Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust

Summer Newsletter – July 2024

Message from Lesley West, CEO.

This newsletter contains a brief update on some of the fantastic events and activities that have happened in our schools during the Summer term. A big 'thank you' to all of our schools, their staff and pupils, and of course to the families in all of our communities who continue to be so supportive.

Owlcotes MAT has gone from strength to strength this year. We have had two very positive Ofsted inspections at both Pudsey Primrose Hill Primary School and Armley Park Primary School and we have continued to grow as a Trust.

In May, we were thrilled to welcome Spring Bank Primary School to the Owlcotes family of schools. Spring Bank Primary is a well-established one form entry primary school in Headingley, with a reputation in the local area for being a caring community school. Mr Jonathan Parker has been working with the school as Executive Head since April 2023 and Jordan License has been Headteacher at the school since February 2024.

We are also preparing to welcome a seventh school to the Owlcotes MAT after the summer holidays. Morley Victoria Primary School is expected to join on 1st September 2024. Morley Victoria Primary is an Ofsted 'Outstanding' primary school which sits at the heart of its community. Their staff team is led by Headteacher, Mrs Jo Wood. The school has around 450 pupils across 14 classes and a Nursery. Owlcotes was set up with a genuine desire to provide excellent education for pupils and I have no doubt that Morley Victoria Primary will be another great addition to our family of schools.

At the beginning of July, the Owlcotes Cup was hosted at Pudsey Primrose Hill Primary School for Year 4 pupils across our MAT. The weather was (thankfully) fine on that day and the children had a lot of fun competing for the prized trophy and representing their school. Every child who took part showed a friendly attitude and displayed positive team spirit. Thank you to all of the staff and volunteers who supported the smooth running of the event and well done to all pupils who took part. Congratulations to Calverley Parkside who won the Cup for the third time!

Also in July, the annual Owlcotes Debating Competition was held at Pudsey Civic Hall for Year 6 pupils across our MAT. The pupils displayed excellent listening and debating skills, as well as great confidence to speak in front of an audience. A big thank you to all of the staff, parent/carers, and pupils who helped prepare for the competition, and a thank you to Therese O'Sullivan who had been working with the children in each school over the course of a term to prepare them to be great debaters; and to our three judges, Judith Norfolk, John Woods, and Cllr Simon Seary, who performed the very difficult task of judging the competition. Thank you also to staff at Pudsey Civic Hall for their help to host the event.

All of our schools strive to provide a full and engaging curriculum for all pupils, including trips, visits and visitors, indoor and outdoor experiences and participation in music, arts and sporting events. This is a strength of all Owlcotes schools, and you will be able to read about some of these school events in the 'round up' of news from Owlcotes schools.

This is the time of year when we say goodbye and good luck to our Year 6 pupils who will be starting high school in September and taking the next step in their education journey. These pupils have all made a brilliant contribution to their schools during their primary years and I hope they continue to embrace all the opportunities that secondary education has to offer. We wish every pupil well for the future. We also say goodbye to some members of staff in our schools. I wish our outgoing staff every success for the future, and we look forward to welcoming any new members of staff starting in September.

If you want to keep up to date with what is happening, or find out more about Owlcotes Trust, you can do so by visiting our website: www.owlcotesmat.org or by following us on X@owlcotesMAT.
I hope you enjoy reading the rest of this newsletter which will give you information about some of the events that have happened in our schools this term.
Thank you to all of the staff; pupils and families at Owlcotes schools. I wish you all a fantastic summer holiday.

‘Round Up’ of News from Owlcotes Schools

News from Pudsey Primrose Hill Primary School

Year 3 Writing Project Reading Shed

During their writing project week in school, Year 3 were tasked with writing to local businesses to ask (persuading!) for a donation of a shed to create a reading shed in school. Following our letters, FARMAC, a local building supplier, were very happy with our writing and were happy to help. Not only did they supply us with a shed to use, they also came and installed this, along with First 4 Fencing, into our KS2 playground. We are so proud of our Year 3 children and the writing they produced and cannot wait to get this space up and running! Thank you so much to FARMAC for their generous donation and their time. The shed looks amazing and fits perfectly into the KS2 playground quiet area.

Year 1 Bikeability

All Year 1 children have taken part in a cycling course run by Cycle North. Children worked in sessions over 3 days to progress from balance bikes to pedal bikes. Once they mastered this skill children played games and practised essential skills such as stopping and setting off. It was great to see the children whizzing around the playground and making so much progress in such a small space of time.

Local History Week at Primrose Hill

All classes in school engaged with ‘Local History Week’. We have been out and about around Pudsey looking for some of the most interesting and important buildings with the aim of finding out about our local area. We have had a focus on asking questions, using the buildings as sources of information and then conducting further research back at school.

Reception Visit Hesketh Farm

Children in Reception have really enjoyed visiting Hesketh Farm Park. They took part in lots of different activities including going on a bumpy tractor ride, cuddling guinea pigs, collecting freshly laid eggs and feeding some of the animals! Children were surrounded by the Yorkshire Dales which supported them in developing their 'Yorkshire Pride'. The staff were so impressed with how the children behaved. Drawing and writing all about their experiences will continue to support learning about the Yorkshire Dales, animals and people.

Year 2 Visit to Filey

Year 2 children had two great days out at Filey as part of their geography learning and Owlcotes Element Yorkshire Pride. Children enjoyed playing on the beach, eating ice cream and learning about the human and physical features of the coast to help with their geography topic. The children carried out fieldwork activities as well as creating some marvellous sandcastles!

Year 6 Trip to The Big Bang Fair!

Year 6 children travelled to the NEC in Birmingham to attend the Big Bang STEM fair. The coach took the children to explore and experience the many different workshops and exhibitions on offer. Children took part in a range of activities and were able to speak to scientists and engineers who carefully explained each task. It was a very busy day, with the majority of participants from high schools and will lead well into the Raising Aspirations week as children were able to see the many and varied roles a scientist and engineer has in our everyday lives.

Year 6 Rivers Study – River Wharfe

Children in Year 6 have visited the Yorkshire Dales National Park as part of their geography learning about rivers. Children observed the river Wharfe at three different points along its course. Their first stop was Hebers Ghyll, after walking up the steep hills to the top, children observed and measured the river before heading back down to Otley. Here children carried out more fieldwork tasks, measuring the width, depth, and flow. Children then moved on to Bolton Abbey where they had lunch and spent time observing the river – and learning how to skim stones!

Raising Aspirations Week

Our second Raising Aspirations week took place this week, children in Year 5 and 6 have experienced a huge range of talks, presentations and discussions about an amazing number of different careers and professions. We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has given their time so generously to support this week in school, it is very much appreciated by our staff and children. Below is a brief summary of some of the speakers.

Steve and Roxy who are police dog handlers. They explained their role, uniform, equipment and all about how they have to train their dogs regularly so that they are ready for the job. Samantha Yule, also a journalist on more of a local basis. She discussed the route she took to reach her current role and the importance of being able to take notes quickly when interviewing. She demonstrated how to use shorthand with the children, which was really interesting. Selina, a financial consultant, spoke about the important job she has and how important it is to focus on reading for understanding and using Maths skills. Ameer from AAK Foods told us all about his career and how it has given him so many opportunities to travel the world! He also explained how the company provides many of the fats and oils in everyday products we use in restaurants such as Nandos and KFC! Alix shared information about her important job as a researcher from the University of Leeds. She explained how she helped with inventions including a textile which helped heal bones. Dr Morgan Herod, a virologist at The University of Leeds spoke to the children about the different elements of being a scientist. They even had the chance to do their own practical experiment using milk proteins and Irn-Bru! Amy explained about a job which the children weren't aware existed until this morning - a recruitment compliance manager. Amy explained how important it is to make sure people are vetted for their jobs within a school. 7 members of staff from BT Openreach with different roles, visited school and shared what their role involves and allowed the children to interact with the equipment they use. Our Twitter page has many more!

News from Pudsey Waterloo Primary School

Adventure Week

This term Waterloo had an Adventure Week on the theme of 'Try Something New'. Throughout the week children have tried some new and interesting activities!

The children in nursery tried ocean painting, baking jam tarts, visiting the library and making shakers. We also completed a 'Commando Joe' session where Tanisha Teamwork set us a top-secret mission. We were also lucky enough to have a karate lesson led by Ashley the Karate instructor!

Year 3 has had a fantastic Adventure Week! The whole year group walked to the Climbing Depot where they learnt how to do some really tricky climbing. They had to show great courage and resilience and all the staff were impressed with the children's positive attitudes.

Year 4 has had a very busy Adventure Week, with both classes spending half a day at the wonderful West Leeds Activity Centre, and really loving the go-karts, archery and especially the water slide. All the children behaved fantastically and made some great memories.

Year 1 Yorkshire Wildfire Park

Year 1 had an amazing trip to Yorkshire Wildlife Park. The children had a fantastic time seeing the different animals up close. As part of the visit, we had an educational classroom session where children found out more about the animals in the park and then were able to hold some smaller creatures. All of the staff in Year 1 are extremely proud of the children as they represented the school brilliantly!

Visit to Scarborough

Year 2 went on their trip to Scarborough. Despite the long journey, the children had a fabulous time. They enjoyed digging as far down as they could to reach water, found it a little cold when paddling in the sea and loved having a tasty ice cream to end the day!

Year 2 Skipping Festival

Year 2 went to Armley Leisure Centre to participate in a skipping festival with 5 other schools. The children showed great enthusiasm and resilience in all the individual events, group events and fun sessions. We came away with some bronze awards for the single and group events and were really proud of all our children's behaviour and attitude.

Year 5 Poetry Slam

Two year 5 teams competed in a Leeds wide poetry slam at the Carriageworks. They faced 11 other teams and were some of the youngest participants, with the majority of entries being year 7 and 8. Their performances were outstanding and the judges praised their confidence and style!

Year 6 Junior Warrior

Year 6 travelled to Bramham to take part in Junior Warrior. We worked as a team to combat the 15 'extremely muddy' obstacles over a 3km course. We had lots of fun helping one another, navigating the different obstacles and of course laughing at how muddy we became throughout the afternoon! The highlight at the end of the muddy course was the giant slip and slide - which was fun to slide down - but unfortunately didn't actually clean off any of the mud!

Solar Panels

Pudsey Waterloo has been successful in gaining a grant to fit solar panels to the roof and replace the boiler with an air source heat pump. The work has already started, with the solar panels being fitted last week. They will really help us to lower our carbon footprint and our energy bills - although a bit of sunshine would help!

News from Calverley Parkside Primary School

Camping Residential

On Monday 24th June, Year 6 set off on their Go Wild Outdoors camping residential. Although they weren't going far (Sconce campsite in Baildon) once you are there it feels like you're in the middle of nowhere as it is so nicely tucked away in a little dip surrounded by trees and bracken.

One of the first tasks was to put up their tents, which proved quite interesting and was made even more challenging by the hot weather.

Over the three days, the children took part in a wide range of activities such as archery, axe-throwing (in a carefully controlled environment!), den building, whittling and many more.

Well done to all of the children for embracing the experience and battling through the usual camping-related challenges, including sleep-deprivation and midge bites! Thanks as always to the staff who planned and supported the trip, giving up time away from their own families to provide the children with memorable experiences.

Junior Warrior

On Friday 21st June our Year 6 children visited Bramham Park to take part in the Junior Warrior event. This requires them to complete a 3km course which contains various obstacles such as the mud moguls, the spider's web, river crossings, the bog of doom and the water slide. The children (and staff!) had a great time!

Year 2 Trip to Scarborough

On Wednesday 10th July, Year 2 visited Scarborough to enhance their Geography 'Seaside' topic. Whilst there, they paddled in the sea, looked at how the land use in a seaside town such as Scarborough differs from Calverley and carried out some mini-interviews with members of the public, asking them about their reasons for visiting. The children really enjoyed their seaside experience (and their ice cream), as did the seagull which flew away with Jude's sandwich!

Year 4 Residential

On Wednesday 5th June, our Year 4 children set off to Ingleborough Hall for their residential visit. Over the three days, they had the most amazing time! They took part in a range of exciting and adventurous activities, including caving, gorge walking and orienteering, and enjoyed the

other experiences associated with residential trips such as being in dorm rooms with their friends and wolfing down brilliant breakfasts and delicious evening meals. The staff who accompanied the trip were all so proud of the Year 4 class for how they have approached the trip– demonstrating resilience, enthusiasm and teamwork skills to make the most of the opportunities on offer and to support each other.

News from Armley Park Primary School

Year 2 Trip to Filey

Year 2 had a fantastic day on the beach at Filey as part of their Geography topic about the seaside. They played in the sand, paddled in the water and enjoyed a well-deserved ice cream at the end of the day.

Adventure Week

As part of our Adventure Week, all the classes went exploring! We had children caving, climbing, canoeing and cycling as well as trekking through the park to experience what it might have been like for the real life explorers we were learning about.

Trip to Lineham Farm

Some Reception children were invited to an EYFS Explorers event at Lineham Farm. They enjoyed a music and movement workshop based on Cinderella and then got to go into the woods to build dens.

Trip to Waterstones Book Store

A group of children from across school went to Waterstones Book Store in Leeds to help choose some new books for the school library. While we were there, there was a reported from ITV who filmed the children looking at the books as part of a news article about the new Children's Laurette who was being announced that day!

Cannon Hall Farm

Reception and Year 1 had great fun at Cannon Hall Farm where they learnt all about the different animals and got to play in their fantastic playgrounds.

Great Yorkshire Show

Year 5 put on their wellies for the day and spent the day at the Great Yorkshire Show. They had a private cooking class where they made sweet pastry treats and then went to have a look at some of the different animals on show.

Celebration of Culture

We had a whole school celebration of culture and children were invited to wear clothes from their home cultures or clothing that makes them feel happy. It was fantastic to see all the different outfits, there were 28 different countries represented throughout the school!

News from Manor Wood Primary School

Year 4 Science

As part of our Science topic 'habits'. Year 4 enjoyed spending the afternoon outside looking for mini beasts, exploring their habitats and classifying them. This half term, Year 4 have thoroughly enjoyed having cricket coaching form Tom from Yorkshire cricket.

Foundation Stage

The Foundation Stage children have been working incredibly hard on their project work throughout the school year, and the summer term is when all the final touches come together to present finales to our wonderful families. Among our nursery children, their curiosity has led them to explore elements of the natural world, from a fascination with the properties of water and the beauty of nature to a deeper look into 'what lies beneath'. The nursery have also delved into the topic of people and cultures, exploring 'Hair' and the value of diversity and identity. The reception projects have spiralled into a range of directions, from delving into the unknown in the Scary Project and investigating the impact of global warming on our oceans in the Recycling Project, to the performing arts in 'Cats the Musical'. The Piazza project has been busy dissecting the importance of community and collaboration to create a green space for all to share, while the Baby Project has featured delightful interactions with the younger members of society, filled with laughter and opportunities to learn more about the early stages of life.

Year 1 Summer Term

Year 1 have had a fantastic summer term full of fun and learning. We have been reading Roald Dahl's George's Marvellous Medicine. We used this text to predict and visualise what might happen in the story. We held a debate around whether George should give Grandma the medicine or not, created persuasive posters for people to visit Mr Kranky's Farm, wrote descriptively about what George's Medicine could do to a range of animals, designed and created our own marvellous medicines and lastly wrote, edited and

published some incredible innovated stories based on this tale. In History and Geography we have been learning about Leeds and West Yorkshire and how physical and man-made features of the city and surrounding areas have changed over time. We hooked our learning around Marks and Spencer and how proud we are as a city to have held the first Penny Bazaar in Leeds Kirkgate Market. From this we visited the M&S Archive to learn more about its history and use our DT skills to consider the design process of a new product and sample their delicious chocolate puddings. On our return to school we used the iPad's and Seesaw to create visual presentations of our trip to the M&S Archive in our Computing lessons. The Summer term in Year 1 is always bustling as we prepare to welcome our Reception children into KS1. This has resulted in many Woods trips to a shared space which was enhanced by reading and exploring 'What Did the Tree See?' which nicely summarises our year of growth and change throughout the seasons. Our visits to the woods also inspired us to design and create some beautiful 'Land Art' in line with that of Andy Goldsworthy.

Year 5's Production of Sister Act

The Year 5 children at Manor Wood put on an exceptional performance of "Sister Act," showcasing their remarkable talents. Mia, who had a lot of lines to learn, executed them brilliantly and truly shone as a superstar. Dara captivated the audience with a beautiful rendition of "Oh Happy Day," and Eira's portrayal of Mother Superior was nothing short of brilliant. Every child was involved, and their collective performance was outstanding. Logan did a fantastic job managing the lights, adding to the show's professional feel.

Year 6 Summer Term

After working incredibly hard in their SATS, Year 6 started their Geography unit of work on 'Rivers and Mountains' including a fieldwork trip to Malham Cove. We visited the limestone escarpment and measured the depth and speed of the river at different points along its course. We followed this by taking a PH reading of the water sample and creating their own sketch maps.

For our residential, we visited 'Bushcraft' at Castle Howard and camped in the wilderness for two nights learning survival skills such as shelter building, fire making and SOS first aid skills.

During our music lessons, we wrote pour own version of 'When I was 7 years old' incorporating our own words to describe memories the children had of their time in Primary school. A lot of dedicated hard work was put into the end of Year Production for the 'Wizard of OZ' giving children many opportunities to showcase their strengths in art, oracy and acting.

Debating was a focus for the term, as a year group we had four lessons with Ms O'Sullivan and then two teams debated at Pudsey Civic Hall on the subjects of: zoos being abolished and the age of social media being increased to 16. Sammy Rowan won speaker of the competition. In addition to this, Manor Wood was selected to attend the finals of the Leeds Debating Competition after the preliminaries at Wigton Moor Primary. The final was held in the Debating Chambers at Leeds Civic Hall, where our Year 6 team received the Silver Award and Kavan Mathrau received 'Best Speaker' for the whole competition.

News from Spring Bank Primary School

Arts Week

Spring Bank Primary celebrated our annual Arts Week in June. A host of current and former parents volunteered their time to run a series of workshops for all year groups. The week started with a Y1-6 visit to Hyde Park Picture House, with Reception visiting a couple of weeks afterwards.

The children were thrilled by the Buster Keaton classic – Sherlock Jr. The silent film from the 1920s had the children in fits of laughter with many children asking further questions about why the production team was so small in comparison to more recent films and being inspired by how talented Buster was to direct the film, be the main star and most important, do his own stunts.

The week concluded with a Friday Arts' Fair, where children proudly showed their artistic creativity to their family members.

Trip to Abbey House Museum

Year 1 had lots of fun at Abbey House Museum and learnt a lot about what life was like in a Victorian home.

They also helped get the house ready for Queen Victoria's visit to the newly built Town Hall and watched her Knight Sir Peter, the mayor of Leeds at the time of her visit.

History Club

History Club have been learning about the Benin Bronzes, amazing metal artworks from Benin City (in modern-day Nigeria). We debated whether the bronzes should stay in Britain or return to Nigeria and made these fab replicas.