

Headteacher News



Term : Easter 2015

Whole School Topic: Different Places, Different Lives

It has been another exiting and busy term here at The Castle School.

Our Inclusion for Learning session on Friday afternoons have really taken off with students mixing together and experiencing some really wonderful learning from DT projects to singing to sensory stories to games to first aid to yoga to name but a few. It is a really rich and varied programme and makes Friday afternoons very active. We now have a page dedicated to this session on our website.

We celebrated World Book Day in style with everyone dressing up in a character from a book and each class door was dressed in a design depicting the class's favourite book. Lots of book related activities took place including story writing, cooking and singing.

On Friday 13th March 2015, The Castle School held their first World of Work Celebration Event at the Castle Post-16 Centre. The event was held to celebrate the success of our students who take part in the World of Work Programmes and to thank the organisations that support our School in this area. The event was very well attended by organisations including Waitrose, Sainsbury's, Tesco Metro, Budgens – Wash Common Stores, Donnington Valley Hotel & Spa, Vodafone, West Berkshire Council, The Watermill Theatre, The Corn Exchange, Newbury Library, Newbury Riding for the Disabled Association, Speenhamland Primary School, Mitie, Newbury College, West Berkshire Mencap and The Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities. We were also pleased to have the

Some photos of our learning



Pupils working together on Egypt Day



Windsor Class showing the art they made with Priors Court



All dressed up for World Book Day



Luke, one of our very many successful work placement students

support of Richard Benyon MP. He wrote a nice article on his blog about it. Read it on our blog on our website.

Have a wonderful Easter break and we will see all our students back at school on **Monday 20th April 2015**

Thanks, Jon Hewitt (Headteacher)

As part of the Governors' Strategy Session, an annual event when the Governors meet up with the Head Teacher and the Leadership Team, we as Governors get the opportunity to experience at first-hand what is being done in school to continually improve the way in which our pupils are taught.

Yesterday Maths was on the timetable. There were a few nervous Governors, myself included as Baseline Screening Test sheets were handed out! Once attempted, we then worked our way around the room taking part in a series of different exercises. These were all part of Snap Maths which the school uses as an intervention to help develop Maths skills.

I was struck by just how imaginative one can be when teaching number recognition. With examples of numbers up to 5 or 10 we used a drum, cards pegged on a washing line with hand puppets, play dough birthday cakes with candles, and numbered birthday cards, all ways of helping to reinforce the number learning. Rhona even had us singing for our supper with her exercise, which involved both participation and coordination. The ideas were fun, colourful, tactile, unthreatening and easy to relate to, making them accessible to all our pupils. Undertaking such exercises brings us a little closer to understanding how our pupils are taught, something which can only help to make us better Governors.

This exercise was just a small part of an extremely interesting and informative afternoon where Jon and his team showed us what lies beyond an outstanding Ofsted rating for the school.

Wishing you all a very happy Easter break.

Ursula Codrington – school governor