

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year!

The new term has got off to a good start and it is lovely to see so many children now fit and well again, it's starting to feel more like normal! There are already a number of events in the diary for Years 5 and 6 this term – another virtual Reading Museum session, Bike-ability, NSPCC Number day, Red Nose Day and World Book Day to name just a few.



Last term flew by and saw us getting away from 'bubbles' and getting back into the swing of clubs and other such familiar Aldryngton activities; children returned to roles as AAs, PMs, School Councilors, poppy sellers etc. Year 6 worked hard to organise and run an impressive range of stalls at the Christmas

Fayre and raised over £700! The children worked hard and enjoyed many different activities and opportunities – performing scenes from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was fun (although chilly at times!) and the sewing skills seen in DT were excellent!



Although we were unable to go on off-site visits we had two very interesting virtual sessions led by staff from Reading Museum – one focusing on Windrush and the other to mark Black History Month. RE Inspired also provided virtual input for a session which would otherwise have been at the church. The Science Dome visit was another opportunity to have curriculum enrichment without leaving school and was a very popular session with the children.



The introduction of Accelerated Reader in September was an opportunity for our Upper School libraries to be revamped and restocked (many thanks to the PTA) and the children are now in the habit of independently selecting reading material which will be enjoyable, varied and appropriately challenging. There will be an online information session for you to find out more about Accelerated Reader in the coming weeks. Please remember that even though your child is in Upper School it is still so important that you read with them at home, sharing and discussing a range of books and enjoying this valuable time together.

In the second half of the term Mrs Dunn's class hosted two PGCE students who worked hard and joined in with a great many extra-curricular activities. The children made them very welcome and both Mr Hardacre and Miss Walker were very sad to leave Upper School at the end of their placement. Our students helped out with some of



the various clubs which started last term – Mrs Woolston's board games club is now into a second round of members after a fun half term, Mrs Dunn's P4C club continues to have adventures in philosophy and Miss Stroud's exciting comic-book club is starting this week. The children have also been attending chess club, tech club, German club and others – keep a look out for activities as they are advertised in school newsletters and other updates.

This Spring term promises to be another fun and busy time in Upper School! The Spelling Bee is a new initiative and we will also be returning to holding our traditional annual Inter-house Poetry Recital. As well as the special days mentioned earlier, we have a focus on wellbeing in our forthcoming Mental Health Awareness Week in March – this is an important focus, we all know how busy our children are both at home and at school so we must not underestimate the importance of them having time to relax, switch off and look after themselves. We have organised visits for Year 5 and 6 to go to Lacock for a geography trip in March, more information will come nearer the time! As Mr Weider mentioned a while back, we will be looking to fulfil our Aldryngton Promises over the course of the year – in Upper School this year the promise is 'To teach a lesson' - children will be asked to each prepare a presentation on a particular topic which they will then share with the rest of the class - more details about this will also be coming soon!

We look forward to sharing the children's Spring term successes with you over coming weeks.

All good wishes,

The Upper School Team