

November 2018

Great Gaddesden Church of England (VA) School

For Children Aged 3-11

A Good Start to the School Year

The children have now all settled into their new classes and the atmosphere throughout the school shows that the children are focusing well on their learning. This year, we are encouraging the children to develop a mindset in which they challenge themselves within their learning. Having the confidence to take risks within their learning creates a more resilient learner, willing to have a go.

Music lessons have started, with years 3 and 4 learning the recorder, and years 5 and 6 playing the ukulele. This is part of the Wider Opportunities Scheme run within Hertfordshire and funded by the school. It enables all pupils, at some stage during their KS2 years, to have the opportunity to learn an instrument. The many benefits of learning a musical instrument include increased comprehension and math skills, better coordination and a greater capacity for memory. Playing music involves using both sides of the brain, helping to develop language, numerical and auditory skills.

Harvest Festival

We had a wonderful Harvest Festival service in church on Friday 12th October, joined by many parents and carers. We were grateful to receive many much needed items to donate to DENS, local charity who supports families in need within our area.

Children from years 5 and 6 also represented our school at the Diocesan Harvest Festival at St Alban's Cathedral, where we joined other Church of England schools in our Diocese to celebrate and give thanks for the harvest. We were very honoured that our school was chosen to provide readers for the service. Fenella and Phoenix were asked to read and rose to the challenge, reading with clear, confident voices.

Grandparents Afternoon

To celebrate National Grandparents Day, which was on Sunday 8th October, we held a Grandparents Afternoon at the school on Friday. This was very popular with many Grandparents able to join us at school for the afternoon, spending time in class with their grandchildren. They were treated to a poetry recital, and worked with the children to create a craft activity based on the theme of 'Poppies'. This included sewing, water colour painting, origami and tissue craft, which was joined together to form a single piece of art work which was then displayed in Little Gaddesden Village Hall, in an exhibition commemorating the 100th anniversary of the First World War.

One Grandfather brought along a brass Princess Mary Gift Fund 1914 Box and spoke to the children about what it contained and why they were given. All the children were fascinated to hear about this. We received lovely feedback from the Grandparents who attended, they loved being able to spend time at school with their Grandchildren, they said the atmosphere was lovely throughout the school, it is very important that the children are able to explore and learn about historical events from the older generation, and they would love to come back again soon.

World Poetry Day

The children celebrated Poetry Day by reciting poems learnt by heart, with actions. These were performed in an assembly to the other children, staff and governors. Nursery and Reception recited a poem about Autumn and showed us their paintings of leaf prints in Autumn colours, Years 1 and 2 performed Tails by AA Milne. Years 3 and 4 recited Ogden Nash's poem called 'The Adventures of Isabelle' with great enthusiasm, and Years 5 and 6 did a rendition of Boneyard Rap with some funky moves. All children did extremely well in remembering their words and actions!

Also Last Month...

We welcomed Karen Tonge back to school to carry out our dog training. Mrs Tonge is a Member of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers and regularly visits us to teach the children how to read dog body language and how to act safely around dogs. All children were very excited to meet Karen's training dogs. The strategies that Karen shared with them will help to support the children in behaving safely when with dogs and will continue to give them confidence with Donut, our school dog.

A group of year 6 children went to Vicarage Road Stadium to watch Watford v Bournemouth, and were invited onto the pitch at half time to take part in a penalty shoot out against another school. Thanks to some excellent shots and brilliant goal keeping, the children achieved a 3-2 victory! Well done children and thank you to Miss Carty for organising this for our children.

Years 3 and 4 walked up the hill through the churchyard, a field full of grazing sheep, past an alpaca, four cows, a horse and a donkey to visit the Amaravati Monastery. We took donations of food, and were shown around the kitchen and temple. We were led in meditation, then joined in the meal offering, listening to prayers and chants. The children all said how much they enjoyed the visit and would like to return to show their families.

Gaddesden Schools Singing Festival

On Tuesday 6th November, we will be hosting a singing festival in our church (St John the Baptist). We will be joined by children from Gaddesden Row and Little Gaddesden schools for singing activities and workshops, ending with a short concert at 2.30pm where the children will perform some of the songs they have worked on during the day. You are all most welcome to join us for the concert at 2.30pm.

Reception Class Applications

Applications for spaces in Reception class for entry in September 2019 open on 5th November. If you are considering Great Gaddesden CofE School, we would be delighted to show all prospective parents around and answer any questions you may have. Please get in touch with our school office on 01442 255 734 to arrange a visit.

Applications are made online via www.hertfordshire.gov.uk, and if you wish to include our school on your application you will also need to complete a Supplementary Information Form which can be found on our website on the admissions page under Key Information.

With very best wishes,
Carli Wall
Foundation Governor