

November 2013 / Issue 10

This is Africa Geography Competition

Emily Kyle is the winner of the competition with an amazing poster of facts and issues faced by Africa. Alexandra Davies came second and Emma Davies came third with excellent maps and research of facts. Well done to all !



Mrs R Lopez – Geography Faculty

Parent Forum

Thank you to all the parents and carers who attended our Parent Forum on Wednesday.

Approximately 50 people came to hear about future changes to GCSE English and Maths, the examination / qualification system and keeping students safe when they are 'online'. The feedback we received regarding the evening and presentations was positive and I will be following up on suggestions made for future Parent Forums. All of the presentations can be found on the school website.

Mr D Ward – Deputy Headteacher

Armistice Day

On Monday 11th November at 11.00am the school observed a 2 minute silence and the last post was played.

Mr D Ward - Deputy Headteacher



Kidlington in Concert!

An evening of musical entertainment from local performers and musical groups

Saturday 23rd November - 7.30pm
St Mary's Church, Kidlington

Tickets available on the door
£7.50 (£5 concessions)
including wine and nibbles

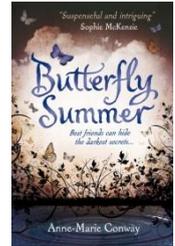
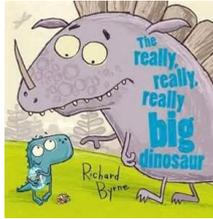
Family ticket £20 (2 adults + 2 children)
<http://tinyurl.com/musicatstmarys>

Inset Day

Please note that Friday 6th December 2013 will be an Inset day and the school will be closed to students.

Dr S Bizley - Headteacher

The 2013 Oxfordshire Book Awards



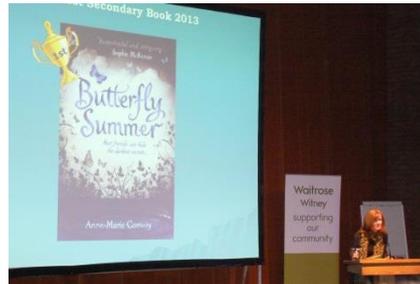
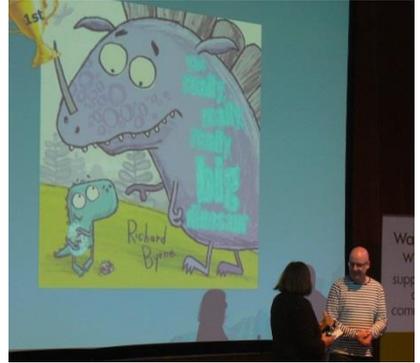
Mrs Hedges, Yemi Akinyemi, Faustine Petron, Isobel Lamb, Holly Hall, Jeremy Mbararia, Katherine Hill & Imogen Taberner await the awards.

In March 2013 two groups of Year 8 students volunteered to read a selection of six shortlisted books for the Oxfordshire Book Awards. Katherine read 'Butterfly Summer' by Anne-Marie Conway and Imogen 'Hero on a Bicycle' by Shirley Hughes. Once the groups had finished reading, each book was reviewed and we nominated our winner for the Best Secondary Book category.

Over 300 children from 20 Oxfordshire primary and secondary schools took part in the 2013 awards with the ceremony taking place in the beautiful setting of Abingdon School's Amey Theatre. Seven students from Gosford Hill attended with Mrs Hedges and Mr Whittaker. Three awards were given out at the ceremony. Firstly, an introduction by Eva Ibbotson's son, Piers, who gave a speech about his late mother's book 'The Abominables' and a little about life as a child growing up with an author mother. Then it was the winner of the Best Picture Book. This award was given to Richard Byrne, author of 'The Really, Really, Really Big Dinosaur'. All of the younger children loved watching him draw the dinosaurs, with one school winning a massive picture of the biggest dinosaur to display in their library. The second award was for Best Primary Book. This winner was R J Palacio for 'Wonder'. She couldn't make the ceremony, although sent a video thanking everyone. Finally, the Best Secondary Book was given to 'Butterfly Summer' by Anne-Marie Conway. When she received the award she gave an overview of her book and talked about her reaction at being nominated for the Oxfordshire Book Award. She answered a few questions from the audience, mainly about what had inspired her to write the book.

After the authors had accepted their awards we were invited for a drink and cakes and had the opportunity to buy one of the award-winning books and get it signed by the author. It was a really great and interesting trip.

By Katherine Hill - 9TDYY & Imogen Taberner - 9WAOE



Sporting Achievements

British Junior Squash Championship 2013



Congratulations to Marcus Tranter who competed in the British Junior Squash tournament during half term. The tournament was only open to players ranked in the top 48 in Britain. Last year Marcus finished 24th in this tournament but has continued to dedicate time and effort into improving himself and this year finished 7th. During the tournament he came up against the Welsh national champion, Scottish number 3, English number 7 and English number 11 seed. In his last game Marcus defeated the English number 11 seed to finish in 7th place and boost his national ranking to number 6. Well done Marcus and we look forward to hearing of more successes in the future.

Under 16 County Schools Captain

Following a trial with over 40 other students from across the county, Callum Rice was selected to join the under-16 County Schools squad. Callum has also received the honour of being captain for the team and played in the first game against Bedfordshire under floodlights at Didcot Town FC. Callum played 90 minutes and led the team to a 3-1 victory.



Under 14 County Schools Football Team

Following a trial where only students at a professional club or recently released from a club were invited, Taylor Southam and Zak Farrow were selected in the under-14 county schools squad. A trial was held at Milton United for 36 students across the county and 16 selected to form the squad for the upcoming fixtures. The Gosford students have been selected for the first fixture at home to Cornwall, again being hosted at Milton United. Both players made the starting team eleven but unfortunately lost 1-0.

County under 16's Football

Congratulations to Emily Young who has been selected to be part of the under-16 county football squad despite being a year younger! Emily was selected following two rounds of trials due to the large number of girls. The first trial took place at Milton and Emily was joined by Cloe Woodward, Alice Bairstow and Megan Rayment. Emily was then selected to attend a second trial of 22 students and has now been confirmed as a member of the squad. The first game is on 27th November and we wish her luck.



Mr P Green – Subject Leader, P.E. Faculty

Proposed Home to School Transport Policy 2015 Oxfordshire County Council Consultation, closing on 2nd December 2013

The above consultation will affect some parents and pupils of Gosford Hill School.

Oxfordshire County Council has to make significant budget savings and school transport is one of a number of areas being looked at. It is proposed to change this present situation.

The first proposal is that OCC will only pay for transport to the nearest secondary school. According to the map, published along with the consultation, children within the following villages will no longer be eligible for free transport to Gosford Hill:

Bunkers Hill, Shipton on Cherwell, Shipton Manor, Thrupp, Woodeaton, Murcott.

Should parents wish for their children to attend Gosford Hill School then they would have to pay for transport.

The alternative proposal is to establish travel areas to avoid splitting communities, and for OCC to work with schools and communities to achieve acceptable and cost effective solutions.

These changes would come into effect for those transferring to secondary school from September 2015 and may affect all other children, including those already in receipt of free travel, from 2017.

The Council's position is:

Oxfordshire County Council is running a new consultation on proposals to change its Home to School Transport policy following a decision in July to look again at the plans.

The current Home to School Transport policy is more generous than the national 'statutory minimum' (what we must provide by law), which means the Council spends more than it is legally obliged to. In addition, charges for 'concessionary fares' on Home to School Transport (i.e. where spare seats on school buses are used by children who are not entitled to free transport) do not cover the full cost to the Council, which means they are subsidised by public funds.

Given the ongoing pressure on public finances and the need for the Council to identify large savings across all service areas, this level of spending is not considered sustainable. We want a thriving Oxfordshire, and pledge to make savings as fairly as possible, while protecting services for those in greatest need.

Following extensive feedback during the summer, when the Council deferred its decision on potential changes to the Home to School Transport policy, revised proposals to reduce the range of schools to which children would qualify for free transport are now being put forward for consultation. These proposals would bring the Council's policy into line with the national statutory level, as well as with similar policies adopted by neighbouring councils. One of the proposals regarding free travel is to provide only the statutory minimum (transport to the nearest available school if it is over the age determined "statutory walking distance"). However, there is an alternative proposal to establish travel areas to avoid splitting some communities. If this alternative proposal is agreed we would work with schools and communities to achieve acceptable and cost effective local solutions.

The Council is also consulting on options to raise concessionary fares on school buses and a proposal to remove references to Collaborative Learning Transport in its Home to School Transport policy.

The proposed changes would not affect parents' or carers' rights to express preferences for any three schools, nor would they reduce the rights of low income families to receive free transport to any of the three nearest secondary schools within two to six miles. The general entitlement to free travel to the nearest school with an available place if it is over the statutory walking distance (three miles for those aged eight to 16 and two miles for those of school age who are below the age of eight) would also remain unaffected. (taken from the OCC website)

If you would like to read the full proposals and see how they may affect you and your family, then go to:

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/htspconsultation>

This is on the County's public website. If you wish to contribute to the consultation you may do so here. You will also find details of a series of public meetings that have been organised by the Council to explain the proposals.

Ms R Foord - Parent Governor

Year 10 Parents Evening

The Year 10 Parents Evening was a very positive event with lots of parents expressing their happiness with the progress their sons and daughters have been making. One in particular commented:

'I was overwhelmed by some of the teachers' comments about my daughter, moving her here was the best decision I made. I only wish I had done it sooner. Thank you to all the staff, teaching and support'

Mr C Hall – Assistant Headteacher

Questionnaire for Parents and Carers - Year 10 November 2012				
Statement 1 - My child is happy at this school				
Strongly Agree 43.08%	Agree 53.85%	Disagree 3.08%	Strongly Disagree 0.00%	Total 100.00%
% positive		96.92%		
Statement 2 - My child feels safe at this school				
Strongly Agree 50.77%	Agree 49.23%	Disagree 0.00%	Strongly Disagree 0.00%	Total 100.00%
% positive		100.00%		
Statement 3 - My child makes good progress at this school				
Strongly Agree 32.81%	Agree 64.06%	Disagree 3.13%	Strongly Disagree 0.00%	Total 100.00%
% positive		96.88%		
Statement 4 - My child is well looked after at this school				
Strongly Agree 43.08%	Agree 55.38%	Disagree 1.54%	Strongly Disagree 0.00%	Total 100.00%
% positive		98.46%		
Statement 5 - My child is taught well at this school				
Strongly Agree 37.70%	Agree 60.66%	Disagree 1.64%	Strongly Disagree 0.00%	Total 100.00%
% positive		98.36%		
Statement 6 - My child receives the appropriate homework for their age				
Strongly Agree 26.15%	Agree 60.00%	Disagree 10.77%	Strongly Disagree 3.08%	Total 100.00%
% positive		86.15%		
Statement 7 - This school ensures the students are well behaved				
Strongly Agree 29.23%	Agree 67.69%	Disagree 3.08%	Strongly Disagree 0.00%	Total 100.00%
% positive		96.92%		
Statement 8 - This school deals effectively with bullying				
Strongly Agree 26.98%	Agree 69.84%	Disagree 1.59%	Strongly Disagree 1.59%	Total 100.00%
% positive		96.83%		
Statement 9 - This school is well led and managed				
Strongly Agree 40.00%	Agree 56.92%	Disagree 3.08%	Strongly Disagree 0.00%	Total 100.00%
% positive		96.92%		
Statement 10 - This school responds well to any concern I raise				
Strongly Agree 32.26%	Agree 58.06%	Disagree 9.68%	Strongly Disagree 0.00%	Total 100.00%
% positive		90.32%		

Statement 11 - I receive valuable information from the school about my child's progress				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
28.13%	65.63%	6.25%	0.00%	100.00%
% positive		93.75%		
Statement 12 - I would recommend this school to another parent				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
34.38%	62.50%	3.13%	0.00%	100.00%
% positive		96.88%		
Statement 13 - Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
36.92%	61.54%	1.54%	0.00%	100%
% positive		98.46%		
Statement 14 - My Child Studies regularly at home				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
23.44%	57.81%	14.06%	4.69%	100.00%
% positive		81.25%		

TERM DATES	
2013-2014	
Term 2	Monday 4 November – Friday 20 December
Term 3	Monday 6 January – Friday 14 February
Term 4	Monday 24 February – Friday 4 April
Term 5	Tuesday 22 April – Friday 23 May
Term 6	Monday 2 June – Friday 18 July
INSET Days: 6 December 2013, 21 & 22 July 2014	
Bank Holiday: 5 May 2014	