



Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust

Winter Newsletter – December 2023

Message from Lesley West, CEO.

Another end of term is almost upon us and, as ever, school life continues to be busy and especially this term as we celebrate Christmas in our schools. Christmas is such a magical time in Primary Schools and in each of our schools, staff have worked hard to ensure that performances, singing, treats and parties, celebrations etc have been planned so that our children have had a great time.

There is much to celebrate in Owlcotes Schools. We have enjoyed a wonderful Arts focus week; we are delighted with a very successful Ofsted inspection at Pudsey Primrose Hill; and have managed to complete a number of building projects to improve our school environments including playground improvements, library upgrades and roof replacement work.

At the end of this term, Deborah Kenny, is retiring as Headteacher of Manor Wood Primary School. Deborah has been Headteacher there since 2011, and throughout this time has been an inspirational leader of this outstanding school, and has been pivotal in the school's success. On behalf of Owlcotes Trust, and also the staff, children and families at Manor Wood, I would like to say a huge thank you to Deborah for the incredible work she has done as Headteacher over so many years.

We are pleased to announce however, that Deborah will be taking up a new post within Owlcotes Trust as she embarks on her role as Director of School Improvement. I know that the trust will benefit greatly from her expertise and experience and we welcome her warmly into the central team.

Kate Humphries, will be taking on the role as Headteacher at Manor Wood Primary School. Kate has worked at Manor Wood for a number of years and knows the school and community well. This will no doubt be an exciting time for Kate, and we are looking forward to welcoming her to her new role.

There are also a number of other changes for the forthcoming term. Alan Steele, Headteacher of Calverley Parkside will be taking on the role as Executive Headteacher of the school, and will work as Head of Leadership Development for Owlcotes MAT for part of each week, and we are delighted that Chris Jolley will become Head of School at Calverley Parkside.

We also welcome Jordan License to Owlcotes Trust. Jordan will be Head of School at Spring Bank Primary School when the school converts and joins the Trust.

Looking ahead to 2024, we are looking forward to a number of things. We will be welcoming Spring Bank Primary School to Owlcotes in 2024, we are excited about the annual Owlcotes Literature Festival in February and we are planning the annual Owlcotes Debating Competition which we are looking forward to welcoming children from Manor Wood Primary School to for the first time.

I hope you enjoy reading the rest of this newsletter which will give you information about some of the events that have happened in our schools this term

If you want to keep up to date with what is happening, or find out more about Owlcotes Trust, you can do so by visiting our website: www.owlcotesmat.org or by following us on X [@owlcotesMAT](https://twitter.com/owlcotesMAT).

Thank you to all of the staff; pupils and families at Owlcotes schools and I hope you enjoy some festive cheers. I wish you all a Happy Christmas and New Year.

Round Up of News from Owlcotes Schools

News from Pudsey Primrose Hill Primary School

Year 5 Activity Day – West Leeds Activity Centre

As part of our Owlcotes Elements - A sense of adventure, the children visited West Leeds Activity Centre. The activities they took part in were: Nightline, Leap of faith, Archery, Waterslide and Team Games. All of the children impressed the school staff and the staff from the centre as they demonstrated excellent resilience and cooperation. Some of the children faced and even conquered their fears, particularly of heights, when climbing to the top of the Leap of Faith.

Year Two Geography – Trip Around Leeds

Year 2 embarked on their Geography trip around Leeds city centre. They have been studying the human and physical features of the city in school and learning about why people may be in the city. This trip gave them a real experience of seeing the features as well as seeing the use of land

within the city. This is linked to our Owlcotes Element of Civic Pride. The morning was finished by visiting Kirkstall Abbey for a picnic lunch.



Artforms – Champion Music School

Primrose Hill was presented with Leeds Music Education Partnership Champion School Status in recognition of an ongoing commitment to music education. We are very grateful for the support we have received from Artforms to provide fantastic music opportunities for the children in our school.

Access All Art – Focus Week

We held a really successful and popular parent workshop as part of the Owlcotes focus week. Inspired by Darrell Wakelam ([@DarrellWakelam](#)), who has worked with our teachers in the past, children and parents created their own mask from recycled materials. It was wonderful to see so many families in school getting creative.

Year 4 Enrichment visit to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park

Year 4 started their new art enrichment sessions this week with a visit to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. The children explored the park and observed the materials, size and types of sculptures around the park. It was a wonderful way for them to launch their own sculpture work in school. This also is part of the Owlcotes Element 'An Appreciation of Art'. We look forward to seeing the children's creations at the end of the enrichment sessions.





Year 6 Bikeability

Despite the challenging weather and cold conditions, year 6 have been taking part in their bikeability training.

They have been cycling around our school grounds as well as taking to the streets of Pudsey. They worked hard on developing their ability to manoeuvre round obstacles, signal, start and stop and pass vehicles. They are learning the skills that they will need to successfully complete the City Centre Cycle later this year.

Primrose Hill Ofsted Report

We were delighted to share the recent Ofsted report with parents. The report is also available on the school website: <https://www.pudseyprimrosehill.co.uk/ofsted-and-performance-data/>

We are so pleased that the report reflects our school and thank everyone for their hard work and dedication in making our school outstanding!

News from Pudsey Waterloo Primary School

Robinwood

Year 6 set out on a great adventure into the unknown - and made it as far as Robinwood in Todmorden! They had a fantastic weekend participating in adventurous activities and problem solving challenges and even a little dip in the lake! They were incredibly resilient and by the end of the weekend there wasn't a surface they wouldn't leap from! The staff at the centre even said what a delightful group of children they were. Thanks to all the parents and staff who were able to help make the weekend such a success. Well done year 6!



Back Chat Brass

As part of this theme, we had a concert by Back Chat Brass in for all year groups. The children had an amazing time dancing and singing along to songs by Miley Cyrus, Justin Timberlake and many others! They learnt about the musical instruments that the band played and thoroughly enjoyed their experience.

Year 5 History Trip

Year 5 braved the cold conditions last week to visit York and enhance their historical knowledge of the Vikings; enjoying a trip through time at the Jorvik Viking Museum and getting an opportunity to handle Viking weapons, learn about Viking battle tactics and understanding how historians use archaeological evidence to develop their understanding of the period.

Art Week

We were really proud of the Art Gallery that the children and staff created in the hall this term, celebrating important black female artists. Thank you to all parents who came to have a look at the art - the children loved showing off what they had created.



Year 3 Stone Age Day

Year 3 were lucky enough to have a whole day dedicated to learning more about the Stone Age. They had the opportunity to build shelters, make fire and try their hand at archery. They also handled some Stone Age artefacts, designed their own piece of pottery out of clay, and even got the chance to recreate some cave painting artwork as a whole class! All the children participated enthusiastically and amazed the visitors with their Stone Age knowledge.



Football and Basketball

Massive congratulations to our Y5 and 6 girls and boys football teams who played superbly in the Pudsey Schools football competition recently. The boys got all the way to the final before they were beaten. The girls were able to go one better and win the competition!

The boys Y5 and 6 Basketball were also in action this term, winning the Pudsey Schools basketball competition to bring home more silverware to Waterloo! The teachers were full of praise for the effort, sportsmanship and teamwork that all of the teams displayed. We are so proud of them!

News from Calverley Parkside Primary School

Year 5 Space Camp

Our Year 5 class took part in Space Camp on Thursday 23rd November. This is one of the events which is part of our Owlcoates Elements Curriculum; additional activities and opportunities which take place outside of the usual curriculum. They took part in a wide range of activities including a series of challenges linked to their Astronaut Training Programme and some star-gazing (well, moon-gazing to be more precise) and the experience culminated in an overnight stay in the school hall!



They were all amazing and had a wonderful time learning about different aspects of space. Some of them even managed to master folding away their pop-up tents!

Year 6 Residential

This took place in the second week of the Autumn term. The children travelled to the Robinwood outdoor centre in Todmorden for three action-packed and fun-filled days. From the minute they had finished breakfast to the minute they went to bed, they were busy taking part in a range of different activities including zooming down zip-lines, swinging high in the air on the giant swing, navigating their way through an indoor cave, building and paddling their own rafts, crossing the dreaded piranha pool and many more. The children had a wonderful time and were a real credit to themselves, their parents and our school. The instructors spoke incredibly highly of the children's behaviour and attitudes throughout their time with them.

Sporting Events

We continue to attend as many of the local sporting events as we can to give our children the opportunities to be experiencing a wide range of sports and activities. This term, we have attended (amongst others) a number of football events, including the Premier League Primary Stars tournament, dodgeball competitions (one of which we won), ultimate frisbee and bench ball.



News from Armley Park Primary School



New Playground

In September, the children returned to school to see some new playground equipment which had been installed during the summer holidays. We have two new climbing frames, new goal structures, a new gazebo and a stage. This has made a huge difference to playtimes and the children are taking great care of it all.



Focus Week Art Gallery

All classes produced amazing pieces of art during our Focus Week – the theme was 'Ourselves' and all classes used different mediums to create their portraits based on the styles of artists from around the world.



Year 2 Trip to Leeds City Centre

In October, Year 2 completed some Geography fieldwork to help them with their learning about the similarities and differences between Leeds and Tokyo. Unfortunately, we weren't able to complete the comparison work and visit Tokyo but we did learn lots about Leeds! We visited lots of landmarks in the city and spoke to a variety of different people about their reasons for being in Leeds that day – one

very kind person even sent us a letter after we spoke to them!

Northern Arts Factory Dance Fest!

In November, a group of children from Year 3 and Year 4 participated in a dance festival at Yeadon Town Hall. They have worked hard to prepare for this by attending an after-school club and this paid off as their performance was amazing!



KS1 Trip to Harlow Carr

In November, all the children in Year 1 and Year 2 went to visit Harlow Carr RHS Gardens in Harrogate to learn about how plants grow. They had the chance to visit the amazing gardens, plant some seeds and learn how seeds germinate. Each child was also given an oak tree sapling to take home and grow themselves.

Enrichment Clubs

We have been able to offer a wide range of enrichment clubs after school again this year. The children have been able to attend clubs such as Arts and Crafts, Bench Ball, Design Technology, Movie Club, Rugby, Dance and Science. Lots of children attend each week and they are really enjoying them.

Manor Wood Primary School

We are really sad to say goodbye to Mrs Kenny as she retires from being the Headteacher at Manor Wood. Mrs Kenny has led the school exceptionally for many years and has been the driving force behind the school's success. We are going to miss her and we wish Mrs Kenny all the best in her exciting new role with the Owlcotes Trust! In January 2024, Mrs Humphries will become the Headteacher of Manor Wood and we also wish Mrs Humphries all the best in her new role, she has been a fantastic Deputy Headteacher and we are sure that she will make a brilliant Headteacher.

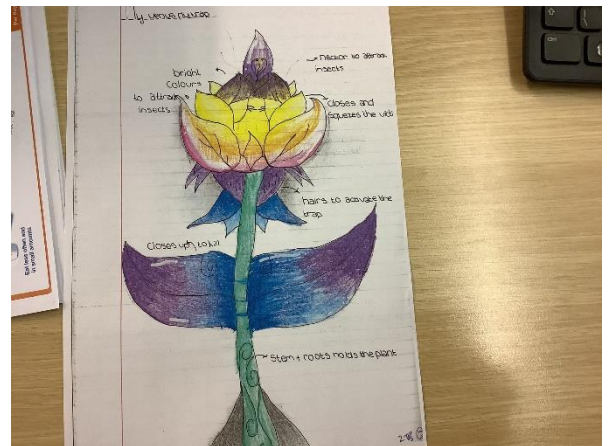


Visit to Carr Croft Care Home

Year 2 visited Carr Croft Care Home which is located nearby the school, in order to spread some festive cheer by signing the Christmas carols and song which they have learnt for their Nativity. The residents of Carr Croft Care Home were so impressed with the children's singing and behaviour and we are pleased to be able to spread some festive joy in the community.

Science Focus Week

Science was the focus across school at the start of December and children across all year groups have been carrying out some enriched science activities. Year 6 created their own venus fly traps, Year 2 tested out various materials in order to make a raft, the Eco Team



Making our rafts



designed a new badge following suggestions from members of the team, and Year 5 visited the surface of the Moon using augmented reality on the iPads!

Pedal for Progress

A huge “thank you” to all that supported our ‘Pedal for Progress’ cancer fundraiser. We have totalled up the donations and, drumroll please... Together the children have raised an incredible £5412.28! Thank you very much to everyone who supported this fundraiser.

