

MARCH 2023

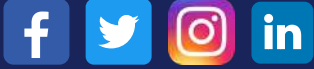
ISSUE 031

VINELINES

YOUR WEEKLY VINEHALL NEWSLETTER



Vinehall
A REPTON SCHOOL



MESSAGE FROM THE HEADMASTER

I am delighted to announce the appointment of James Thain as my Deputy Head from September.

James will be joining us from Somerhill, where he is currently the Assistant Deputy Head Academic. He is an exceptional teaching practitioner (English & Humanities) and a hugely popular member of staff. James is also a keen sportsman: coaching tennis, playing competitive golf and entering marathons and triathlons. He is incredibly excited to join Vinehall, having been struck by the warmth and energy of our wonderful school.

Personal Values and Learning Habits:

As part of our end of term assembly this morning, with great excitement I shared a re-fresh of the school's personal values and learning habits with the children. I know you will agree that the following values encompass our Vinehall Ethos: **Kind, Respectful, Confident and Ambitious.**

These values will combine with our established learning habits: **Reflective, Inquisitive, Collaborative, Courageous and Resilient.**

More to come in my beginning of term letter, together with an invitation to our 'We Are Vinehall Day' on 5th May. Please save the date!

Have a wonderful holiday with your children.

Jeff Davis



JAMES THAIN



CONGRATULATIONS

Rushton wins the GK House Event

The Chaplin Theatre was painted RED as Rushton House celebrated their win at the annual Lent Term General Knowledge (GK) House Event.

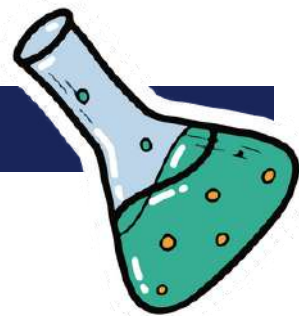
An honourable mention to the Year 8s who 'demolished' the teachers (as one child put it) with their knowledge of text typing acronyms and several actors we did not even recognise!

Many thanks to Ms Tripp and the teachers for their efforts in putting on this much-loved event.





FOCUS OF THE WEEK- SCIENCE



The Science Department kick-started British Science Week celebrations with an exciting, yet windy visit to Rye Harbour Nature Reserve. This year's theme is connections and pupils in 5L enjoyed a walking tour of the reserve, exploring a variety of different habitats along the way. The children managed to fill up their buckets with seaweed specimens quite quickly and used identification keys to determine different species. It was a wonderful opportunity for the children to learn about local nature reserves and their importance in protecting endangered species. Year 5 are moving on from learning about the life cycle of humans and animals to a more in-depth study of different habitats and animal adaptations after Easter, so this trip has been a timely springboard into our new topic.



The following day, all pupils from Years 2 to 8 enjoyed a STEM afternoon, working together in mixed year groups within each house. Competitive spirits were high, and the buzz of excited chatter filled the room as the children were challenged to build a marble run using only card, masking tape and a chair. The criteria for a successful build included a height of one meter incorporated into the design and a marble jump! Creations materialised quickly and the best marble runs were the few with twists and turns, using all parts of the chair. The most impressive groups were those who worked collaboratively throughout; thinking like engineers to check their marble run worked and tweaking their designs as necessary.



FOCUS OF THE WEEK- SCIENCE



The children in Year 6 STEM have been creating research posters on a variety of topics relating to 'connections' and I have been impressed by the plethora of ideas submitted so far. These include research on neuron connections in the brain; the idea of how humans are connected to nature through plants; and an interesting look at genetics and how humans are connected through their DNA. I am looking forward to selecting the top five posters in Year 6 to enter this year's British Science Week poster competition. In Science lessons, the children have been learning about the human body and how the different systems work together to make an organism.

We continue to make rapid progress through the syllabus in Year 7 Science lessons, focusing on the chemical reactions topic most recently. The children kept coming up to the lab to check on their rusting nails experiment and made themselves jump with the squeaky pop test, where they tested hydrogen gas with a lit splint. We will continue the hands-on excitement in the summer term when I am looking forward to the children experimenting with dancing slime on a speaker, as part of our Sound topic. The Year 8 pupils are continuing to work hard towards their upcoming CE examinations, but we have managed to squeeze in some interesting demonstrations of fuel efficiency and exploding icing sugar!

ACADEMIC



YEAR 3

Sharing stories

3E have enjoyed hearing each other read their own compositions, based on a story by Michael Foreman. They were good listeners!



Dictionary Detective!

3E have been like Cassie Cat this week, using the glossary in their reading books (or, in Caspar's case, Mrs E's ancient dictionary) to find the definitions of unfamiliar words. The Ashton cake sale hat helped - or maybe it was the cake!



ACADEMIC

YEAR 3 & YEAR 4

New baby!

Fiona Drury returned to watch the Year 3&4 play with baby Freya. They spent some time in the classroom with us.



DRAMA



Tam Lin

On Tuesday evening the Chaplin Theatre was transformed into a magical forest teeming with malevolent fairies, heroic knights, local yokels, noble Lords and brave beautiful Ladies in the Year 3&4 production of 'Tam Lin' by Lin Marsh. This traditional Celtic tale was a departure from our usual Lent musicals, but one filled with lovely songs and a wealth of challenging characters. Our Juniors worked tirelessly all term to learn the songs, master the dances and interpret the text and we were enormously proud of them all.



Guillaume BL was the gallant and dashing Tam Lin, bewitched by the evil Queen Mab (a wonderfully feisty performance by Rosa A) and her two cackling fairies played by Alexandra C and Betsy S with great aplomb. Esme L was charming as Janet, the only girl brave enough to break the spell, overcome the enchanted creatures keeping our hero in thrall and win his heart in the process. Teddy H was marvellous as Janet's noble Father and Rex L was a commandingly wise old Knight. There were lovely scenes with Janet's playful friends in Ivy G, Alice C and Indira H. George B, Harry M, Lucas M, Sam L and Arthur P had the fun of the Harvester scenes, rehearsing their hopeless and chaotic production of 'Pyramus and Thisbe' much in the manner of Shakespeare's mechanicals.

DRAMA



Year 3 were extremely busy providing the enchanted forest and wielding the shadow puppets, creatures essential to the lifting of the spell that had kept Tam Lin in the Fairies' malevolent power. Keeping those branches up and trunks still was a huge challenge but it looked spectacular.

Sue Glossop has worked tirelessly to teach the children some difficult songs and many of the Year 4 cast opted for solos or played instruments. This is tremendously brave for such young children and showed off their talents very effectively. We were delighted to have Colin Hughes, our excellent peripatetic piano teacher, accompany the action.

The wonderfully magical setting was created by Head of Art, Tracey Konyu, then titivated with a lot of twinkling fairy lights and ivy. All this, the props and the beautiful costumes were coordinated by the ever-brilliant and creative Kate Hunt, supported by a dedicated group of Year 3&4 parents. As always my appreciation of, and gratitude to, Kate is boundless and heartfelt.

It was wonderful to see the children's confidence and skill blossom as rehearsals progressed. Earlier in the term I wrote about the importance of drama. An experience such as this is proof enough of the many valuable opportunities provided through working as a group, overcoming difficulties, trying to support one's peers and learning that it is a huge amount of work to produce something worthy of public performance. There can be no doubt that our children rose to the challenge and each one of them shone like a little magical fairy light.



Macbeth

After a busy term of excellent weekly workshops focussing on the breadth of this wonderful story, the beauty of the language, the numerous themes and rich characters through tableaux, soundscapes, improvisation, voice work and mime, the two Year 8 classes joined forces to produce a short performance of Macbeth in a special assembly this week.

The devised script featured excerpts of the original Early Modern English and some current paraphrasing and incorporated all the activities they had completed. I was very proud of all the children coping so well and imaginatively with this demanding but wonderful text; I was particularly amazed by the way our overseas pupils grappled so bravely with language that our home-grown children find a challenge. For me it was an opportunity to reinforce the idea that studying these plays is very important, but Shakespeare intended them to be performed and watched. For our young audience, this may have been their first introduction to the great Bard and the Year 8s did him proud.





Vinehall Art Exhibition 2023

The exhibition has been running since Friday 17th March and will now continue until, and including, Saturday 1st April. Thank you to everyone who took part in the exhibition.

Our artists produced some amazing pieces, which looked particularly fetching in the gallery environment. Without them, we would not have had an exhibition. Thank you. (All artwork will be returned to the artists once the exhibition has finished).

A special thanks to the following people:

- Joff Powis for his support and encouragement.
- Kenton Lowe at The blackShed Gallery in Robertsbridge for agreeing to display the work and for curating the exhibition.
- Arthur Lyu for offering to digitally twin the event.
- Wendy Owens for her marketing skills.
- Gemma and her team for the delicious canapes, especially the beef and horseradish!
- All form tutors for graciously accepting the barrage of 'gentle reminders' about the event.

If I have forgotten anyone, I apologise. It has been a big team effort. Thank you for visiting the event and supporting the artists involved.

Tracey Konyu



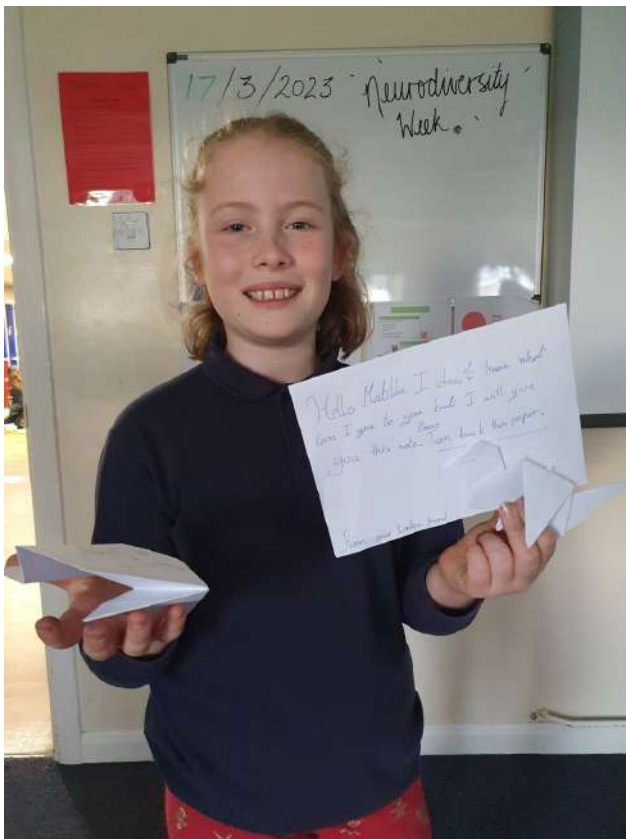
HORTICULTURE

The Eco Committee and the Gardening Club children have been hard at work (with appropriate tree-climbing breaks in between)! With the help of Rachel Borrows and other staff, the children have helped to clear and outline a path so that we can take in the beautiful sights of the bluebells after the Easter Holidays. We have also cleared brambles to enable bluebell growth. Roll on, spring!



Lenten Friends

Children and teachers alike have been secretly spreading kindness around the school this half term. Notes with joyful messages, decorated lockers, flowers and more! Lenten Friends is a heart-warming tradition loved by many. It also tied in beautifully with our recent Empathy Week celebration where we looked at different ways to connect with others. The Prep School children decorated vine leaves with the many ways in which they demonstrate empathy. We are the (empathetic) Vines!



CHARITY

On Tuesday, the Ashtons held their Charity Event – a cake sale and games. We were raising money for our fabulous local charity 'Dandelion Time', which supports families that may be struggling due to trauma, hurt or neglect.

There were four activities:

- 1) A cake sale; we had an incredible variety of homemade cakes and cookies for sale.
- 2) The children were able to make Easter crowns decorated with eggs, bunnies and flowers.
- 3) Hannah Q kindly donated a large, fluffy duck and many people had a go at guessing the name. Ines C won with the name 'Bob!'
- 4) There was also a 'guess the number of sweets in a jar' game, which was won by Mia G.

We raised an amazing £278.20 from the Charity Event for 'Dandelion Time'.

Written by Ricky W



BOARDING

This weekend was jam-packed in the boarding house, starting off with sports followed by a rather muddy laser tag on Saturday morning.

After everyone was satisfied that they were the best alternative to the SAS, we sat down for a rather delicious lunch of chilli tacos with rice.

We then had an afternoon hosting and viewing the spectacular artwork created by Vinehall pupils at the Land & Sky exhibition, which featured work from some of our boarders: Maria, Ines A, Ines C, Ricky, Summer and Patrick. After an afternoon of drinking orange juice with lemonade and grazing on hors d'oeuvres, we headed back to the boarding house for dinner.

After dinner we had a hilarious craft evening. The children had to blow the yolk out of an egg so that it could be painted and decorated. Some had a light touch and others were red in the face by the end, but most agreed it was equally amazing and disgusting.

Sunday started with an Easter service in the chapel, followed by a shopping trip to Hastings where our boarders could buy gifts for their Lenten friends and do some personal shopping. We then came home to have some homemade carbonara followed by some prep. We had a big Easter egg hunt within the school grounds, where everyone hunted for their own tag in order to exchange it for a big chocolate bunny of their choice.

After dinner, we all settled in the common room to watch the first of the 'Pirates of the Caribbean' films to wind down from a full-on fun-filled weekend.



MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF PRE PREP

Competition Time in Pre-Prep

Over the past few weeks, the children have astounded us with their ingenuity and creativity as they have produced various masterpieces for our Pre-Prep competitions. This week was no "eggception!" Mary Alderson and Debbie Gearey kindly agreed to be the judges for our Easter Egg competition, and eventually decided on five worthy winners: Maeva JA in Nursery, Ariadne L in Kindergarten, Elizabeth Rose in Reception, Jesse J in Year 1 and Monty C in Year 2. Congratulations to these children, and to everyone who entered and helped to make the competition such genuine fun.

Our story box competition to celebrate World Book Day also saw a bumper crop of utterly amazing entries. Our worthy winners were Annabel G in Nursery, George F in Kindergarten, Oscar B in Reception, Florence R In Year 1 and William C in Year 2. The overall winner was Shahaan K, for his amazing creation of 'The Snail and the Whale.'



MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF PRE PREP

Of course, all of Pre-Prep are winners in one way or another, and we have had a wonderful last week celebrating our achievements together. On Monday we had a record number of children taking part in our Watch Dance sessions; it is great to open these sessions up for parents to come in and watch. Gym club put on a truly brilliant display for their families on Monday afternoon; and Singing club sang their hearts out as they shared some of their favourite songs with their parents last Friday.

I was incredibly proud of Year 1 who behaved beautifully during their zoo trip to Port Lympne on Tuesday, and on Wednesday Reception shared a super afternoon tea with their parents as the culmination of their Fairy tale topic.

We are all in need of some time to recharge before the “eggcitement” of the summer term, and I wish everyone a happy and relaxing Easter holidays.



Nicky Whittaker



LITTLE VINES NURSERY

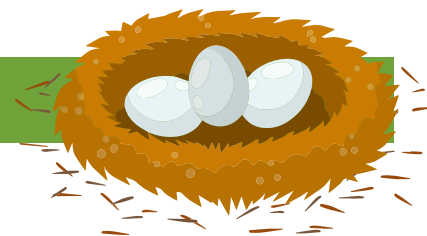


Spring offers the most wonderful educational experiences for our children. We have been learning about the life cycle of animals, new beginnings, as well as exploring different media and materials to create Easter decorations.

The children went to visit the school pond to see if they could see any frogspawn and look for signs of spring. They spotted lots of new buds and flowers but we are still waiting for the blossom!

Happy Easter everyone.





Kindergarten

Kindergarten have enjoyed an exciting week exploring Easter traditions and celebrations. We have been busy making cards, decorations and chocolate Easter nests. A real highlight was going on a spring walk to collect items to make our own Easter garden and it was a joy to see the awe and wonder on the faces of the children as they found a variety of natural items for us to use.



RECEPTION



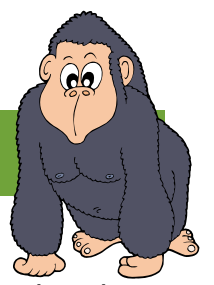
Reception have had an incredible final week of the Easter term. The highlight for many of the children was our traditional tales day and tea party. The children came dressed as different characters from Old MacDonalld to Kings and knights. The children all took part in preparing the food for our tea party, including sandwiches, scones and gingerbread men. Unfortunately the weather was rather miserable so we had our tea party inside, which the children loved as we made the room look very different.

We had our final Forest school session on Wednesday, which involved the children making birds' nests out of Willow and other natural materials. The children have really enjoyed these sessions and Sally King is going to come back and visit us in the summer. We also had our final bike ability session this week and it was amazing to see how far the children have come with their cycling.

The children have worked very hard and deserve a rest, we hope you all have a fabulous Easter holiday!



YEAR 1



There was no better way to end our Year 1 topic on 'Amazing Animals' than with a trip to the zoo! We boarded the safari truck eagerly and listened attentively to the zoo keeper as she drove us through the different habitats looking carefully to find the animals who were camouflaged amongst the trees. After eating lunch, we ventured down to the gorilla enclosures and learnt about the life of gorillas. We thought carefully about ways to protect these endangered species. After a long day and lots of fresh air we made our way back to school, happy and tired.

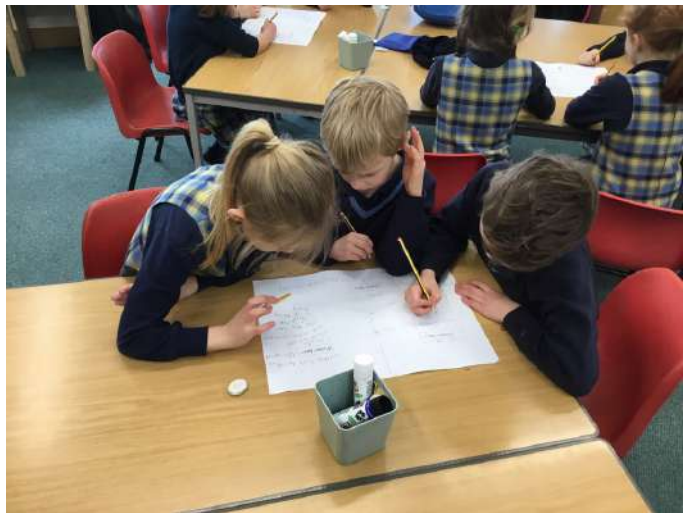


YEAR 2



To conclude our Creepy Crawlies topic, Year 2 worked together like Billy Bee to find out about honey bees. They had to sort the facts and choose the correct sub-headings, as well as brainstorm information and use a Thesaurus to find alternative words. The children produced some informative non-chronological reports and discovered that the bees are crucial.

We also had lots of fun baking Easter cupcakes and the children were so excited when they spotted the mini eggs with which to decorate them. What delicious cakes they made!

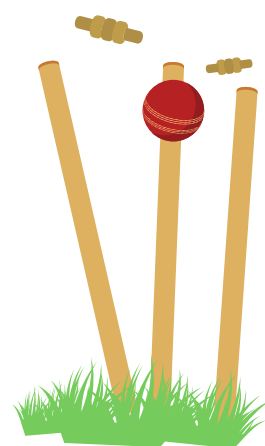


SPORT

I cannot praise the pupils enough for what has been another extremely busy Lent Term. Rugby to hockey, netball to football, swimming and gymnastics, the teams have acquitted themselves brilliantly at every fixture and it is so pleasing to see the continued progress being made at all levels.

Next term promises to be just as busy, with cricket, athletics and tennis being the main focus for the games department. Please do remember to check the school uniform list to see what clothing your child will need for the upcoming term. Pupils in Year 3 & 4 will not need cricket trousers; however, the other year groups will. Everyone from Year 3 to 8 will need a Vinehall cricket shirt. Being a cricket lover myself I am a firm believer that cricketers should wear a cap/hat and whitish shoes when playing. A bottle of labelled sun cream is also something I would encourage. The cricket teams have not been selected yet, but the table below will give you an idea of the type of ball and format the different groups are likely to play.

Year Group	Boys	Girls
3 & 4	Softball Pairs	Softball Pairs
5 & 6	Colts A Hardball 20/20	U11A Incrediball Pairs
	Colts B Incrediball Pairs	U11B Softball Pairs
		U10 Softball Pairs
7 & 8	1st XI Hardball 20/20	1st Team Hardball Pairs
		2nd Team Incrediball Pairs
		3rd Team Softball Pairs



If your son or daughter is selected for a team that is playing hardball cricket, I would encourage them to have their own kit. Please do not purchase a bat that is far too big or heavy, as this will hinder their performance. The pupils will also do athletics every Friday in their games sessions. Many pupils wear running spikes. These are not compulsory, but they do help when sprinting.

I hope you all have a restful Easter break and I look forward to seeing you on the side of the cricket field at the end of April.

Pre-Prep ^{☆☆}

STARS OF THE WEEK

Nursery

Faye

Kindergarten

Margaux

Ariadne

Reception

Freddie

Albert

Year 1

Rose

Year 2

William

Vivi

Happy Birthday

Oscar OG – Nursery

Eva SC – Nursery

Ella – Nursery

Ezra – Reception

