

DECEMBER 2024

NEWSLETTER



Message from the Principal

Once again we find ourselves at the end of the autumn term, which always brings with it lots of great opportunities for the children and young people across our two schools. Staff and pupils have worked so hard on the performances that took place before the end of term, that's before we even think about Children in Need before that, the Winter Fayre (which raised a fantastic £4582.78), and all the other events that have kept us all busy.

Look out for the write up of our fundraising activities from the summer in this edition, it has been great to see so much money raised for the benefit of the pupils.

Have a great Christmas break, and we look forward to seeing the children back at school on Wednesday 8th January 2025.

Bradley

Enjoy our newsletter offering this time around and please do give us feedback for how you might like to see it develop. Please send all feedback to either office@bookerpark.bucks.sch.uk or office@stocklakepark.bucks.sch.uk



Bradley
Taylor
Principal



WINTER FAYRE



MASKS Winter Fayre



On Saturday 30th November we held our annual Winter Fayre. The highlight of the day we're sure was a visit to Santa! We are delighted to let you know that we raised £4,582.78. If anyone has any photos from the day that they are happy to share to be published on the website, please email these to masks@thevalefederation.com

We have talked through with Bradley priorities for both schools and we will be considering projects to fund at our next meeting early in the new year. We will update you on this spending and will also be sharing with parents/guardians how money was spent last year.

We would like to give a big shout out to everyone who supported the Fayre this year by sending in donations, buying/selling raffle tickets and/or attending the event. We have some special people who have given up hours of their time to organise the event including parents, staff and one of our trustees. We want to say thank you to them for giving up their precious time.

Looking forwards, we are interested in any ideas you have for raising funds for the schools and would welcome more parents on to our trustee board. So if you have any special skills particularly marketing or events management we would be delighted to hear from you. Please email masks@thevalefederation.com and one of us will get in touch.

Thank you so much for your support this year and we look forward to supporting The Vale Federation in 2025!

MASKS Trustees





AND THE
WINNERS
ARE...

Well done to the winners
of our top prizes in this year's raffle.

- 1st Prize** PlayStation 5 with £40 gift card: 04686 K Horwood
2nd Prize £250 cash: 02239 R Howes
3rd Prize Lego Bundle worth £100: 04779 G Brown
4th Prize £50 Amazon Voucher: 03590 C Moore

We had over 50 more prizes where the winners have all been notified.

Well done to the winners of the activities from the Fayre:

- Guess the weight of the cake:** Maria M
Lucky Snowball: J Simmons
Rudolph's favourite football team: A Charles
Where does Jimmy live: J A-Hooke





MASKS

AAC Fundraising Update

We are delighted to share that the final donations have been received over the last few weeks, including significant funds received from match funding by National Grid Ventures, after their charity bike ride in June. This involved a group of NGV employees cycling 400km over 3 days, from Northumberland, down the east coast via the North York moors (with plenty of hills!) to Lincolnshire. Bradley and I joined the group for a final day of cycling, a mere 90km of mercifully flat and very beautiful countryside in Lincolnshire. It was wonderful to be able to tell them a bit about our school and how the money would be used, to thank the cyclists, and to encourage them over the finish line.

This ride also served as a training exercise for Bradley and I ahead of the Castle to Coast Triathlon in July, just before the summer break. This covered 83 miles from an early swim start in Eton Dorney Lake in Windsor, followed by a long and hilly bike ride through Berkshire, Surrey and Sussex, ending with a half-marathon trail run along the South Downs Way to the centre of Brighton. We expected a challenge and that was certainly what we got! As our colleagues will testify, we suffered a lot on the day, and spent the final days of term gingerly hobbling round the school, eating any and all staffroom biscuits in an attempt to address the calorie deficit (the silver lining!).

We also wanted to acknowledge the fantastic fundraising that has come from Kristen Rutson, who participates in a regular badminton marathon with her club, raising money for charities. MASKS has benefitted considerably from her efforts and she also deserves credit as the original inspiration for this particular fundraising project – thank you so much Kristen.

We are thrilled to share that the total raised to support the AAC Project is a staggering £19,478.10. This is far more than our most optimistic expectations. We will be using the money to purchase a variety of highly specialist equipment, including 2 infra-red “eye gaze” cameras, a specialist device and software, and specialist mounting. This will allow us to support those pupils with the most severe and complex physical needs to have the opportunities to access and explore new technology. It will also allow us to offer some in-house loans of more specialist equipment, which is an important part of seeking funding for those pupils who need it, to have their own devices. Seeking this funding remains immensely challenging, but our hope is that being able to offer loans to pupils will allow us to gather evidence of how they can use the technology to communicate, to access education, and to increase their independence, thus strengthening funding applications and giving us the best chance of success.

To everyone who has supported this fundraising effort, our sincere and grateful thanks. This money will make a big difference to the service we can offer pupils across Booker Park and Stocklake Park Schools, and we will provide a further update once the equipment is in place and set up.

Helen Sutherland
Lead speech therapist, The Vale Federation.





Booker Park

Message from the Head of School

It has been great to see so many of you this week at the various Christmas performances. Whilst it may not have been the most polished Christmas play ever, it is great to see the children participating! Thank you for your support of this.

I am very aware that there has been a lot of frustration this term regarding the lack of swimming opportunities. This has been both due to technical difficulties with the pool floor, which is now fixed, and the absence of the swimming teacher. We are looking into alternative arrangements to ensure that the pool is used by our pupils in the spring term.

We are sad to see some teachers leaving us. Julie, Amy and Sophie are all moving on to opportunities in different schools. They have all played a vital role in supporting the pupils here and will be missed. We wish them all the best in their next endeavours.

I hope that everyone has a good break and we are already looking forward to seeing the children again in January.

Marianne



Marianne
Murphy
Head of School



Class Updates

Starling Class

This half term, Starling class have been reading a story called 'The Quiet Little Firework'. During the story we have been exploring the difference between loud and quiet sounds. The children have been making loud sounds by blowing party blowers and banging drums as well as making quiet sounds by splashing in puddles and stomping in crunchy leaves. Adults modelled different emotions throughout the story as the Little Firework runs away from the loud parade to find some quiet in the forest.



Skylark Class

In Skylark class we have been busy doing festival art and crafts. We made Diwali lamps and firework pictures. We have also been exploring numbers, sounds and colours in our "learning through play" lessons. In our reading lessons the children are given a range of different types of books and they select a book they would like to look at. They are making great progress, well done!





School Council (Helping Hands) 2024-5

Autumn Term 2024 Update

Rachel Barnes Senior TA and I have worked with the new School Council over the past few weeks. Our key priorities were for the children to understand the role of the School Council and for them to be actively involved in practical ways to support the school.

We divided up the School Council representatives into smaller groups and pairs of children in order that our discussions were not too overwhelming.

Initially we discussed what it meant to be on the school Council. One pupil, Josh Allister – Hooke said that they were the helping hands of the school. I asked a large group of children from the School Council if they would like to be called the Helping Hands or School Council, and they all agreed that they preferred the name Helping Hands.

Autumn 2 focus: To improve the quiet area in East Wing

I met with the several groups of School Councillors (Helping Hands) and asked them, what they thought of the quiet area by showing them a photo or asking them to visit the area with myself. I then asked the children how they would improve the quiet area.

I asked several of the school councillors what they like when they want to be quiet or calm. In order to communicate more effectively with the children I used photographs, core word boards, visual supports, Makaton signing and gestures to support my verbal language.

The feedback from the pupils was fantastic. They were all very keen to share ways to improve the quiet area: yoga visuals Amelia, (Heron), Stilijan (Hummingbird), music Josh (Magpie), a core word board for pupils to choose from Sam (Penguin), pictures Bobby (Kingfisher) and breathing exercise visuals Kayan (Penguin).

The children shared strategies or objects that support them to feel calm:

Being near familiar people Umar (**Raven**)

Lego: Eryk (**Goldfinch**), Amelia (**Bluebird**), Adam (**Skylark**), Hammaad (**Dove**)

Books: Ariana (**Robin**), Tilly (**Blackbird**) Lamiyah (**Puffin**), Harry and Benedict (**Red Kite**)

Visuals that are laminated Ali (**Wren**)

Bubbles Aileen (**Firecrest**), Erin and Victor (**Parrot**)



School Council (Helping Hands) 2024-5

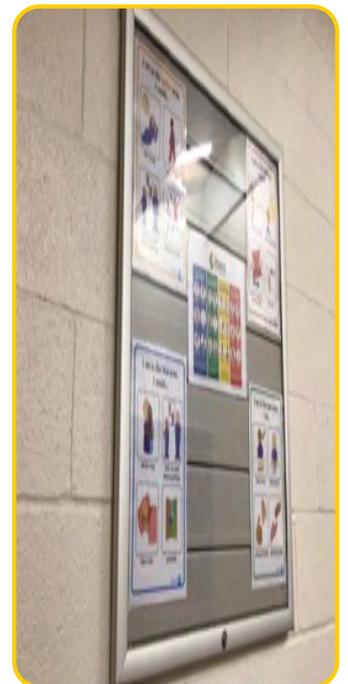
With the help of Rachel Barnes, I created a display in the front entrance of the school to show the rest of the school the work of the School Council (Helping Hands).



Before



After





School Council (Helping Hands) 2024-5

Rachel and I took the children's ideas and improved the quiet area based on the children's input. We will be taking the children back to this area over the next few weeks to get their feedback on our changes.



Moving forward...

Spring 1 focus:

Pupil Survey – response to key skills that the children said they wanted to develop

Spring 2 focus:

School meals – looking at wastage, the menu and getting feedback from the children about the food at lunchtimes.

Summer 1 and 2 focus:

To be determined by the School Council



Rachael Cooper

Assistant Head Teacher



Stocklake Park

Message from the Head of School

It's been so lovely to see the change in students now compared to the beginning of term. Settling students into their new classes after a 6 week break can be one of the hardest times for them and it's great to see how far they have come.

We had some parents who helped out at our Christmas Fayre last Friday and they were very happy to have been able to see a snapshot of the school. One parent said that her child is in Year 5, but just from that morning she can see that her child will be a good fit for Stocklake. That was lovely to hear and a credit to all of the staff and students.

We are sad to see Julie leaving us after her long service to Stocklake Park. She has seen lots of students through from starting with us to them leaving from 6th form. She has helped to shape a lot of students' lives.

I hope that you enjoy your break.

Rhonda



Rhonda
Gosney
Head of School



Class Updates

Cherry Class

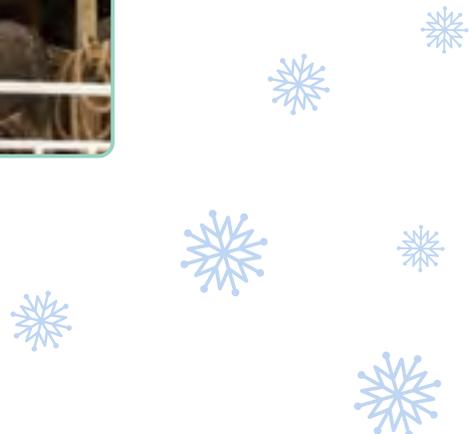
Cherry class has been really busy this term. Our topic has been 'A Pirate's Life for Me!' We've worked our targets against a background of sea shanties and Sensory Pirate tales and dramas, found Pirate Treasure buried in the sand and played games of Pirate skittles.

We've cooked up a storm and sent home lots of things we've made. Most families seem to have enjoyed the Jam Tarts, Pitta Pizzas, Potato and Leek Soup and most recently our selection of Christmas goodies!

We've all worked really hard on our physical programmes, using lots of new equipment and practicing walking, standing and stretching our bodies every day.

We've managed to be able to get out into the community and saw all the Christmas decorations at Friars Square shopping centre and have timetabled a trip to see Santa next week!

Happy Christmas Everyone!



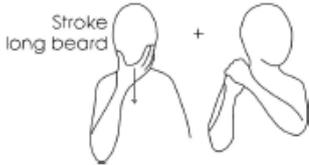


Symbols and Signs for Christmas

Santa has finished, go and play.



Santa has finished go and play



Help me put up the christmas tree.





Symbols and Signs for Christmas

School has finished for the holiday.



I like Christmas.



I like Christmas.



Slide right hand over back of left hand towards body, then close right hand and place on back of left hand





Discounts

for young people with SEND

There are various schemes and charities which can help save money if your child has an additional or special need.

Max Card

[Max Card](#) is a national, local authority-commissioned discount initiative for looked after children and children with additional needs aged 0 to 19 years. The scheme enables families to visit hundreds of attractions across the UK at a free or discounted rate.

[Sign up](#) to the Disabled Children Register to receive a card for free.

Merlin's Magic Wand

[Merlin's Magic Wand](#) offers magical days out at Merlin Entertainments attractions such as Legoland, Sea Life Centres and Madame Tussauds. They welcome applications on behalf of children aged 2 to 18 years with a confirmed serious illness/long term illness, disability or disadvantage.

CEA Card

[CEA Card](#) enables a disabled cinema guest to receive a complimentary ticket for someone to go with them when they visit a participating cinema.

Access Card

The [Access Card](#) translates your disability/impairment into symbols that highlight the barriers you face and the reasonable adjustments you might need. It then informs providers quickly and discreetly about the support you need and may gain you access to things like concessionary ticket prices and complex reasonable adjustments without having to go into loads of personal detail.

It costs £15 for three years.

For more local and national discount schemes visit the [Discounted sport, entertainment and travel page](#).



Helpful/Other Information

Foodbanks

and food sharing

Here is a list of Foodbanks in Buckinghamshire. To get a foodbank referral and vouchers speak to your Family Centre, Health Visitor or Social Worker or local Citizens Advice office.

You can also use the [Trussell Trust's website](#) to find its 400-strong network of Foodbanks.

Aylesbury - Store House

[Storehouse](#) helps anyone in need by providing food and other items like furniture and clothing to people on low incomes, benefits or who are in temporary hardship.

Areas covered: Aylesbury Vale area.

Referral or voucher needed.

Aylesbury Foodbank

[Aylesbury Foodbank](#) provides three days' nutritionally balanced emergency food and support to people with a voucher or referral.

Areas covered: Aylesbury.

Referral or voucher needed.

FoodCycle Aylesbury

[FoodCycle](#) Aylesbury welcomes anyone to attend as a guest and enjoy a FREE hot meal. No need to book. Just turn up on the day!

Come and enjoy company and conversation with others from your local area over a delicious meal, prepared with care by FoodCycle volunteers.

Areas covered: Aylesbury and the surrounding areas.

No Referral or voucher needed.

Berryfields Community Store

Berryfields Community Store is open each Thursday morning from 10.30am for anyone in a financial crisis. For a £5 donation, you can choose 25 items of food including fresh meat, vegetables and household items (depending on available stock).

The address is Roman Park, Sir Henry Lee Crescent, HP18 0YT. For further information please contact help@romanparktrust.org.uk.

Areas covered: Aylesbury

No referral or voucher needed

Beaconsfield - Hope Community Drop-in

[Hope Community Drop-in](#) is a drop-in service where local people referred by doctors or social services can receive an emergency food package. The drop-in runs every Friday at the Holtspur Youth Club building from 8:45 am to midday.

Areas covered: Beaconsfield and neighbouring villages.

Referral or voucher needed.

Burnham - Care and Share Food Distribution Project

Burnham Health Promotion Trust (BHPT) [Care and Share food distribution project](#) is a collaborative community initiative which offers pre-filled food bags and a voucher to buy fresh fruit and vegetables.

Voucher needed.



Helpful/Other Information

Foodbanks

and food sharing

Chiltern - Chiltern Foodbank

[Chiltern Foodbank](#) provides three days' nutritionally balanced emergency food and support to people with a voucher or referral.

Areas covered: *The Chiltern District and nearby surrounding areas such as Wendover.*
Referral or voucher needed.

Chesham Community Fridge

[Chesham Community Fridge](#) distributes free surplus food that is good to eat to anyone who comes to the Fridge. There is no referral or voucher needed. Chesham Community Fridge is open Wednesday and Saturday mornings in the yard behind Broadway Baptist Church, Chesham.

Areas covered: *Chesham.*
No referral or voucher needed.

High Wycombe - One Can

[One Can](#) provide free, nutritious food parcels to those deemed 'in crisis' by their partner organisations.

Areas served: *High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire and surrounding areas.*
Referral or voucher needed.

Wycombe Community Fridge

[Wycombe Community Fridge](#) shares food locally with anyone and everyone regardless of income or means. No referrals are needed.

No referral or voucher needed.

Wycombe Food Hub

[Wycombe Food Hub](#) collects crates of unsold food like bread, fruit, vegetables, chilled and frozen foods every week from supermarkets, farms and shops. The products are then made available to people unable to buy food.

No referral or voucher needed but food is available for a small donation.

Milton Keynes - The MK Foodbank

[The MK Foodbank](#) provide food parcels that can be picked up from one of their serving sessions located around the city. Clients can receive a food parcel 5 times within a rolling 12-month period.

Areas served: *Milton Keynes.*
Referral or voucher needed.

Thame Food Bank

[Thame foodbank](#) provides emergency supplies of essential food items to those in the community who are struggling financially.

Areas covered: *Thame.*
Referral needed.

Wendover

- Wendover Free Church Foodbank

[Wendover Free Church Foodbank](#) provides food parcels for the local area.

Areas served: *Wendover and neighbouring villages.*
Referral or voucher needed.

Wing Foodbank

Areas covered: *Wing*
No referral needed.

Not in Buckinghamshire but nearby

Rickmansworth Foodbank

[Rickmansworth Foodbank](#) provides food parcels for the local area.

Areas served: *Rickmansworth and nearby towns and villages.*
Referral or voucher needed.



Other Information



SWIMMING SESSIONS

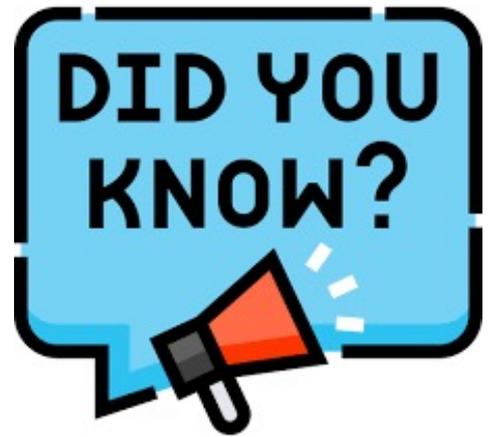
**EXCLUSIVELY FOR
CHILDREN WITH
SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL
NEEDS &
DISABILITIES**

- Neil's SEND Swim School provides swimming sessions exclusively for children with SEND.
- Our teachers are trained, qualified and experienced in working with children with SEND.
- We hire whole swimming pools just for our SEND children so its private and peaceful.



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We offer exclusive hire of our soft play centre!

Soft Play - 3 hour hire time
Mon- Fri £100 plus VAT* - School holidays only
Sat - Sun £112.50 plus VAT*
Additional hours on request

Capacity: up to 20, Maximum number of children on the equipment at one time is 5. No children over 8 years old

Includes: Exclusive Use/Toilets/Tables & Chairs

For further information please contact
facilitiesbookings@thevalefederation.com

Please email facilitiesbookings@thevalefederation.com for more details"