

REPORT TO PARISH COUNCIL
St Michael's C.E.Primary School

The school's mission statement states 'St Michael's School shall be a place where all will be welcomed and valued for what they are. Through Christian principles and education each child will be encouraged to reach their full potential.'

As always, we have had a very busy year. We have six classes in the school, some of which have mixed aged pupils. We endeavour to develop in our pupils a positive sense and understanding of values for life.

This year sees the end of our current Comenius Project, with our partner schools in Spain and Germany. We have been taking part in this project funded by the British Council to work with these schools. The project started 3 years ago and we have become good friends with the schools, their teachers and the pupils.

During that time 10 members of staff and 14 children have stayed in host families in Germany and Spain and children and staff from both countries have visited us. Our project has celebrated both our similarities and differences. Each school had grown a Comenius garden, exchanging seeds earlier in the year and also exchanging garden diaries and recipes. Watch out for the launch of the Comenius Recipe Book!

Our Spanish and German friends made their last visit to school in March. To celebrate this we had a Comenius Day which was open to everyone in Steventon. It was enjoyed by all the children who visited the exhibition. They were able to watch films made from each visit, examine books and artwork made by all 3 schools, as well as chat to the Comenius teachers from Spain and Germany.

The children at St Michael's have a strong awareness that some children are not as fortunate as they are and have organized a lot of fundraising this year.

For Children in Need they dressed in their house colours and took part in competitions in which they dressed a teddy and coloured a Pudsey. They raised a total of **£329**

For the children in Haiti they wore hats of all shapes and sizes and took part in class obstacle races with hats flying everywhere. They raised **£255**.

The Children raised **£450** for the NSPCC by taking part in a mini Olympics

The harvest service was a lovely occasion and money raised from the auctioning of produce amounted to **£168** which was sent to the Bateman Trust in India.

You may have seen us running around the play park on 19th March when the whole school attempted to run a mile in aid of Sport Relief. Every child took part in the event, running around the school field, crossing into the play park and back around the field. The pupils on the school council organised the event and were excellent marshals for every race. We raised **£121.70**.

A total of **£1323**.

They have also completed some fund raising to aid the school. The ECO group have raised £88 towards buying new waste bins for the playground by organizing a bring and buy sale.

We celebrated Harvest, Christmas and Easter with services in the church which were well supported by parents and friends. The younger children performed "Starlight", a Nativity Story, which the Steventon Playgroup and the Darby and Joan Club came to. The older children had a Carol Service and the whole school took part in the Christingle service.

To enhance their learning the children have taken part in larger projects:

The whole school took part in the Take One Picture project suggested by the National Gallery in London. The children used one painting, 'The Umbrellas', as a stimulus for their learning across the curriculum all week, and displayed the finished work in the school for parents to view.

Oak class children treated the rest of KS2 to a mini science fair called "The Body Beautiful", featuring a number of hands-on activities. Children were able to investigate how we see things by making their own pin-hole camera, complete with upside down image; measuring and comparing body dimensions; observing how sounds travel to our ears; identifying mystery smells; measuring and comparing pulse rates before and after exercise and taking part in a treasure hunt body quiz. Members of Oak class were all on hand to offer help and explanations. Ash and Oak class children made informative posters. I think you will agree that this is an excellent way for the children to learn.

Children have also visited museums etc:

Rowan Class had a busy day at Abingdon Museum getting to know about life in Roman Britain.

Oak class were studying the Second World War and 29 children, dressed as evacuees and 4 adults boarded a bus for Swindon Steam Museum. Each child was equipped with a ration book, identity card, evacuation label and a WW 2 style lunch.

The children also welcomed Brigadier Hastings who told them about his time in the war.

To enhance their curriculum work Sycamore class went on a tropical adventure to the Living Rainforest near Newbury.

Year 6 children had an enjoyable and instructive morning at Marcham Road hospital. Here they learnt about resuscitation, how a plaster cast is made and some children had their fingers put into plaster. They also watched a video with different scenarios AND discussed what action to take and how to prevent the accident occurring. In an assembly they told the rest of the school about DRS ABC.

You may see pupils cycling around the village in the next few weeks learning how to be safer on the roads by taking their cycling proficiency test.

We have also welcomed visitors in to school:

The local community policemen visited Sycamore class. They talked to the children about their role in the community and helping people as well as keeping law and order. The children were treated to a pencil each and a visit to their police van.

The KS1 children were recently visited by Red Watch fireman from Didcot.

We held a special Whole School Assembly led by children's author and professional storyteller, Bob Hartman, who specializes in re-writing Bible stories which, whilst remaining faithful to the original narrative, also include storytelling devices such as rhythm, repetition and wordplay to make them more appealing to the listening ear.

We were also lucky enough to have a visit from Mike Leahy, the village's own celebrity, who talked to the older children about bugs.

We provide extra musical activities, including piano, violin, clarinet and recorder lessons.

The children in the choir entertained the Darby and Joan club at the village hall. They sang a number of songs and had a very enjoyable time. They are now learning songs ready for the Festival of Voices at Dorchester Abbey in June.

Pupils are able to take part in piano, violin, recorder and cornet/clarinet lessons.

There are sporty after school activities, football, hockey, tennis and karate.

We would like to thank those members of the village who come into school to help as volunteers and the many village friends who support our summer fete and Christmas Fayre. We extend a warm welcome to anyone in the community who would like to take an active part in our school life.

Judy Spiller
Acting Headteacher