



Holywell News



Issue No: 174
May 2024

Headlines from Mr Simpson:

It's Friday afternoon, the sun is shining and the school is all quiet at the end of the day ... well, the end of the half-term - it's hard to believe that we *are* actually at the end of the Summer half-term ... where did those six weeks go?!!!

One reason for the term speeding by so quickly is the fact that it has been such a busy half-term with lots of learning, lots of trips and visits and lots of challenges. We have had everything from KS2 SATs to PSHE Day, from trips to Hazard Alley to Theatre Visits (Shrek and Aladdin), from Mission Aviation Fellowship to Lifepath, from Drama Workshops to the start of transition work (for both Year 8 going into Year 9 and for welcoming the current Year 4 students into our community in Year 5) ... as well as further preparatory work getting the school ready to transition from a Middle School to a Secondary School.



You can read more about some of these events later in the Newsletter. One particular highlight for me is the way in which our Year 6 students tackled the KS2 SATs – they were all brilliant during the tests and they all tried their best (which is all we ask from all of students). Fuelled-up by a breakfast snack and a drink, they cheerily worked their way through each day. They kept the SATs-monsters they had created in Art close as they worked their way through grammar, spellings, reading comprehensions on random topics, arithmetic challenges and two lots of Maths reasoning tests. We will find out the results of these national tests in July ... whatever the outcomes, we are already proud of what students have achieved in spite of all the challenges of the last few pandemic years.

Our focus values for April and May were 'Care' and 'Community'. Students have really demonstrated these values as they have supported each other in their learning. Our worship this term is exploring the themes in our two key prayers: The Lord's Prayer and our School Prayer. We are delighted to welcome Rev Isaac from Cranfield and Rev Ackroyd from Wootton to lead our exploration of The Lord's Prayer. I have started exploring the themes of our School Prayer and over the last two weeks we have been thinking about how our classrooms are filled

with learning and love. It is always wonderful to have themed days and trips, however, it is also wonderful to take a walk 'round school to see such brilliant learning going on in our day-to-day classes. In a recent walk-through, I came across the following super examples of learning:

- Some Year 5s were learning how to throw the javelin (expertly coached by Mr Inskip);
- Some other Year 5s were separating liquids and solids – all independently conducting experiments under the watchful eye of Mr Colbourn;
- Year 6 were sewing and discussing Growth Mindset with Miss Selby (the power of 'yet' ... ie. never saying 'I can't do this' but rather 'I can't do this YET!');
- Year 7 were using the Maths programme 'Sparx' (we are consistently in the top three schools in the country on the Sparx leaderboard!);
- In English, Year 8 were exploring The Tempest by William Shakespeare ... and able to summarise the plot and discuss the themes and symbolism when challenged by Miss Mayles);
- In the Gym, Year 7 and Year 8 students were rehearsing for the end-of-year production of 'Bugsy Malone' (this is going to be a real treat!!).

... all of this 'just what we do in a normal day' ... it was a real privilege to see such great learning and a reminder of the high-quality students and staff we have here at Holywell.

AS we come to the end of our 50th academic year, we are starting to think about our future ... we will continue to develop our learning provision as we start to transition to becoming a secondary school. The transition to secondary was due to start in September 2025 but this was delayed by one year by Central Bedfordshire Council and we are now working towards starting our transition in September 2026 (watch out for a new consultation document coming this Autumn). We have already started on preparing for the transition with staff having spent time this half-term researching and choosing GCSE specifications so they can plan our curriculum for students as they move into Years 9, 10 and 11. Our current Year 6 students will be the first year group to



have the opportunity to stay with us all the way until Year 11 and we hope that the majority of students will stay with us. Many of our staff have a secondary background (myself included) and we are all excited about the opportunity to further develop and support our students. What will remain the same is Holywell's vision to 'Live Life in all its Fullness' where we choose to live

our values, being the best we can be in community.

We will be bringing Holywell out into the local community next month as part of our Values Day (Friday 14th June) – watch out as students take on local challenges to show 'Kindness in the Community' ... projects include: litter picking in the park and on Marston Thrift, working with Lower School children, students working with the Baptist church to learn about NEED project and create care packages, students making cookies/cakes to deliver to the local community and one form making bird and bat boxes for Cranfield in DT.

Thank you for your continued support and we wish all students a restful half-term break.

MG Simpson
Mike Simpson
Headteacher



Eco Club and Garden Club

Eco Club

Our Eco Club met with the Sustainability Officer [Becky Wishart](#) from Cranfield University. The University has been doing some work to encourage hedgehogs on to their sites and have given us some hedgehog tunnels to bait to see if we have them here too. The results were very exciting and we had clear 'hoggy' footprints on each day. Miss Saunders lent us her wildlife camera and we were able to film a very healthy-looking hedgehog who, along with rabbits, mice, and foxes and birds, visited the site.



Kitchen Garden Club

We have been a little unfortunate with the weather this year but have planted lots of seeds and currently have a varied stock of vegetables to go in our raised beds. Already growing in the beds, we have onions and sweetcorn with cabbage, carrots, beetroot, squash and courgettes to follow.

Eco Option

The Year 8 Group have been working very hard with the Eco Club to attain our Eco School status. They have looked at reducing plastic in school, focusing on single use plastics bought in lunch boxes and snacks and also on Energy use and Healthy Living. Students worked on a large artwork made from litter left on the school grounds.



MFL News

Euro 2024 Bake Off Competition – deadline 17th June 2024

To celebrate the start of the UEFA Euro 2024 championships and to raise money for Msijute School in Tanzania join in the competition for the best European themed cake.

Combine your research skills and baking powers and create a show-stopping **nut-free** bake to represent the origin of a foreign language of your choice, e.g. German, Portuguese, Italian, Spanish, French, Polish, etc. This could be a traditional cake from a specific Euro 2024 country or a European themed decoration, it is entirely up to you. More details on Satchel One.





French Exchange

Students in Years 6 and 7 received and watched a video kindly sent to us by our French exchange school: Collège Camille SAINT-SAENS de CHAUMONT. Students have also received another letter from their pen pals and we are in the process of writing a reply letter.



German Exchange

Students in Year 5 wrote letters to their exchange partners at St. Ursula-Schule in Hannover. We are now in the process of organising an online meeting with our exchange partners.



Celebrate Speaking by British Council

We have received fantastic news about Eva's Romanian entry which was highly commended by the judges at British Council. Huge CONGRATULATIONS to Eva for her incredible effort!

Thank you to all our students who participated in the #celebratespeaking festival on X/Twitter.

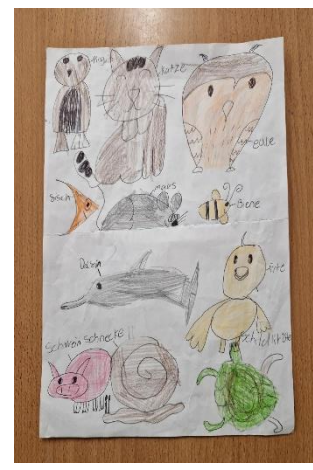
Oxford German Olympiad 2024

We are delighted to announce that the results for the 12th Oxford German Olympiad are in! Thank you to everyone who took part. The University of Oxford received a record number of entries this year, and their panel of judges found it extremely hard to pick the winners. Our students made us so proud - they achieved the first 2 places!!!

HUGE CONGRATULATIONS to our winner: Cailin, Year 6. Cailin has been invited to a Prize-Giving Ceremony at Oxford University.



Massive WELL DONE to the joint runners-up: George, Year 5 and Seth, Year 6 and to Austin, Year 5 for achieving commendation!



GIMAGINE Award

HERZLICHEN GLÜCKWUNSCH to Ruhani in Year 7 who fully completed the GIMAGINE Award in one weekend! Incredible achievement and hard work! It was Ruhani's very first encounter with German ever!

Looking forward to more Year 7s and 8s to get stuck in the challenge.



Selected Year 7 and 8 students have been invited to participate in a challenge to learn German and complete **The GIMAGINE Award** provided to us by the Goethe Institute London.



To achieve the award, students need to complete the following until **9th June**:

- a) 10 German Starter modules
- and
- b) 5 Global learning modules

What is the prize?

As the 'First Finisher of the Gimagine Award', students who complete the required work will be invited to the Sommerfest der deutschen Sprache of the German Embassy in London, where they will participate in an official Award ceremony.

The *Gimagine Award* is a highly engaging, innovative self-learning platform for young learners, equipping them with beginner German skills and current global knowledge about a broad range of topics.

By completing modules, students collect points that lead to the GIMAGINE Award Certificate – an official certificate stating their achievements issued by the Goethe-Institut London. This certificate can be used for CVs and any future college / university applications.



German and French Primary Bee

All students in Year 5 and 6 French and German classes have the opportunity to participate in the *Routes into Languages* Primary Bee. The programme aims to practise and improve knowledge of vocabulary, pronunciation and memory skills in French and German.

There are 3 stages of the award. Stage 1 has been completed and students have been awarded official certificates. The next step is for all our students to work towards achieving Stage 2.



Duolingo

All French and German students have access to Duolingo. Their username and password details are recorded at the front of planners.



We encourage students to access the app regularly to further develop their foreign language skills. Duolingo is an app and website that uses a gamified approach to language learning, with lessons that incorporate translating, interactive exercises, quizzes, and stories

Year 5 Lifepath

"Year 5 have been on their annual lifepath trip, this year to Olney, following in the footsteps of John Newton. Students had a fantastic day learning about the history and life of John Newton and how he came to write the famous hymn "Amazing Grace", after being saved from a storm by praying to God.

We had a great day with lots of singing, games and learning all about the local History of John Newton and his time living in Olney. We made lighthouses and Origami boats to reflect the storm John Newton faced on his ship the Greyhound and learnt all about Newton as a slave trader and how he preached in the Church Pulpit in Olney. We hope all students enjoyed themselves as they were a credit to the school.

Miss Martin



Hazard Alley

1st May and 2nd May

Year 5 visited Hazard Alley in May and enjoyed a few hours out of school learning about safety in a practical and visual way. Children were immersed into a memorable safety day, with fantastic volunteers. Children had the opportunity to use the telephone box to call for emergency services, giving back a message to their scenario and reporting the accident. Everyone was well behaved, and thoroughly enjoyed their time. We had a few children ask to stay, and wanted to come back with their family.

5AJS were able to tell Miss Selby some of their favourite moments and described some activities:

"I really enjoyed it when the smoke alarm went off in the house and we had to get out of the house. I also learned that there are a lot of dangers for a baby in a house, which I did not realise before" -

Toby

"I think the Dark Alley was really creepy with a gang at the back of the alley; there were smashed alcohol bottles on the floor and cigarettes and I know I should not go anywhere near them" -

Austin

"I really liked the train situation, it was the best! It felt like I was actually near a real train" -

Ethan

"I enjoyed going to the lake part of Hazard Alley because we got to see what it would actually be like to experience someone drowning and what to do" -

Tammy

"I enjoyed the quiz because I was trying to get all the answers right. It was so fun and some of the answers were shocking. I also like learning about CPR (Recovery Position)" -

Mara

"I really enjoyed the whole experience, and I learnt that you have consequences in everything and it really is our job to keep ourselves safe" -

Kayla

We hope everyone enjoyed it as much as we did! Stay safe and be vigilant.

Mrs McCann



Hydration Guidelines

At Holywell we encourage students to keep hydrated and we recognise the importance of drinking water regularly through the day.

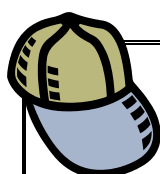


Why is water important?

Water makes up approximately 80% of the brain and is an essential element in neurological transmissions. Poor hydration adversely affects a child's mental performance and learning ability. Dehydration is simply not having enough water in your body. Mild dehydration may include tiredness, headaches, reduced alertness and ability to concentrate. Mental performance including memory, attention and concentration can decrease by about 10 per cent, once thirst is felt and continues to decrease as dehydration increases. Thirst is usually felt when dehydration results in 0.8 - 2 per cent loss of body weight lost due to water loss. As children don't always recognise the early stages of thirst, they are at risk of becoming dehydrated. Even mild dehydration can make children irritable, and can cause tiredness, headaches, lack of concentration, reduced mental performance and dry skin. Water consumption also has an immediate alerting and revitalising effect. The key to boosting the capacity to learn is to keep well-hydrated throughout each day (ideally from a personal water bottle within arm's reach).

Organisation in school

- All students should have a water bottle (labelled) and they are encouraged to take regular sips during the day.
- Bottles must be anti-spill bottles - **NOT GLASS** - with sports tops.
- Water bottles should be carried separately from school books and library books.
- Water bottles are not allowed near electrical equipment.
- Water bottles and drinks must be for personal use only.
- Teachers have the final word in lessons as to when and if they can be used.
- Bottles must contain still WATER! Flavoured still water or sugar-free squash is also an acceptable alternative, however, water is best! (Fizzy drinks – including sparkling water drinks or power drinks – are not allowed in school.)



Sunhats and Sun Protection Cream

Please ensure that your children are equipped for any hot weather with a sunhat (baseball cap style) and sun protection cream. Students can bring sun cream into school, but must be able to apply it themselves – staff are unable to apply it for them.

Students are encouraged to have water bottles and sun hats with them during P.E. lessons.



If your child is away from school

A telephone call, email or WEDUC notification is required on the first day of absence, before 8.30 am

WEDUC Communications from School



Please note that we use WEDUC to communicate with families.

We **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** that at least one parent / carer downloads the WEDUC app.

If parents/carers need an enrolment code, please email Miss Watson on awatson@holywellschool.co.uk who will be able to supply one. Thank you.



Hairstyles, Make-up and Jewellery



Please remember that **extreme haircuts and colours** are not part of our school uniform!

- **HAIRCUTS MUST NOT BE SHORTER THAN A NUMBER 2**
- **'CUT IN' DESIGNS (INCLUDING LINES) ARE NOT PERMITTED**
- **DYED HAIR IS ALSO NOT PERMITTED**

If you are in any doubt about the acceptability of a hairstyle, please contact the school beforehand.

Make-up (including nail varnish) is not allowed.

To avoid loss and any dangers or accident to the wearer or another pupil, expensive items of jewellery must not be worn.



Summer Uniform



During the summer term, students have the following two options re: uniform:

- a) **Either continue to wear blazers, white shirts and ties.**
- b) **Wear a white polo shirt (without a tie) and a blazer**

Shorts: School shorts are now an option all throughout the year ... however, we know that they are more popular in the Summer Term ... so just a reminder about style and length: The length should be just above the knee to just below the knee. The shorts must be plain grey tailored shorts (ie. no combat style shorts, skinny / cycling shorts, or shorts with pockets further down the leg; no designs / appliqué or stripes; no denims, cord, linen, combats or cropped trousers allowed).



- **As with school shorts, skirts must be pleated and just above the knee to just below the knee in length.**
- **Socks must be plain grey, black or white.**
- **Shoes are required as part of our school uniform.**
- **PE Kit to be worn on days when PE lessons are scheduled.**

Essential Equipment

We stock essential stationery items in the School Office.

Pupils may purchase a **pencil case** which contains the following items: **Handwriting pen, pencil, green, red and blue pens, dry-wipe pen and a 15cm ruler** for **£2.50** (see photo).

Stationery items are also available to buy individually. (Empty pencil case £1, other items 10p – 50p each).



Attendance and Holidays in Term Time



Parents / Carers should be aware that under current government guidelines **we can NOT give permission for any holiday in term time.** Holidays will be classed as **unauthorised absence** for your child. There may, however, be events that a student takes part in out of school which require him / her to miss a school day – we will continue to consider that sort of request. However, it is clear that the government and external authorities will want a very persuasive argument for us to be allowed to record any absence as a permitted time out of school. **No leave will be authorised during the first two weeks of the school year or during exam periods.**

Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence are required to **fill in a Leave of Absence Application Form at least 4 weeks in advance of the planned absence** and before making any travel arrangements (available from the school office and to download from the school website). We always take a reasonable, supportive approach to requests (especially with regard to fines) however, taking 'the odd day' here and there can have a HUGE impact on learning.

No Aerosols Please



Please remember that aerosols / sprays (deodorants, hairsprays, etc.) are **NOT ALLOWED TO BE USED IN SCHOOL.**

We have students and staff with allergies to the gases and spraying such aerosols can cause severe allergic / medical reactions. Please be considerate.



Emergency Contact Details



Please remember to inform the school office of any changes to your contact details. This includes **change of your home address, telephone numbers** (even temporary changes) **and doctors' details.** This is very important, as it enables us to reach you in case of emergency. Thank you.



Vacancies at Holywell School

We are currently looking for

Midday Supervisors and Cleaners.

Please see our school website for further details.

PE Department News

Y6 Boys football

After a fantastic effort to reach the district finals, our Year 6 boys' team just fell at the last hurdle, succumbing to a strong RBA team...a massive congratulations to all of the boys that played!

Athletics:

KS3 are in the process of finishing of their league season with the potential to still reach the final at Bedford athletics track. However, they have also competed in the District Athletics Championships against schools from our Partnership but also all over Bedford. Competition was fierce and for the vast majority of students it was the first time they had competed at a proper stadium, on a professional running track. Collectively there were some excellent performances and lots of PBs including Lois Fordham (Y8) who managed to win the High Jump (for second year in a row!) with a PB of 1:41m



Rounders/Cricket:

Year 7 and Year 8 still have plenty of rounders and cricket matches to play due to postponements – detailed match reports will be in the next newsletter.

The Y5/6 cricket team and the Year 5 and 6 rounders teams will all have their tournaments in the next few weeks so fingers crossed for some good weather and excellent performances!

Please do make us aware of any sporting success your child has outside of school – they could feature in the next newsletter!!

Sports Day – Inter House Athletics Competition

Our annual Sports Day is scheduled for Wednesday 26th June. Students are invited to represent their Houses at traditional Athletics events. Due to the sheer number of events and students taking part, 'Field events' take place the week before, during lunchtime. If you wish to watch your child competing then they will need to sign up to events that take place on Sports Day itself. More info will be given to students and parents/carers after half-term.

As always, we would like to thank all those students who have attended clubs and represented the school this half-term. We would also like to thank all the parents, carers and spectators for your continued support of the department; it is much appreciated!

The PE Department

PE Clubs Timetable – Summer Term 2nd half

	13:05-13:35	13:35 – 14:05	15:45-16:45
Mon	Y5 Mixed Rounders (SM/MK) - Field	Y6 Mixed Rounders (MK) - Field	Y5/6 Mixed Dodgeball (MK) - Sports Hall
Tues	Y7/8 Girls Rounders (ES) – Field	KS2 Cheerleading (SM) - Gym	<i>Athletics Fixtures</i>
Weds	Y7/8 Mixed Athletics (ME/ES) - Field	Y5/6 Mixed Cricket (ZI) – Field	<i>Rounders/Cricket Fixtures</i>
Thurs	Y5/6 Mixed Athletics (ZI/ME/MK) – Field	Multi Skills - KS2 Mixed (MK/CSI)* *Invite Only	<i>Rounders/Cricket Fixtures</i>
Fri	KS3 Inter House Competitions (ME/ZI)	KS3 Inter House Competitions (MK/CSI)	Y5/6 Mixed Badminton (MK) - Sports Hall

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

3 June	Students return to school after half term
10 and 11 June	Year 7 Tudor World Trip
12 and 19 June	Year 6 Harry Potter Trips
26 June	Sports Day (11.00am – 1.00pm)
28 June	Year 8 Take-your-child-to-work Day
2 July	Year 4 transition students in Holywell Year 8 students to Wootton Upper School
3 and 4 July	Bugsy Malone
9 July	Summer Concert
11 July	Year 8 Awards Evening
15-18 July	End-of-Year Trips
19 July	End of Summer Term

Term Dates for Next Academic Year 2024 - 2025

<p><u>AUTUMN TERM 2024</u></p> <p>Closure Day – Monday 2nd September Closure Day – Tuesday 3rd September Term Begins – Wednesday, 4th September Half Term – Monday 28th October to Friday 1st November Closure Day – Friday 29th November End of Term – Friday 20th December</p>
<p><u>SPRING TERM 2025</u></p> <p>Closure Day – Monday, 6th January Term Begins – Tuesday, 7th January Half Term – Monday 17th February to Friday 21st February End of Term – Friday 4th April</p>
<p><u>SUMMER TERM 2025</u></p> <p>Closure Day – Tuesday 22nd April Term Begins – Wednesday 23rd April May Day – Monday 5th May Half Term – Monday 26th May to Friday 30th May End of Term – Tuesday 22nd July</p>

Dates are correct at the time of printing. Please note that dates may differ from other schools.