



Welcome to our Family!



This term, the Wessex Learning Trust has been pleased to welcome two new schools into the Wessex Family as Sandford and Winscombe Primary Schools officially join the Trust. The schools are the fifteenth and sixteenth schools to join our exceptional educational partnership and bring with them more than 350 amazing learners and 60 world class staff. To celebrate the two new schools joining the Trust, Chief Executive Gavin Ball visited the schools to meet staff and learners.

Mr. Ball commented: "I am excited to welcome Sandford and Winscombe Primary schools into the Wessex Learning Trust. This move is just the start of an amazing journey together and I look forward to working with the staff and learners at the schools to continue their incredible work".

Executive Headteacher across the schools, Lorna Richardson, added: "Joining the Trust will help ensure that Winscombe and Sandford are able to continue to provide the high-quality education and care that they are famed for. We cannot wait to see what this partnership brings".

The Trust believes that this partnership will offer incredible opportunities for all involved and help us to continue to provide an outstanding, education to all young people. By working together, we can harness the talents of all our staff, share good practice between our academies, and share resources that enable us to concentrate on delivering excellence in education.



Top: Sandford; **Bottom:** Winscombe

East Brent Prepare for Lift-Off!

Children at East Brent were recently treated to a visit by the Space Detectives who worked with the children to immerse them in all things space! Activities included creating solar systems and even building and launching rockets! Many thanks to the amazing team at Space Detectives for such an enriching day - the children gained so much to support their learning.



Tel: 01934 745363

Email: office@wessexlearningtrust.co.uk

Station Road, Cheddar, Somerset, BS27 3AQ

wessexlearningtrust.co.uk

Social Media: @WessexTrust





Chief Executive's Message

And so, we come to the end of yet another half term here at the Wessex Learning Trust, and what a pleasure it is to be back to a much more normal feeling Christmas term. Although we're not totally back to business as usual, it has been wonderful for learners to be able to enjoy some of the traditional Christmas activities in their classes.

This edition of the newsletter is packed full of activities and achievements from across our schools, and I am really excited to be able to share everything they've been up to with you. The sheer range of stories on display in this edition are testimony to the quality of education the Trust is so proud to provide: nurturing the whole child, and encouraging inquisitiveness and a desire to learn.

One particular high point this term has been welcoming Winscombe and Sandford Schools into our Trust at the start of December. Having worked closely with these two fantastic schools for so long now, it's wonderful to finally be able to properly welcome them into our family.

Outside of the day-to-day however, it is worth emphasising that COVID is still here and that we must continue to work hard to keep each other safe. This means sanitising hands, wearing masks and doing your bi-weekly Lateral Flow Tests (where applicable). If we do this now, we are hopeful for another normal term in the new year.

As we approach the Christmas break, I hope you can all look back on what you have achieved so far this year and look forward to what you have to come in the remaining two-thirds of the year. I am incredibly proud of everything I see going on in all our schools and I can't wait to welcome you back for more in January. Stay safe and have an enjoyable and relaxing Christmas!

Coming Together to Remember



On November 11th, learners and staff across our schools stopped to remember those who have given their lives in conflict. Schools organised a number of events to give children time to reflect, as well as learn about remembrance and the sacrifices our forebears made.

At Hugh Sexey, learners discussed the meaning of remembrance and took part in the work provided by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. This saw each tutor group learning about how other nations remember and examining other days and symbols used.

Axbridge children spent time recognising the importance of respecting and honouring the sacrifice others have made for their

future through activities in class, and in a whole school remembrance service. As part of this, Year 4 learner Oscar gave an exceptional and moving rendition of the Last Post on his Trumpet before the school took part in a traditional silence.

Elsewhere, our schools could all be seen with beautiful displays of poppies – for instance made from plastic bottles at East Brent and Fairlands. Also at Fairlands, the children went on a Remembrance parade around the school, with some learners wearing their Cadet, Scouts, Cubs, Guides and Brownie uniforms. The parade ended with a guard of honour and two minutes silence marked with the Last Post.

At Kings of Wessex, representatives from all of the Trust schools were invited to join them for a memorial service. Reverends Burns and Motion led staff and learners in prayer and reflection before Year 13 learner, Joe, sounded the Last Post on the Trumpet and a two-minute silence was held. Following this, wreaths were laid by representatives of each school in the Trust, as well as the four house groups at Kings.





Tree-mendous Work at Lympsham!



Last year, the Griffins class at Lympsham First School were upset when they discovered that their favourite tree had been cut down in the neighbouring park, so they decided to write to the Parish Council to find out why. The council replied and said that they were also sad to have had to cut the tree down, but unfortunately it had become unsafe. However, following the class's letter the council promised to plant a new tree in its place and invited the class to come and help. This term, joined by Councillor Brian Gooding, the children helped plant the new cherry tree in the park which will grow to provide fun for generations of children in the future.

Learning about Diwali

To celebrate Diwali, the children at Shipham School were delighted to welcome the fantastic 'Same, Same, Different' Theatre Company who introduced them to the Diwali story of Rama and Sita. The story was creatively brought to life using their beautiful puppets and traditional musical instruments. The children had a wonderful time and were completely mesmerised throughout, even getting to join in with parts of the performance. Thank you to the actors for such an amazing experience!



Having Fun in the Great Outdoors



All the children at Draycott and Rodney Stoke First School have been enjoying outdoor adventures with Miss. Green from Wild & Green Outdoor Learning.

Miss. Green has been coming into the school every Monday to work with the children to give them experiences of risk taking, problem solving and child-initiated learning. Sawing, hammering, drilling, building shelters, bug hunting, fire lighting and making Christmas decorations have all been on the agenda and ensured the children had a great time learning about themselves and the great outdoors.

Thank you to Miss. Green and everyone at Wild and Green Outdoor Learning for the incredible opportunity!

Keeping Traditional Crafts Alive

Learners at the Kings of Wessex this term featured on an ITV News report about their work at the local 'Artichoke Furniture School' where they have been learning carpentry skills under the tuition of master craftspeople. The class teaches the learners new skills for their DT coursework, as well as helping to keep traditional methods alive. Read more about it [here](#).





Sporting Success Across the Trust

This term has been a bumper term for sporting success across our schools, with learners across the Trust earning some exceptional achievements across a range of sports. See below for a breakdown of some of the incredible successes we've seen over the last few weeks!



Hugh Sexey Middle School: (Left to Right)

In the recent Burnham-on-Sea Swimming Club award night, **Caspar** (Year 5) was awarded the Under 12 Swimmer of the Year trophy and the Club Captain's Swimmer of the Year trophy in recognition of his achievements at recent galas including gaining county qualification times for 50 and 100m butterfly.

Mimi (Year 5) recently passed her Compulsory Level 3 in Gymnastics – the highest grade she can take at her age – and did so with flying colours, demonstrating moves including a backflip on beam and a yurchenko vault.

Harley (Year 5) has won silver in both singles and doubles badminton at the under twelve, Avon County Championships, as well as bronze in the under twelve Avon Restricted Tournament. Thanks to these successes he has been selected to represent the county in the under twelve Avon Team in an upcoming competition against other counties from around the South of England.

The Kings of Wessex Academy: (Pictured Below Right)

Gymnastics

- Elana and Daisy achieved gold in the South-West Acrobatic Gymnastics Championship Youth Open in a trio with Elana's sister.
- Katie competes for Great Britain in Group Acrobatic Gymnastics and came 3rd in Europe.

Football

- Oscar and Charlie both play for Bristol Rovers Academy and have achieved a two-year scholarship with the club, one below securing a professional contact.

Surf Kayaking

- Philippa won the English Surf Kayak Competition this summer and is now training for the World Championships in 2022.

Cricket

- Jimmy and Will form part of the Somerset U16 team, with Jimmy winning Young Player of the Year this term.

Swimming

- Laura-Ann is in the top 20 in Britain for 50m Backstroke and will be competing in the winter nationals. Laura-Ann holds several English and British records and is working towards the Olympic qualification time.



Above: Some of Kings' exceptional athletes



The Kings of Wessex has also been lucky enough to play host to Hugh Sexey and Fairlands Middle School's boys hockey teams this term. The schools each won a game a piece and were skilfully umpired by Year 12 students Ellen and Ellie.

Congratulations to everyone who took part! It's great to see our schools collaborating like this.

Below: Kings Surf Kayaker, Philippa competing at the Black Rock championships where she won earlier this term.





Raising the Roof at Nailsea!

The gifted musicians at Nailsea School have this term enjoyed finally being able to get back to performing live after a long hiatus due to COVID. The school's Christmas Concert showcased the talents of scores of the school's students who came together to perform a wide and varied programme of music.

Performances were given by a range of ensembles including the Jazz Band, Orchestra, Choir, Brass; Flute; and String Groups, 'Vocalise' and the Hub Club; as well as a number of exceptional soloists including Tom R, Alys W, Oliver V, and Sophie C.

The concert's programme included everything from 'C Jam Blues', and 'Snowman' (Sia) to 'Pie Jesu' (Lloyd Webber), and Trepak (Tchaikovsky), ensuring there was something for everyone in attendance.

Many thanks must go to all the staff, peripatetic teachers, and parents who supported the school and enabled them to put on such a wonderful event. We for one hope that this is just the first of many amazing concerts to come!



Bringing the Festive Spirit



The children at Brent Knoll Primary School had an incredible opportunity this term as they were invited to perform at the Burnham-on-Sea Christmas light switch on. Forty children from the school performed to a packed audience, singing a range of songs – new, and traditional – and really succeeding in getting the audience in the festive spirit. Well done to all the children for putting on such a wonderful performance, and thank you to Mrs. Baker, Mrs. Weston, and Miss. Greenwood for their support in organising.

An Alternative Advent at Wedmore

The Fox Class at Wedmore First School have been getting in the festive spirit this term by counting down the days until Christmas with a 'Book-vent Calendar'. Instead of chocolate, the children have been enjoying a new story every day – some from authors they know, others from brand new writers; and with each story they've been looking at common themes and making connections between the stories, before deciding on their favourite to study in-depth. We think this is a lovely alternative take on the traditional Christmas countdown.

Egyptologists for the Day

Year 3 at Weare First School this term had an incredible trip to Bristol Museum as part of their Ancient Egypt topic. The children got to take part in a workshop where they held real Egyptian artifacts and had to work out where they were from, followed by a tour round the museum where they saw exciting things like a sarcophagus and canopic jars (which they had also been making out of clay in art). Finally the children had a chance to explore the rest of the museum, and found lots of links to their science topic 'Animals including Humans', and saw lots of rocks and fossils too which they will be learning about in the Spring Term!



Heron Class at Mark have been learning about Space this term,

and in art looking at Van Gogh's starry night, even creating their own versions:



Don't forget that you can follow us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn – Just search @WessexTrust





Back to the Stone Age at Axbridge

Children at Axbridge First School have this term been learning all about the stone age by bringing aspects of ancient times back to life in several spectacular activities. These included: re-creating the pottery of the Beaker people, building stone age huts and creating their own mini village in the school grounds, and exploring the tools used by stone age people and re-enacting a day-in-the-life of a hunter gatherer.

It's safe to say that these activities really gave children a feel for stone age life and helped support their learning about the topic in the classroom. We're so pleased to see them having so much fun!



Getting Creative at Cheddar

This term, the learners at Cheddar First School have been getting creative and hands on in range of activities to extend their learning. In one class, children made bird cakes following instructions and put them out for the birds, to keep them fed and warm as winter draws in. Elsewhere in the school, Year 3 and 4 had great fun making Bronze Age Bell Beaker pots for their topic, 'Through the Ages'; as well as designing and cooking a delicious wrap for their 'Cook Well, Eat Well' project. The mouth-watering meal included peppers, courgettes, and tomatoes. Finally, children in the Skylark Class have been learning how to write 'meeting tales', building up to publishing their own story books, which they illustrated and shared with their peers.



An Update from the Leisure Centre

This term has been another exciting one for Kings Fitness and Leisure. The term started with some spooky fun in the form of a Halloween fun day. A range of ghoulish activities were on offer, from dance to basketball, and spooky spin and step classes. They even had their very own 'witch' at the front desk to welcome members and offer them a chance to play for one of her spooky prizes.

The term also saw staff take part in some valuable professional development with the Life Fitness Education Team. The training focused on upskilling knowledge on pad work, strength training, class design, and small group training. We look forward to sharing what we learnt with you in classes soon!

Finally, the centre has taken delivery of an exciting new pool inflatable which is available to book now. The inflatable – known as 'Kings Island' – features slides and obstacles of all shapes and sizes and is sure to provide hours of endless fun!

The centre has lots more amazing activities planned for the new year, so be sure to pop by to take part and find out more.

