

The summer term has been a very busy time for all. Alongside our official commitments as a Board of Governors, we were delighted to accept further invitations to accompany year groups on their educational and cultural visits; some of which were to a familiar venue but with a different cohort of children or took us on a new experience. These included the Year 5 trip to Tudor World in Stratford upon Avon and the Year 1 visits to the Didcot Steam Railway Museum and Leicester Space Centre.

At Tudor World, the children immersed themselves in the Elizabethan period and were able to demonstrate their knowledge of the era and extend prior learning. At Didcot the younger children were in awe of the sheer size, sound and motion of such large trains and the close inspection of a working engine prompted many questions. Together with an interactive workshop in a converted carriage and ride on one of the steam trains, the visit provided a glimpse of bygone years. In contrast, their visit to the Space Centre brought them up to date with the present and beyond and was a hands on experience with plenty of displays and simulations to engage young inquisitive minds and stimulate conversations. The Night and Day planetarium show was an ideal opportunity to relax and learn about the rotation of the Earth, Sun and Moon.

Back in school, the Living Museum was a huge success where children chose to present their work depicting a number of historical events in varying formats from early civilisations such as the Romans through to major events with WWII. Others chose key figures that influenced society by representing Florence Nightingale and Rosa Parks. The exhibits included artefacts, acting, sculptures and picture boards with children dressed in costumes of the era. Parents and carers as well as other classes were invited to come along to the small hall to view their work and find out more about the historical themes they had chosen.

With Year 6 SATS firmly back on the agenda, we were pleased to be invited to the breakfast club that had been arranged to welcome children into school early during the week of the tests. It was good to see them chatting in a relaxed manner sat in their friendship groups whilst tucking into a variety of healthy breakfast food. After greeting their teachers and senior members of staff, a tour of the hall followed to wish them well, hear about their experiences so far and any concerns they may have had.

The first Year 6 trip to France was very successful in not only providing the children with the opportunity to relax after their SATS but also to learn more about a different culture and practice their linguistics skills. It was an action packed few days during which the children visited the US WWII Military Memorial where they witnessed the unexpected arrival of the French President and military fly pasts, the Bayeux Tapestry, a cinema, theme park and market; the latter of which put their knowledge

of the French language to the test. We wish the children well as they move on to their senior schools.

The anticipated arrival and completion of the Ofsted inspection was a particularly demanding time for all involved. We were extremely pleased with the outcome and the school retaining its outstanding rating and wish to recognise all the hard work that has taken place to ensure a high standard of education and pastoral care has continued to be provided. Well done to the Head Teacher and all staff at Middleton!

We have been holding follow up meetings with our respective Faculty Leaders this term in order to review the impact of the changes and progress made in curriculum performance since the beginning of the academic year. The new faculty approach, which has been overseen by a member of the Senior Leadership Team, has proved to be very effective. With the additional preparation time allocated to Subject Leaders and the provision of a balanced instruction v exploration approach to lessons, children have embraced and enjoyed the new style of learning. This was evident from our observations at recent Pupil Voice sessions which continue to provide the opportunity for children to feedback on subject areas and a platform for public speaking and debate. Ofsted Inspectors were impressed with the outcomes and commented on a number of areas. They commended the introduction and delivery of the new writing scheme plus the highly ambitious history curriculum and, in particular, the clear sequence of learning required from Foundation to Year 6. The opportunities provided for children to review and revisit learning over time supported their detailed understanding of the whole curriculum. The numerous extra-curricular activities, especially planning and inclusion of many different cultures and interests which Middleton offers, were also highlighted in their report.

And finally, as with any school there are changes in personnel but this year we say a fond farewell to Mrs Trail as she moves on to pastures new in Devon to take up a new role as head teacher. She will be greatly missed after many years of dedicated service at Middleton but we wish her the very best for the future. We would like to congratulate Mr Hughes and Mr Higgs who will be taking up new senior leadership roles from next year and look forward to supporting them.

Barbara Bushell

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