

JANUARY 2023

ISSUE 023

VINELINES

YOUR WEEKLY VINEHALL NEWSLETTER



Vinehall
A REPTON SCHOOL



MESSAGE FROM THE HEADMASTER

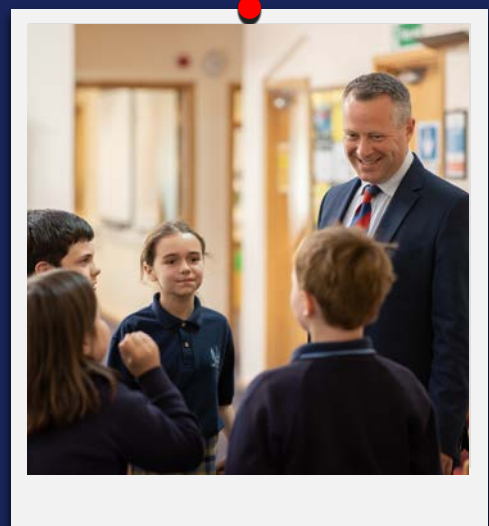
Our Big Energy Save Week has not only raised awareness of our energy need vs our actual energy use, but it has also required the children to think BIG. They have been encouraged to consider their place as global citizens and the role they can all play in creating change.

Thinking beyond Vinehall is very much on the minds of our Year 8 pupils. Of great inspiration to others has been the recent scholarship news from a couple of schools which hold their scholarship assessments early in the year. I know you will all be delighted to congratulate:

Alfie C – academic scholarship; Flo S – both an academic and an art scholarship; Elsie B – all-rounder scholarship (academic, drama and music); and Rafe P – sports scholarship, all to Battle Abbey. Also Elsie B – academic scholarship to Mayfield. We are also hugely pleased to share that Hannah Q and Rosie D impressed in their Cranbrook entrance exams and have both been awarded boarding places.

We are also growing accustomed to thinking bigger within our membership in the Repton Family of Schools and I am grateful to Dan Lewis for covering this within his letter in this edition of Vinelines.

I will leave you with a lovely anecdote ... With the Boarders heading off to fly their kites on Camber Sands last Sunday, I chose to build my chapel service around the theme of wind and kites. Wholly coincidentally, the children and I were thrilled to discover that my choice of a fitting and favourite hymn, 'Dear Lord and Father of Mankind' (which I picked for the words 'earthquake, WIND, and fire'), has a long and rich history with Repton! I will leave you to do the research on why ...



Joff Powis

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

Dear Parents,

I hope it's not too late to say happy new year!

I so enjoyed the opportunity to meet some of you at the School's Carol Service at the end of last term – ably led by Sue Glossop; it was a wonderful occasion and, despite the chill in the air at St Mary's that afternoon, the glowing warmth of the Vinehall community was thoroughly inspiring.

I am keen to spend more time at Vinehall (I was there last week, as it happens) and at events for parents so I can meet more of you; I am hosting a social drinks event at the School on Tuesday 21st March 2023 from 5.30–7.00pm before the Year 3&4 production, 'Tam Lin', and would be delighted if you can attend; please RSVP to Mary Alderson at headspa@vinehallschool.com if you would like to come along. In the meantime, I wanted to update you on a few developments since Vinehall joined the Repton family of schools back in May 2022.

You will no doubt have noticed that the School's logo has been 'refreshed' in order to create a more modern feel, yet in keeping with the School's sense of tradition and its history. As a result of this, new signage is currently being commissioned, and a new website design is underway, as well as a new set of prospectuses for parents interested in sending their children to Vinehall. I am extremely grateful to our new Director of Marketing and Admissions, Wendy Owens, for her efforts in driving forward these projects, supported by Arron Polton, our Marketing and Events Manager. Having worked previously at Radnor House (Sevenoaks), Wendy's appointment represents what I hope you will see as a genuine step-change in the quality of marketing and admissions functions at the School. (Those of you who follow us on Instagram will have already noticed improvements, I'm sure!)

My colleague, Simon O'Malley, who is Repton's lead executive in its work with Vinehall, will be spending two or three days a week at the School this term in order to work closely with Joff Powis, his leadership team and the Marketing/Admissions team in pushing forward improvements in many aspects of the School's operations and education. Simon was previously Head of Wellesley House prep school and Thomas's Battersea, and so brings a wealth of knowledge and understanding in running independent prep schools to his Vinehall role.

The refurbishment of the outside of the Dining Hall was completed over the summer, along with many other less obvious improvements, and quotes obtained for the other major capital projects which we are seeking to complete. Unfortunately, bad weather (and a paucity of contractors actually willing to commit to the work!) has delayed some of our projects but, as the weather improves this Spring, the painting of the school's exterior walls will commence, as will a number of other projects.

I'm delighted that members of staff from Vinehall have signed up to take part in the Repton Family of Schools leadership courses, offered across the group for middle and senior leaders. On these courses, they will be working closely with colleagues from the UAE, from Malaysia, Egypt and China. And speaking of collaborations, Vinehall pupils will, this term, have the opportunity to participate in the annual Repton International Debating Festival, debating against pupils from Cairo, the UAE and from Repton Prep – an exciting new initiative which I hope they will enjoy.

Finally, I'm delighted to announce that Vinehall parent Mark Mahaffey has joined the governing board. I hope you will join with me in welcoming him to that new role within our community.

As I wrote to you when Vinehall first joined with Repton, this relationship is not about creating a 'feeder' school (although of course Vinehall pupils will be very welcome at Repton should they wish to join); it is not about geography, (the schools are not closely located); it is about a meeting of values and cultures and a firm belief, on the part of Repton, that Vinehall can again become the prep school of first choice for parents in this area: flourishing both academically and financially. The Repton Chair of Governors, Mark Shires, still recalls the happy years his daughter spent at Vinehall; the wonderful opportunities available to pupils and the happy, vibrant atmosphere at the school is something I enjoy and value with every visit.

I wish you and your family a happy and healthy 2023.

Best wishes

Daniel Lewis
Chair of Governors



SCHOOL LIFE & ACHIEVEMENTS



Vinehall has been awarded the RHS Level 5 School Gardening Award, the highest achievement in the Royal Horticultural Society's School Gardening Awards scheme.

As a school we have been working our way through the various levels over the past 18 months, embedding horticulture, nature and growing into our school life through the planting of an orchard, construction of a new vegetable garden, introduction of new gardening clubs and activities throughout the school, and culminating in our first horticultural whole school event – Vinehall's Apple Day.

Rachel Borrows, our School Horticulturist, said:

'I have been delighted with the enthusiasm and support shown by the whole school community for the various initiatives we have introduced. The children have embraced the opportunity to get dirt under their nails, whilst developing their practical horticultural skills and understanding of environmental issues.'



Thank you to all parents for donations of shoes which has helped Vinehall to raise:

£114.00

for Sals Shoes

Thank you to the FOV for arranging this amazing fundraising initiative.

CAMERA UPDATE



We thought that parents might like to know that two cameras have been mounted above the sign at the Main Entrance to the school which will be in place for one week. Vinehall requested that Highways England measure the volume/density of traffic on this stretch of the A21. We hope that these will provide evidence of the need to install traffic calming measures near the school.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Boys' Rugby v Papplewick (U11)

Monday 23rd January, Parents welcome to spectate at 2.30pm

Year 3 Trip to Bexhill Museum

Tuesday 24th January, leave 8.30am, return by 2.00pm

Reception Trip to Battle

Tuesday 24th January, 9.00am -11.45am

Girls' Netball v Holmewood House (1st, 2nd, 3rd, U11AB, U10)

Boys' Rugby v Marlborough House (U13, U12, U11 & U10)

Wednesday 25th January

Year 8 Trip to London – National Gallery & 'The Woman in Black'

Thursday 26th January, leave 9.00am, return 7.00pm

Big Garden Birdwatch

Friday 27th January

Year 2 Class Assembly (parents welcome, 8.40am)

Friday 27th January

Dover Castle Trip

Saturday 28th January, all welcome

Chapel Service

Sunday 29th January, 10am

Boarders' Activity: Pottery Painting & Decopatch

Sunday 29th January

SCHOLARSHIP ASSESSMENT WEEK

Monday 23rd - 27th January



FOCUS OF THE WEEK – DRAMA

What's the point of Drama?

If you key 'what is the point of drama lessons' into a search engine, you may get the following definition: 'They encourage children to think and act creatively, thus developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills that can be applied in all areas of learning. Through drama, children are encouraged to take responsible roles and make choices – to participate in and guide their own learning.'

This term's INSET included a training course on how to make children active thinkers; rather than giving pupils the answers to their questions, teachers try to enable them to think through their conundrums for themselves. The satisfaction a child feels at solving their own problem embeds the information learned. Spoon-feeding or learning by rote will be easily forgotten; trial, error and experience will be more likely retained.



At Vinehall weekly drama lessons support the English department in a practical way. Currently children in Years 5, 7 and 8 have an opportunity to think about the texts they are studying academically and translate this into active and practical learning. They put themselves into the characters of the curriculum novels, plays or poems. This is particularly helpful for those children who are visual or kinaesthetic learners, those whose imaginations can be engaged in practical tasks.

Performing in front of an audience throughout their time at Vinehall, from Nursery upwards, enables our children to find the confidence to use these skills in their improvisations, mime, text interpretation, voice work and movement further up the school. They also learn by watching each other, providing constructive criticism and advice for improvement that they can take into their own work; I impress upon them that you often learn as much by watching your peers perform as you do from treading the boards yourself.



Whether children want to pursue a career in drama or public speaking is irrelevant, as the skills learned will support them in any aspect of their future lives. This is why we are considering the introduction of LAMDA lessons/examinations for Years 3-8.

I recognise that many pupils struggle with the idea of performance, but the enormous satisfaction I feel when even one of those reluctant thespians suddenly breaks through their reticence or self-consciousness to produce something fantastically thoughtful often makes this overly-dramatic luvvie want to cry! The new year, new term has already seen some startling achievements: every single one of the Year 4s shone in their auditions for the musical; Year 5's interpretation of Stig of the Dump's confusion with the modern world was incredibly insightful; Year 7 grappled brilliantly with putting themselves into the huge, stomping boots of the murderous hunter in 'Cry of the Wolf'; and the Year 8s were truly amazing weird sisters on Macbeth's wild Scottish heath. I am also staggered by the vivid imaginations of the Pre-Prep Drama Club attendees and Year 1's Dinosaur Workshop was a delight. Year 2 visited for a taster day this week and joined me in the Chaplin Theatre for a drama workshop; it was unbelievably satisfying to see how well they worked with the Year 3s and how vivid were their collective imaginations.



Teaching drama can be noisy, barely-contained chaos at times, but littered with moments of inspirational joy. As Arthur Miller once said: 'The mission of the theatre is to change, to raise the consciousness of people to their human possibilities ...' and this is the not-so-humble 'point of drama lessons'.



ACADEMIC

Moving up to Year 3 Taster Day

Make a train with rods!

Year 3 and 2 worked in teams, like Billy Bee, to find as many ways as possible to make a Four train using Cuisenaire rods. They then wrote a number of sentences to match each train. Great thinking and collaboration!



Float a Boat!

The children showed perseverance and resilience (like Terry Tortoise) as they worked together to make boats with corks and lolly sticks, featuring a propeller made out of an elastic band and plywood! Then they tested them out - some worked better than others, but it has got them all thinking about their next design.



Carpentry & Drama

The Year 2s loved their afternoon with Ollie Dorman, our Carpentry and DT teacher, learning to saw wood and sand down their own dice. Mary Alderson, our Director of Drama, discovered some new acting talent as she led the children in a workshop in our Theatre.



It was another fantastic day in Juniors and Year 3 really enjoyed looking after the Year 2s. They also loved meeting Serenity and Percy and welcoming them to Vinehall.



ENGLISH

Someone once said that reading is 'a solitary activity best shared'. Paradoxical maybe, but quite possibly true!

Last term, the Vinehall Library Photo competition encouraged pupils in the Prep school (and staff) to share pictures of reading with their pets. Horses, dogs and cats were the most popular companions, but we also had a very attentive hamster and some highly literate teddies amongst the entries.

After serious deliberations the winners were selected, but huge thanks must go to all who made the effort to enter photos because each one could have been a winner! Congratulations to: Ben O, (Junior Winner) Charlie F, Mia G and Zara S-W (Joint Middle Winners) and Isla Mc (Senior Winner)

I hope there will be even more entries for our exciting new competition (coming soon) but, in the meantime, please keep reading!



**Vinehall Library Photograph Winners (left to right)
Mia G, Zara S-W, Ben O (centre) Isla Mc, Charlie F**

SPORTS



With the temperatures plummeting, unfortunately we had to make the difficult decision to cancel the boys' rugby fixtures against Skippers Hill on Wednesday afternoon.

However, the girls were far luckier and their matches against Claremont went ahead. Laura Percy-White was very impressed by her 1st team, who took on board exactly what was asked of them and implemented it brilliantly on court. The U11As & Bs also shone, winning their matches at home, with the U10 team doing the same.

A great set of results.

On Thursday the U8 and U9 girls hosted Marlborough House for a most enjoyable afternoon of hockey. Playing small-sided games, the girls passed, tackled and dribbled with enthusiasm in the winter sunshine. The chicken nuggets and chips were also a welcome warmer after the game and it was great to see the girls chatting with the opposition.

The U8 and U9 boys played their first hockey games of the season. Not in the calendar, it was decided that, instead of keeping them at school because their rugby games were off, they would still travel to Skippers for an early season hockey afternoon. They were buzzing with enthusiasm on their return to school and it was wonderful to hear them retelling their efforts in the changing room.

On Monday we will welcome Papplewick's U11 Rugby team to Vinehall; kick off is at 2.30pm. The U8, U9, U10 and U11 boys will finish their rugby season next week against Marlborough House and the girls take on Holmewood House at netball and Battle Abbey at hockey.

For Match Reports

via Mobile

Please follow these instructions - [click here](#)
(then click sport tab > select sport >
Select team > select the fixture > select report)

via Desktop or Tablet

please [click here](#)

LITTLE VINES NURSERY



Brown Bear's Snoring

Drama gives children the opportunity to explore and the freedom to imagine. This week the children have been learning a song called 'Brown Bear's Snoring,' which is all about a bear waking up from hibernation.

The children pretended to be a bear in their cave and slowly they began to wake up as spring had arrived. The use of props, such as cuddly toys, and dressing up in winter clothes gave the children the opportunity to think creatively and communicate their ideas.

Please do ask your child if they can sing and act out the song to you at home.



Kindergarten

One of our favourite activities in Kindergarten is drama, especially role play. You will often find us using our imaginations to explore make-believe worlds.

Recently we have enjoyed building rockets to zoom off into space. We have been jungle explorers; been on imaginary trips on planes or buses and dressed up as princesses and clowns.

We love to role play with our friends, just like Billy Bee.



RECEPTION

Superpowers

Reception had a fabulous week exploring their superpowers. The super league sent us another mission, to free the people from the laser web. They had to crawl, roll, jump and dodge through the web. The children created their own special super capes, masks and belts then wrote a super profile about their powers. They had to decide how to use their powers to help. In maths, the children used their super brains to solve addition problems with counting-on and number bonds.

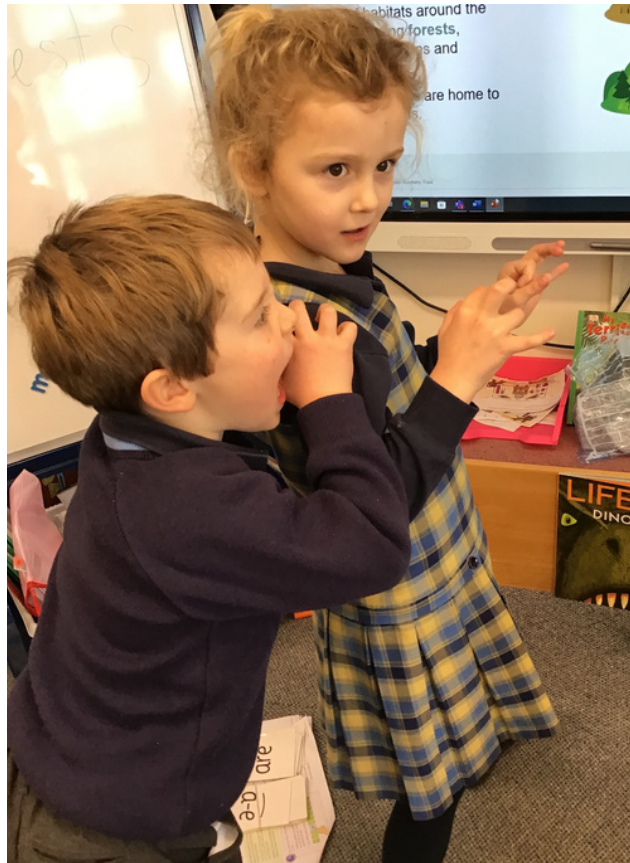


YEAR ONE

Dinosaur Diets

Year 1 learnt about dinosaur diets this week and whether a dinosaur was a carnivore, omnivore or herbivore. Loud roars could be heard through the Pre Prep as the children worked in pairs, taking turns to 'act out' predator and prey situations.

Well done Year 1 for being such realistic dinosaurs!



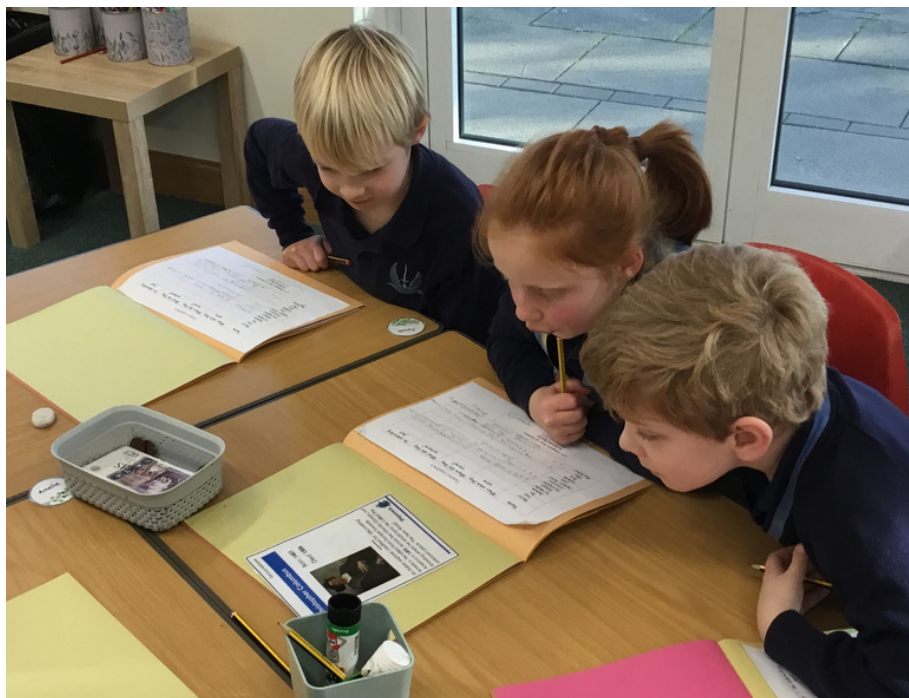
YEAR TWO



Sea Explorers

We had to work like Billy Bee this week to find out about famous sea explorers. We were given fact cards and had to discuss what we could find out about each person, as well as who was the most significant explorer. We also went on a materials hunt around the school, to see which materials we could find.

In Maths we worked in groups to solve word problems involving money, using bar models and number lines to help us answer the questions. The children love working in small groups and some great discussions took place.



CELEBRATIONS

Pre-Prep

STARS OF THE WEEK

Nursery

Anya

Kindergarten

Immy

Ariadne

Reception

Louis

Rory

Year 1

Elfie

Rose

Year 2

Evie

William



Happy Birthday

VIVI L

