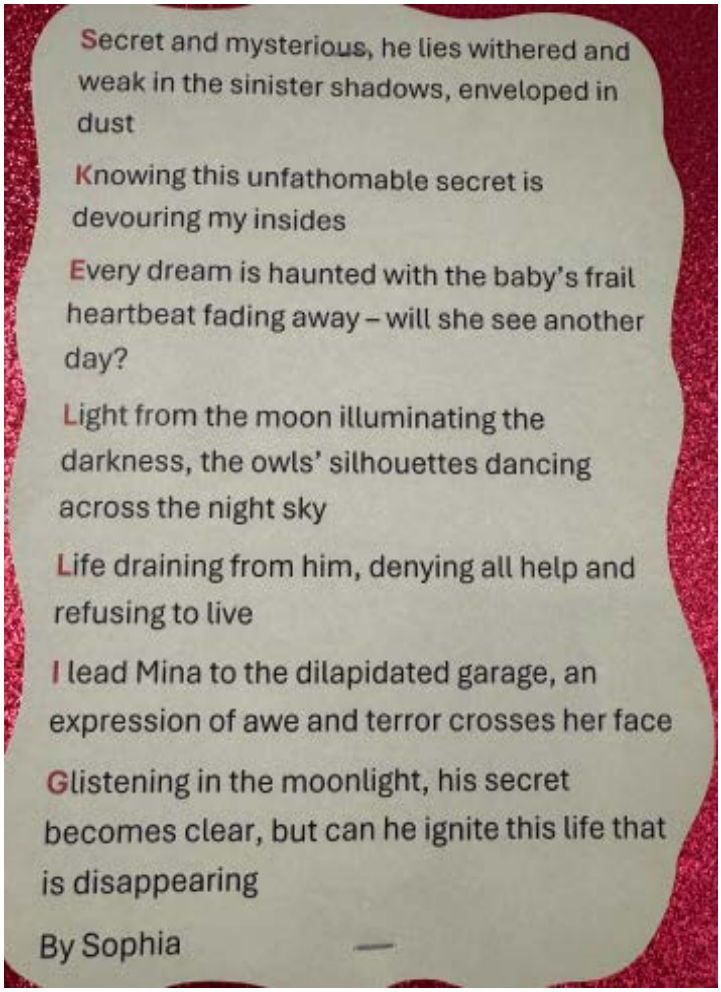
Some image the waters as tranquil symphonies, with repetitive choruses.

But only the true of mind sees, the withdrawn effect of the desolating currents.

And only the true of mind will see,

The loss of passion and love

By Edward



Secret and mysterious, he lies withered and weak in the sinister shadows, enveloped in dust

Knowing this unfathomable secret is devouring my insides

Every dream is haunted with the baby's frail heartbeat fading away – will she see another day?

Light from the moon illuminating the darkness, the owls' silhouettes dancing across the night sky

Life draining from him, denying all help and refusing to live

I lead Mina to the dilapidated garage, an expression of awe and terror crosses her face

Glistening in the moonlight, his secret becomes clear, but can he ignite this life that is disappearing

By Sophia

BOARDING LIFE

HOLLIES

Despite the less than disirable weather, it has been a lovely, relaxed and warm weekend in Hollies House. The girls have well and truly found their latest obsession with the game Werewolf, which has taken over much of our free time with suspense, dramatic accusations and plenty of giggles. It's a brilliant social game that really gets everyone involved – definitely one to try at home, especially if you're a fan of The Traitors. Alongside the gaming, the girls also enjoyed getting creative with some Fimo clay crafts, producing a wonderful range of colourful and imaginative creations. It was lovely to see them so absorbed and proud of their finished pieces. Sunday brought a real treat with our first visit of the year from the breakfast van – a big hit all round – followed by a calm, cosy day spent relaxing, chatting, and enjoying time with friends. A perfect balance to the weekend and a very happy Hollies house all round.









CHESTNUT

What an exciting week it's been in Chestnut House! The energy and camaraderie among our boarders have been fantastic, and we've enjoyed plenty of fun moments together. One of the highlights was our thrilling game of Traitors. It was a battle of wits and strategy, with everyone trying to uncover the hidden traitors among us. After plenty of suspense and clever guesses, the Faithfuls emerged victorious, correctly identifying the traitors, in the end! Special mention goes to our brilliant Traitors, **Liza, Alena** and **Amelia**, the Doctor **Viola**, and Detective **Eloise**, who played their roles with skill and kept everyone guessing until the very end. The atmosphere was electric—mysterious, fun, and full of laughter. Our two Brilliant Boarders from last term, **Sophie** and **Hope**, were recognized with a special treat: a celebratory meal alongside Mr Bingham and the other Brilliant Boarders. It was a wonderful opportunity for them to enjoy great company and delicious food while being acknowledged for their achievements.







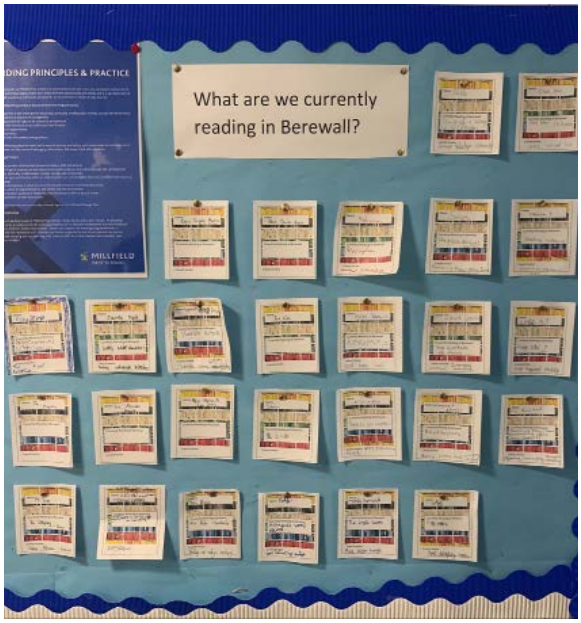




BEREWALL

The Berewall boys have continued their fine start to the term. The weather has been dark and damp, which means that in the evenings, they have been able to utilise the indoor facilities. The days of playing outside in the sun are far away, but not that far! The weekend saw some very tired boys. We opened up the tuck shop, cooked some pulled pork and all watched a movie. The Sunday lie-in was just the tonic, especially when the breakfast van arrived. Tech-Free Tuesday has seen a big push on reading. Mr S and Mr R have updated the board so we can all see what we are 'currently reading'. We celebrated with Kyoya on Tuesday for his birthday. For a change, we went for the classic cake shaped like a caterpillar and it was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Great singing, great fun, and a great celebration. All in all, it's been a great week. The boys have been so good at organising themselves and completing their jobs, we are all very proud of them. We hope that the rain stops soon, especially for the poor matrons that wash the sports kit.









CHAMPION

Another week has flown by! Basketball is a firm favourite at the moment and there has been lots of games in the evenings. Our four 'Star Men' from last term were taken out for a special treat supper on Wednesday evening. These boys have worked really hard at independently getting everything done in the evenings. This includes putting their dirty washing in and getting organised for the following day. Well done to **Shawn, Toby, Archie** and **Alfie!** It has been really nice to see some boys offering to help tidy up in the kitchen after snacks. This is really thoughtful and has been appreciated. With a term or more under their belts, the boys are into the rhythm of boarding life and there has been a lovely atmosphere in the house.











SPORTING NEWS

NETBALL

The U12 girls played superbly at the King's Bruton Festival, and some fantastic link up play. They all worked extremely hard on their basic skills and it was a great way to start the season.



A huge well done to some off our Year 8 netball players, including several who were representing Millfield Prep Netball for the very first time. They showed fantastic teamwork, fair play and determination throughout, all with big smiles. With more than 25 goals scored between them, it was a brilliant display of effort, spirit and what it means to play as a MPS team!



The U13C netball team had a great first performance of the term, and showed impressive team work. The girls were losing 5-1 after the first quarter but made an amazing comeback in the third quarter to eventually win 15-12. It was an exciting comeback with great shooting from **Izzy M, Faye M** and **Vanda B.** Player of the match must go to **Sofia L**, who played with such energy and commitment.



TENNIS

The tennis department would like to congratulate **Reggie O'S, Finn S** and **Rory S** on their selection for U10s Regional tennis camps. Zara English has also been selected for an U9 Regional camp. This is a result of the hard work that they put in every week.

Congratulations to **Isabella W** who has had some great recent results, coming runner up in U14 and U16 Grade 4 events.





KARTING

Ethan recently achieved a huge milestone by competing in his first European kart race, just 12 months after starting competitive karting. He stepped up to the RMC Euro Trophy, one of the highest levels of European kart racing, taking on a much more experienced international grid.

Although qualifying didn't go to plan after a post-session disqualification due to a setup error meant starting the heats from the back of the field, Ethan showed great determination and resilience throughout the weekend. He fought his way through the races and finished the final in an impressive P15 out of 21 drivers.

Competing on the European stage so early in his racing journey was a massive learning experience and an achievement he can be very proud of.



ATHLETICS

Congratulations to **Elodie** who is now the U13 South West Regional indoor 1500m Champion. It was her first time running this distance indoors and 7.5 laps of the banked track proved to be a real tactical challenge. Elodie led the first 100M to keep out of trouble and then settled into a strong but sustainable pace, finishing with a super strong kick to pick-off two Welsh athletes in the home straight. It was also doubled up as a tune-up race for the Welsh nationals, so many of the top Welsh athletes were in attendance to get some speed in their legs. She finished in fourth place overall but most importantly claimed her first South West Regional title in any sport!





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MESSAGE FROM MR JORY



Dear Parents, Grandparents and Guardians,

We began the week with an assembly all about teamwork, where the children threw themselves into a series of fun challenges designed to get them thinking, communicating, and cooperating. It was great to see how quickly they discovered that tasks become more enjoyable and often more successful when they work together.

A particular highlight for me this week was visiting the Senior School Atkinson Art Gallery with Frogs, Reception and Year 1, where the children had the opportunity to see their artwork proudly displayed alongside that of the older pupils. Year 1 also enjoyed walking around the Senior School grounds looking for sculptures.

We have received several thoughtful entries in our Pre-Prep suggestion box, sharing ideas on how we can make school life even better. We would love to hear even more, so please do keep contributing, every idea is welcome!

This week we had marketing who did some filming with us and have been asking us lots of different questions! Keep your eyes peeled on our social channels for other videos.

Best wishes,
Mike

KEY DATES

Tuesday 20 January

Year 1 and Year 2 Visit Carymoor Recycling Centre

Friday 23 January

Exeat, School finishes 3.15pm.

No creche, clubs or late club.

PRE-PREP

HOUSE TOTALS

HOUSE	ANGLES	DANES	JUTES	SAXONS
OVERALL	225	158	173	208

TADPOLES

PARTY PLANNING

Last week, some of the Tadpoles showed an interest in celebrating birthdays and parties so this week we have been planning a Tadpole party. We talked about decorations, party games, music and of course cake! We have written invitations to some of our friends, including the Frogs and Mr Jory, so they can celebrate with us!







FROGS

FOREST SCHOOL

The Frogs had a glorious morning at Forest School this week. We have been exploring the concept of light & dark after **Ezra** brought in his torch for show and tell. In small groups we went out with our torches to see what we could find. However, the sun was out, it was too bright, what could we do? The Frogs were quick to suggest a den, lots of teamwork ensued dragging very large sticks and branches. Miss Childs had some tarpaulin and sheets which we also used to cover the sticks to make our den darker. We then used our torches inside the den. We also played the game 1, 2, 3 where are you, and there were some fantastic hiding spots! We also revisited our learning from last week as we observed the frost and ice melting from the trees; what was happening and observed our breath in the cold weather.











YEAR 2

FRENCH

Year 2 pupils have been learning about the 'Galette des Rois' or 'Kings' Cake', eaten in France to celebrate Epiphany. The children enjoyed hearing about the traditions of this festival and made their own crowns, imagining what it would be like if they were king or queen for the day!

