



Junior School NEWS

Dear Parents

Last Saturday we welcomed Year 2 children from many different schools, including our own Pre-prep, for a Junior School taster morning, involving a variety of activities. As well as offering these young visitors a familiarisation visit prior to their entrance visit in January, it provided them with the opportunity to sample our unique approach to teaching and learning. Shortly after arriving, the children dived into books in our welcoming library and they thoroughly enjoyed listening to the specially chosen story, which introduced the theme for the remainder of the event.

We were most impressed by the children's high level of interest, their engagement with the requirement to think as scientists, code breakers and designers, and their willingness to get to know one another. All too soon the morning drew to a close and the children returned to Earth, complete with their jet packs, alien passports and photos of themselves with Tim Peake and fixing the Mars buggy. They were excited to greet waiting parents and siblings with tales of their travels and it was also exciting for us to have spent a few hours with future Stephen Perse students who had demonstrated a thirst for learning and adventure.



News

Girls' Hockey

While the Junior School was a hive of activity that morning, so too was Latham Road as our U10 hockey players had a fixture there versus Kimbolton School. The A team found themselves trailing 0-1 but managed to turn things round and they, along with the B team, are currently unbeaten. We wish them all the best in completing their undefeated season in their remaining fixtures against St John's College School tomorrow and Bedford Girls' School next Saturday. Mr Millward added, 'As a school, the girls are playing a very aesthetically pleasing brand of hockey this year. There have been some fantastically fought matches and the overall skill level is improving all the time.'



Boys' Football

It has been great to see the U9 and U10 boys putting the football pitch down at Latham Road to good use. Between them they have achieved a very healthy goal difference, with all teams recording impressive victories. Mr Cooper speaks of the improved poise and balance of a number of individuals this term and is delighted to report periods of outstanding possession football.



Running Club

Despite the lack of light and the colder weather, it is superb to see that early morning running club is still being very well supported. The cross country season is approaching fast and we look forward to seeing some strong performances from a number of the attendees.



Year 6 Victorian Day

Our thematic curriculum is now well established and one of the strengths of this approach is the enrichment provided by learning in a different setting.

Year 6 students are accustomed to being taught in Senior School learning spaces, as well as in the Junior School, but experiencing lessons in the Victorian School of Stibington came as quite a shock!

Tablets took on quite a different meaning to that with which the girls are familiar and, judging from the feedback I received on their return to SPF, the girls were happy that their trip back in time lasted for only a day.

[To read more click here.](#)



House Assemblies

Towards the end of 2015-16 we ran a most successful integrated learning project. 'Back to the Future' had its roots in the Foundation focus on the STEAM subjects, and provided pupils with opportunities to work independently and collaboratively, both in and out of school.

Some year groups were invited to participate in special one-off expeditions, such as Year 4's visit to Marshall Aerospace, and everyone was involved in a circuit of activities building on skills and knowledge acquired during STEAM Week, back in March.

The children participated in some activities whilst grouped in their school houses and, as always, we were delighted to see how beneficial this was, with great examples of learning across ages in a relatively short amount of time.



Following the success of this project, we decided to ask Junior School pupils to tackle a very different challenge in their school houses this term. They have been tasked with basing their assemblies on the 'six bees', which are considered very important in the delivery of P4C (Philosophy for Children). P4C is a vehicle through which different forms of thinking can be developed. The children are now familiar with the importance of the need for them as individuals to 'be creative', 'be critical', 'be collaborative', 'be caring', 'be curious' and 'be reflective' thinkers.

While these are embedded in our teaching, there is much to be gained from an occasional whole school focus on such aspects of our practice and assembly is the perfect setting. And so, the 2106 house assemblies are in production! We very much look forward to seeing how the Year 6 students manage to guide the younger members of their house towards a performance showcasing the benefits of one of the 'six bees'.

Meanwhile, Miss Dobson has been in Oxford yesterday and today in order to attend an advanced level course of P4C teaching. We look forward to her feedback next week and I am sure Year 5 Philosophy Club members will continue to enjoy their sessions with her when she introduces yet more ideas which spark lively discussion, encourage members to challenge assumptions and exhibit the confidence to rethink their opinions.



Young Writers

While many in the Junior School were enjoying the warm end to the summer term, winning races at Sports Day and joining in with the excitement of 'Back to the Future', some budding writers put pen to paper and generated an amazing array of Historical Mini Sagas to enter the Young Writers competition.

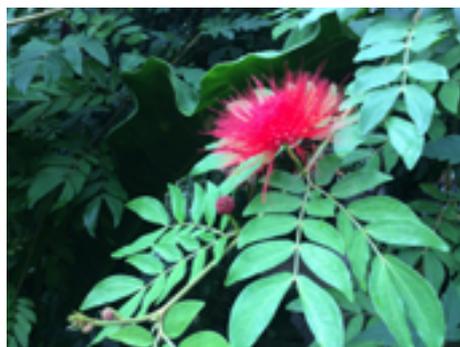
There were Egyptian mysteries, Roman wars and Minotaur myths to capture the interest of the judges. After waiting patiently all summer it was a wonderful surprise to discover that, of those who entered, 27 pupils stories have been selected for publication.

The published stories will be available in January 2017 and we will have to wait to see if any of the sagas are then selected as winners. Congratulations to these young writers, to their teachers who inspired them and especially to Mrs Parker who coordinated this project.



Tang Soo Do success

Congratulations to Abbey, a Year 5 pupil, who competed in the STKD/ATMA Korean martial arts tournament in Rugby on 30 October. This was a new competition for Abbey and a first competition at her new rank. She produced a most impressive performance, achieving two golds and a silver in her three disciplines: Hyungs, Weapons (Abbey used a dagger, previously she has used a bowstaff), and Sparring, respectively.



Every Tuesday a group of Year 4 pupils visit the Botanic Garden during their lunch break and this week the children involved took part in an informal photographic competition. Congratulations to Genevieve and Martha for their winning entry.

Finally, given that the importance of developing children's oracy skills has been in the news this week, I thought you might be interested in a report by Ikm co, to which Stephen Perse students and teaching staff recently contributed.

Here is the link: <https://www.ikmco.org/oracy-state-speaking-schools>

I hope you enjoy a very good weekend and I look forward to seeing you at Parents' Evenings and House Assemblies over the next two weeks.

Best wishes,

Katie Milne

Head of Junior School