

The termly magazine from the Dragon School

Dragon Tales



Summer Term 2023





HEAD'S WELCOME

Dear Dragon Families,

As the School year draws to a close, please take a moment to have a look at this snapshot of the Summer Term at the Dragon. We were blessed with fabulous weather in the main, so punting, camping, hopping and skipping could go on uninterrupted. We all swooned by the river under the willow trees to catch the escapades of Ratty, Mole and Toad, and our talented musicians not only entertained the community, but through our Social Impact Programme gave a rich range of opportunities to local primary school children. We rounded the year off with a jam-packed three days of sport; only thunder and lightning could stop us from the traditional Bannister Challenge where we try to break the four-minute mile with a pupil, OD and staff relay. Our A Block children waved goodbye, clutching an excellent set of CE results and a record haul of scholarships, to start on the next step of their journey to top national schools. We wish them all the best starting their new terms and thank them for all that they have brought to the Dragon over the years.

Wishing all our readers a restful summer.

Emma Addison



SOCIAL IMPACT

It has been an incredibly busy and exciting year for the Social Impact Programme, and we are so proud of all that we have collectively achieved along the way. In September, children from Reception to A Block voted to support three Charities of the Year: Rose Hill Junior Youth Club, Plan International UK and Blue Marine Foundation.

Together, we embarked on an amazing array of fundraising challenges, raising over £14,000 for these organisations. In addition, we supported many other organisations through our non-uniform days, the Dragon Sale and the popular Schools' Triathlon.

Our partnerships with local schools continue to grow, and we welcomed over 300 pupils from nine local primary schools to take part in a wide range of activities, including uplifting musical theatre workshops, inspiring percussion days with

the Oxford Philharmonic, mind-blowing STEM roadshows with Imperial College and intriguing weekly *QUEST* sessions. Dragon pupils at both sites put together hundreds of Christmas shoeboxes for children in our local community. The Pre-Prep launched the first Dragon Community Larder, collecting donations of dry food and essentials distributed weekly by the Oxford Food Hub.

Finally, we are thrilled to have grown our Transformational Bursary Programme and become a partner of the Royal National Children's SpringBoard Foundation, securing free places for children from across the UK at leading schools.

Next year looks set to be equally action-packed, and we are grateful to the hundreds of enthusiastic Dragon children and staff, the wider community, and our School and charitable partners who continually inspire us.



PRE-PREP

The Pre-Prep has had an exciting final term, filled with laughter and fun. Reception focused on their topic 'All Change', exploring various types of changes, from life cycles and growth to contrasting localities based on our focus text set in Nigeria. The successful hatching of seven chicks in an incubator provided a noisy and fascinating learning experience. The JogAlong saw all 46 children run a mile each around St. Edward's fields to raise money for our Charities of the Year. Class assemblies and the Summer Concert showcased brilliant music and drama performances. As our smallest Dragons prepare to spread their wings, we are delighted to witness their growth and development.

Year 1 had weekly Muddy Dragon sessions at St. Edward's and swimming lessons at the Prep, culminating in the Swimming Festival for parents. Their play, 'Zeraffa Giraffa', was a hit, displaying their confidence on stage. They also had the opportunity to trial different instruments, igniting their passion for music. A trip to Cotswold Wildlife Park consolidated their learning about animal classification and African animals. Their progress in story retelling, non-fiction writing, persuasive writing, maths, and cursive handwriting has been remarkable. The topic 'Hummingbird Migration between Central and North America' allowed Year 1 to investigate native plants and plant structures, and the Mexican Food Workshop by Ma Michelle was hugely popular!

Year 2 studied The Tin Forest by Helen Ward, exploring the characters' feelings and emotions through poetry and diary entries. They delved into the vivid work of Henry Rousseau, conducted successful hydroponic experiments, and deepened their understanding of plants. In Maths, they consolidated their knowledge of place value, fractions, time and money. The term concluded with learning about swifts and their migration to Oxford each summer. Visits to the Natural History Museum and University Parks enriched their knowledge, and they created fact files to share their learning.

Year 3 was full of transformative moments, preparing the children for their transition to E Block in September with site tours, assemblies and Q&A sessions, which allayed any apprehension. The singing bonanza with E Block was magnificent, and a visit from Professor Bubbleworks' during Science Week, as well as our CREST afternoons, filled with classroom with laughter and enthusiasm for science. Ancient Egyptian studies and learning about rivers expanded their knowledge. Mastering the green screen in IT allowed them to transport us to different locations. The Year 3 play, based on Oliver and the Seawigs, was a highlight, with incredible songs bringing the madcap explorer family's tale to life. Their achievements, maturity and progress have made their teachers and classmates proud.



PREP

E Block had an exceptional term filled with exciting sporting fixtures, including thrilling swim relays and their first-ever Prep School Sports Day. Undoubtedly, the highlight for many was the unforgettable E Block residential experience. The children showcased their outdoor skills by cooking their own lunch over a fire, carving objects from wood, conquering bushcraft challenges, constructing and sleeping in dens, playing team games in the woods and sharing songs around the campfire. Our charity event provided an opportunity for the children to present their chosen charities and then to sell items, such as custom-designed bags and Form calendars. The end-of-term concert and performances by different ensemble groups at the Pre-Prep showcased the children's musical abilities. As the year in E Block draws to a close, the children have grown in confidence, embraced diverse opportunities and eagerly anticipate their move to Middle School.

D Block kicked off the term in style with their fabulous, dramatic Shakespeare performances in 'Bards of Bardwell Road' (poor King Lear's ping-pong eyeballs will stick long in the memory!) Further drama was undertaken with the brilliant Eco Musical where the year group performed songs and drama as part of the Talking Drum production. D Block also undertook exciting trips to the Corinium Museum, Chedworth Roman Villa, and Warwick Castle. They also participated in their big charity event this term – the neon whirlwind that was our first-ever Colour Run. An exciting and fun event that we are looking forward to repeating again. Thank you to all parents /guardians who donated. It has been a frantic term, but the perfect way to end their first year in Middle School.

For C Block, Tudor Day immersed the students in the fascinating world of the Tudor era, fostering a deeper understanding of history. In Science lessons, they were captivated by the interactive 'States of Matter' Show, making the subject come alive. The French Morning provided an immersive experience in French culture and language, enhancing their linguistic skills. STEM Day sparked their curiosity

and problem-solving abilities through hands-on experiments and challenges. The Form Singing Competition showcased the students' vocal talents and their enthusiasm for music. The Middle School Concert and Summer Serenade showcased the children's musical accomplishments to an appreciative audience while the 'Dra-gone in 5 minutes' debate allowed for brilliant arguments and critical thinking skills.

B Block enjoyed their Geography Fieldwork trips to Amersham and Shotover, which allowed them to explore and observe geographical features first-hand, deepening their understanding of the subject. A vibrant Coronation celebration marked a significant historical milestone, immersing us in the pomp and grandeur of the occasion. A small group of B Block children had the incredible opportunity to visit The Times newspaper, gaining insights into the world of journalism and current affairs. The Water Run charity fundraiser brought the community together for a noble cause, raising funds and awareness for a meaningful initiative, whilst the B Block studio production displayed theatrical talents and teamwork. The term culminated in the highly anticipated Form Athletics, Swim Relay Finals and Sports Day.

Our A Block are a fantastically creative, diligent and fun year group who have made the most of all opportunities presented to them this year. Whether it be the academic challenge of scholarships and Common Entrance, the sporting challenge of matches and Form competitions or their musicality, acting prowess and artistic talents, this year's A Block have accomplished a lot. The highlight has to be the Expedition Week, with the wonderful weather and the chance to do something completely different with their friends, followed by the amazing way they pulled together in their final week to put on such a brilliant and moving A Block Revue for the whole School and their parents. They have given it their all and deserve every success as they start their next schools. We wish them the best of luck.



QUEST

QUEST has been buzzing with exciting activities and achievements. The Gaelic Dragons kicked off the term with their first fixture, showcasing their skills and determination on the field! Karate grading awarded new belts to talented participants while QUEST Prime sessions drew in enthusiastic parents eager to experience QUEST for themselves.

Outdoor activities such as paddleboarding, sailing, fly fishing and kayaking were enjoyed in the glorious weather. This term, QUEST introduced Dragon Canoers, Ultimate Dragons (ultimate frisbee enthusiasts), and Broadway Dragons delving into musical theatre. As the term comes to a close, we look forward to the start of QUEST 4 in September, with anticipation for more thrilling experiences and personal growth.



DRAMA

The Drama department had a dynamic and vibrant term, showcasing their students' talent and creativity through a series of captivating performances. This immersive experience allowed the children to delve into the world of Shakespearean plays, honing their acting skills and understanding of classical theatre. The B Block studio production, titled 'Relationships', took place in The Rink and consisted of eight short plays performed by a talented cast of 34 students. Each play explored different aspects of relationships, showcasing the students' versatility and dramatic prowess. The Curtain Call evening celebrated the performances of Drama scholars, providing a platform for the children to showcase their skills and passion for the art of theatre. Lastly, the A Block studio featured drama sketches, offering a glimpse into Dragon life while exploring various themes beyond the School environment. Overall, the Drama department's term was filled with creativity, collaboration and memorable performances, leaving both participants and audiences in awe of their talents.



MUSIC

The Music department had an exceptional term, brimming with impressive events and outstanding performances. The Manus Noble Guitar Masterclass and Concert provided a unique opportunity for students to learn from and be inspired by a renowned guitarist. Gamelan Day, organised for Chilworth School and PEG, immersed participants in the enchanting world of Indonesian music and culture.

The Keyboard Festival final showcased the talents of over 200 pianists, displaying their skills and dedication. The Band's Cheese and Wine Evening filled Lynam Hall with delightful melodies and a convivial atmosphere. D Block's Eco Musical featured the entire year group singing original songs.

The Middle School and E Block Form Singing Competition highlighted the vocal talents of students across the School. The Dragon School Choir collaborated with St. Edward's singers, uniting their voices in harmonious performances. The Middle School Concert concluded with a stirring rendition of 'Fix You', leaving the audience moved and captivated. Curtain Call celebrated the accomplishments of A Block Music and Drama scholars, providing them with a final opportunity to shine. The Leavers' Service, led by the Idris Choir, marked a heartfelt farewell with beautiful singing. The Summer Serenade Concert served as a rousing finale, with 200 children coming together to deliver a memorable performance.

Additional highlights included the E Block Concert and the Chamber Music Concert at the Ogston Music School, St. Edward's, showcasing the talents of our budding musicians. It was a term filled with musical excellence and unforgettable moments.



BOARDING

The Summer Term has been bustling with activity and camaraderie among 310 boarders who have participated in various forms of boarding this term.

Boarding Week was a highlight, where 30 children had the opportunity to trial boarding and immerse themselves in a range of exciting activities, including a lively BBQ, inflatable games and indulging in Mr Whippy ice cream. The Summer Fayre, with its Coronation theme, was a resounding success, raising over £600 for the School's Charities of the Year. Excursions to Cadbury World, Drayton Manor, LEGOLAND®, paintballing, laser gaming, and the cinema provided additional opportunities for adventure and entertainment. National Boarding Week was celebrated with great enthusiasm, featuring special events such as Bake Off and MasterChef competitions, sit-down banquet meals, water pistol fights on the fields, nature rambles on the meadows, and the enjoyment of milkshakes and precious memories. The term was characterised by a vibrant boarding community, fostering friendships and creating lasting experiences for all involved.



EXPEDITIONS

This year's A Block were all incredibly excited to head off on expeditions to Coinston in the Lake District, Moorland Hall in Devon and Plas Y Brenin in Wales. They timed their trip perfectly, with the best weather of the year.

Everyone got to experience some amazing activities from mountain biking, surfing, kayaking, archery and fire building, to climbing up rivers and waterfalls, hiking and abseiling. Day trips to beaches, up moors, and down into mines, all left the children exhilarated and exhausted! They enjoyed some downtime games, lots of ice cream, swimming and delicious meals, all surrounded by unbelievable natural beauty.

This was a fantastic trip to bring the A Block closer to leaving the Dragon – invaluable memories were made and friendships were solidified.



SCHOLARSHIPS

An outstanding (and record-breaking) 62 scholarships have been awarded this year for Academic, Art, Drama, Music, Sport, Chess and DT. We also have an Oundle School Scholarship awarded, and the King's Scholarship. Our scholars will be going to a wide variety of schools, including Headington School, Charterhouse School, Cheltenham Ladies College, Rugby School, St. Edward's School, Wellington College, Oxford High School, Harrow, Oundle and Eton, to name but a few.



SPORT

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