



Millbrook Connect

The Christmas Edition



Believe

Achieve

Succeed

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come towards the end of a rather challenging term two, we wanted to thank you for the support you have given us – it really does mean the world! Despite the difficulties we have faced, we must reflect on what still has been a very successful term! The children enjoyed an incredible pantomime performance of 'Cinderella'; new Read Write Inc book bag books; Forest School; a FROM school disco; taking part in our community project, 'Operation Christmas Cheer' (read on to find out more!), and a school Mosaic project to name but a few! We also welcomed back school photos with siblings, and at the end of this term, our Nursery team moved into their new home!

Huge thanks must also go to our amazing FROM team lead by the incredible Katie! Again, under difficult circumstances they are doing sterling work and making a huge difference to the school offer through their incredible fundraising. It was hugely disappointing to have to postpone our Christmas Fayre, as we know so much hard work had already gone into it, but it will be rescheduled and we can have Christmas fun in January hopefully! 😊

Enjoy the final Connect issue of the school year. Have a great Christmas everyone.

Faye Charlton Laura Youngman

Head(s) of School

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Millbrook Manners in the Community



This edition, our Millbrook Manners in the community section is dedicated to the incredible work that our Pupil Parliament have initiated around 'Kindness'. Kindness underpins everything we do at MBK and we are so happy that



our Pupil Parliament wanted this to be their first project. What amazing children we have!

First, we had the launch of our 'Kindness is Key' award - designed by Harry (our Head Boy)! Each week, during celebration assembly on a Friday, one child per year group is chosen to receive this much sought-after accolade!



The second project the Parliament undertook was developing a 'Kindness Crew' at Millbrook! This lovely group supports children on the playground who might need an extra sprinkle of kindness during break times – they might have no one to play with or need help joining in a game for example. This idea came completely from our children – we are so proud of them!



Our Kindness Crew now have their cool new vests and have been spreading kindness this term across all the different playgrounds in school!

Can you spot the Kindness Conga line?! 🥁

Curriculum Update

Teaching and Learning Update – December 2021

What a term it has been! Despite various challenges this term, our passion and ambition to develop our curriculum – we are incredibly proud of all that our staff have achieved! Go Team Millbrook!

This term our curriculum work has focused on:



❖ Providing quality time for subject leaders to further develop their subjects across the school (including in the Early Years); this has included planning; reviewing children's books and working with teachers on their termly planning.



❖ Working closely with teachers to plan their next Geography and History units. We have also been exploring new concepts for future units that link closely to our '**Curriculum Drivers**' – investigating migration over the course of time is one of themes that we are currently researching. We can't wait to see these in action!



❖ Sequencing next term's R.E. units – Mrs Sanhotra has been working extremely hard on these and we are looking forward to seeing some fantastic learning next term.

❖ Implementing our new curriculum – Year 5 for example, have had an amazing time as part of their D.T. unit (Mr Baish has enjoyed it just as much!!)

❖ Mrs Charlton and Mrs Youngman have led a staff meeting around Writing and have been sharing Millbrook's work with other schools – it has been such a pleasure to hear children talking so brilliantly about their writing learning journeys; the 'Big Six vocabulary' and how proud they have felt of their end products!

Our Senior Leadership Team also conducted a 'learning walk' earlier this term, to see our curriculum in action. Children spoke about how much they were enjoying their learning and were excited and proud to share what they had learnt – **we were absolutely blown away by some of their amazing knowledge in subjects such as History and Science! What superstars!**

Next term will focus on supporting teachers in the delivery of all subjects within the curriculum (pedagogy) in order to ensure that everything the children are taught '**sticks!**'



School Development Priorities

Our development priorities were shared in last term's MBK Connect and we are delighted to share a short update of what we have achieved this term:

Key Priority 1: Curriculum Implementation

Focus on the implementation of the newly developed curriculum so that it is taught consistently well from Early years to Year 6.

- Subject leads have worked with teachers to support their planning; lead staff meetings and monitor the impact of this support (see our curriculum update!)
- Time has been provided for teachers to plan together and share ideas
- Cat Boaz has worked with teachers to plan their Science and Computing lessons - children have loved these sessions!
- Mr Campbell has continued his singing assemblies which have been a real 'hit' with the children (and staff!)
- Cross-school collaboration with other VAT schools, has taken place, for example to plan Writing; share ideas linked to the Early Years Curriculum and subject forums.
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Key Priority 2: Early Reading

Implement the newly chosen phonics programme from Nursery to Year 4 (Read, Write, Inc) and ensure that all staff are trained to deliver it effectively.

- Staff training has continued across Nursery – Year 4
- Children have been grouped and books have been matched carefully to their decoding ability.
- Successful parent information evenings have been held – thank you to those of you who attended; we were delighted with the turn-out!
- Videos and other resources have been uploaded to our website and shared with parents to support learning at home.



Key Priority 3: Grow and develop teachers

Grow and support teachers to develop their practice so that teaching across the school is excellent.

- Staff meetings linked to the school development areas have been held – for example Writing; Vale Academy Trust subject forums across the primary schools and a curriculum update from Mr Baish (where staff were 'quizzed' on their knowledge!)
- Our Early Career teachers have attended training sessions and regular meetings with their mentors – they have all been amazing!
- Senior Leaders have continued to work with staff on their planning and providing feedback from learning walks
- Our coaching programme has been developed is being launched next term – **watch this space for more updates!**

Operation Christmas Cheer!



Last Friday, we had a brilliant day at Millbrook, where we worked as a school in our bubbles, on a project called 'Operation Christmas Cheer'!

At Millbrook, we want to celebrate and give back to all of the key workers that have dedicated their time to keeping us all safe throughout this year and bring them a bit of Christmas cheer! We held a big Art day on Friday 10th December where each class created a piece of artwork for a different group within our community.



Nursery – A wreath and a Christmas tree for the Fire Services

Reception – Made a Christmas tree with specially decorated baubles for Tesco Express in Grove

Year 1 – Made a box collage Christmas tree for the Police.

Year 2 – Made a hand-print wreath for the Co-op

Year 3 – Made a special version of 'The Night Before Christmas' poem for Grove Library

Year 4 – Made a huge piece of artwork for the JR Children's hospital.

Year 5 – Made a patchwork Christmas tree for The Mix in Wantage

Year 6 – Made their own version of the 'Jolly Christmas Postman' book and a large card of personalized Christmas stamps for the Royal Mail

Kids Club – Made a large Christmas card for Stirlings Care home



This is our way of saying 'thank you' for everything you have all done for us and a big MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Please see the photos on the next two pages for the finished artwork by each year group!





What was also lovely to see was that Year 1's Christmas Tree that they made for the Co-op last year was brought back out and displayed again this year!
#OperationChristmasCheer #MillbrookMagic 😊



Spotlight On...



This week the spotlight is on our newest TAs... Mrs Dixey, Miss Carter and Mrs Fawlk 😊

For a bit of fun and to allow us to learn a bit more about them, we have asked them some quick fire questions!



1. Favourite chocolate bar? (important things first!)

Anything Galaxy! Toblerone Cadburys Dairy Milk Marvellous Creations. It has jelly beans and popping candy in it, so it's like a chocolate bar and sweets all in one!



2. Place of birth?

Basingstoke Oxford Oxfordshire – I have always lived in Wantage or Grove!

3. Favourite place in all the world?

Espana!

Lulworth Cove in Dorset

Scotland and in particular the Isle of Skye.



4. Favourite book? The Twits by Roald Dahl The Owl who was Afraid of the Dark by Jill Tomlinson Fantastic Mr Fox by Roald Dahl.

5. Favourite film? Anything CHRISTMAS or Romcom...But if I had to choose it would be National Lampoons Christmas Vacation! Labyrinth I love either a good action movie or a kids film. I love the more recent James Bond films with Daniel Craig. If we are talking Christmas films Elf is my absolute favourite.



6. Favourite song?

I secretly love listening to Jazz music 🎷

By your side by Sade

Anything by Will Smith is a winner for me though!

7. Last meal on earth is likely to be?

Spaghetti bolognese or pizza...I can't choose!

My Dad's chilli con carne

Pancakes with lemon and sugar!



8. **When I was little, I wanted to grow up to be ...** A midwife or a teacher A farmer! I wanted to win the lottery and buy a farm!! As cool as my older brother! He would beat me at football, computer games, badminton, chess, even swing ball! I thought he was brilliant at everything!

9. **Unlikely interesting fact about you?**

When I was little I cut my chin open 3 times in the same place on holiday 3 years in a row! I like looking for random heart-shaped things wherever I go. I have a collection of heart-shaped stones that I've found on walks and on beaches! During lockdown I got really into growing my own vegetables and gardening (not something I have ever done before) I now have an allotment and grow lots of different fruit and veg (some more successfully than others!) My other hobby is doing Agility with my 4-year old Cockapoo, Bella! We have only been doing it a while and have had to take a break due to Covid, but we are both raring to go again in the new year!

10. **In a world of 'no limits', how would you spend a fantasy 24 hours?!**

I would sleep in until lunch time, shop all day for coats & candles, eat lots of yummy food (Italian), go to the cinema & end with a takeaway and a cup of tea in my pjs...Oh the simple things in life!



I would get a campervan and go on a road trip with my family, probably around Cornwall or Scotland. We'd have plenty of snacks and good music on the stereo to listen to as we take in the sights!

I would definitely cross the pond and visit New York, go on all the rides at a big theme park (minus the queues!), take my children to see a Panto and then finish with a walk along Miami Beach!



Our School Christmas Tree



This year, our school Christmas tree was kindly donated to us by the **Lambourn Christmas Tree Farm**. Our wonderful Chair of FROM Katie organised it for us and when she visited the farm, she was able to choose a tree from the field where there were more than 7,000 of them growing!

The farm has naturally grown Nordman Fir Christmas trees direct from the farmer's field. As you can imagine it was very difficult for Katie to choose!

The tree was then brought to school where it was lovingly decorated and the honour of placing the star on top of the tree given to Coach Josh!

We would like to say a massive thank you to David and the team at Lambourn for spreading

some Christmas cheer for our children and staff!

Look for @lambournchristmastreefarm on Facebook!



Empty Hands Defence

This term, we were so thankful to David from Empty Hands Defence for helping our Year Five children learn one of life's most vital and valuable lessons: life-saving CPR as part of the 'Restart the Heart' programme.

We were also so proud of our children for how attentive, sensible and mature they were throughout the sessions!



Orlah's Story

Earlier this term, the lovely Orlah from Grebe Class came to see Mrs Charlton in her office. She explained that she had been making her mummy a card at home the night before, and that it got her thinking about how Millbrook feels like her family too! So she drew us this wonderful picture with our new logo and the caption, "We're all a family in Millbrook" 🥰

[#millbrookmanners](#) [#millbrookmagic](#) [#onekindword](#)
[#believeachievesucceed](#)



Mia's Swimming Success

Mia in Pondskeepers Class achieved something very special in her swimming - her first medal! Mia earned a silver medal for the 50m breaststroke in the Club Championships with Abingdon Vale Swimming Club.

AVSC are among the top 20 clubs in the country and she came second out of all the 10-year olds which is no mean feat! (.....there are lots of them and they are mostly very tall 😊!). She smashed a massive 8 seconds off her personal best and is rightly very proud of herself. She also won her heat in 100m freestyle and narrowly missed out on a bronze overall. She hasn't been with the club very long and has had to work very hard to get back into swimming after all the time off through Lockdowns when the pools were closed.

Mia has since gone on to win another silver medal for breaststroke, this time at a proper development meet swimming against other clubs. She also won another 3 medals - so that's 4 across 5 events! - in front crawl (4th), butterfly (5th), and in the individual medley. Super impressive and hopefully bodes well for the future. Mia is now waiting to hear if she has qualified for county championships in the new year....!

It's all credit to Mia as she is the one having to get in the pool to train hard three times a week without complaining, usually after school when she is already quite tired!

This really does sum up our motto 'Believe, Achieve, Succeed' 😊

Great stuff Mia!



Millbrook Pupil Parliament Update

What can we say – we are so proud of our Pupil Parliament this term! In the short time (only since September!) that they have been in post, they have had such a positive impact on our school.

Key projects this term have included:

- ✓ **Launching our new Kindness Certificates**
- ✓ **The new 'Kindness Crew' (snazzily named by Hubert!) are now in place and have been making a huge impression in the playground – we have also had lots of children asking to join the 'Crew' next term which is lovely!**
- ✓ **Placing a 'compliments box' in every class to make sure that lovely comments can be shared with each other.**
- **Mrs Charlton and Mrs Youngman were so inspired by the Parliament, that they introduced our new 'Mug of Kindness' for staff – this has gone down very well! So far, Mrs Kilminster our Home School Link Worker, Ms Courtney our Office Assistant and Paulette our School Cook have been mugged! 😊**



The impact of the Parliament has also been clear in the feedback of our pupils. We were delighted (and rather emotional!) to hear our children talk about the variety of leadership opportunities at a recent VAT leadership review. As a small example:

The Senior Leadership Team guide us and lead us to be better people; in fact - we are all leaders too. A good leader is fair; listens; takes charge and motivates you.

We have unfortunately needed to suspend our meetings in the past few weeks due to Covid; however, we can't wait to plan our next project in January!

To see what we have been up to, please do look our website page:

<https://www.millbrookschool.org.uk/millbrook-pupil-parliament/>

recommends...

Office Legend

JULIA DONALDSON • AXEL SCHEFFLER

The Smeds and The Smooos



Assistant Headteacher; Year Five teacher

CHRISTOPHER EDGE

THE INFINITE LIVES OF MAISIE DAY

"This book is one of those world-changing, ground-up, original, and powerful. **AMAZING!**"
—*Quentin Jones*

new



Millbrook The Pantomime comes to Millbrook!

Millbrook were mesmerised by the fantastic show 'Cinderella' this afternoon, performed by an outstanding cast from [M&M Theatrical Productions](#) ✍️ So many laughs, dances, sound effects, songs...we absolutely loved it! Oh yes we did!! 🌟🌟🌟🌟

Thank you to the wonderful [FROM - Friends of Millbrook](#) for subsidising this, an absolute highlight of 2021 and an amazing opportunity for our children to see live theatre! [#millbrookmagic](#) [#magicoftheatre](#)



Times Tables Rockstars & Hit the Button



We have access to the Times Tables Rockstars online resource. This is popular amongst pupils as they can challenge themselves to improve their times tables as well as trying to improve the time it takes them to answer questions. Similarly, our younger pupils in Year 2 should endeavour to practise their skills on Hit the Button online resource, which aids their multiplication speed and fluency. Both links can be accessed from our school website using the links for children under the Home Learning Extra tab:

<https://www.millbrookschool.org.uk/home-learning-extra/>

Contacting you



Please make sure that we have the most up to date contact details for you. If your details have changed recently, please let the school office know:

officemb@millbrook.vale-academy.org

Safeguarding – What you can do



Parents and carers play a vital role in safeguarding children in their community. If you have any worries or concerns about a family or child, no matter how small, you can raise it with the school safeguarding team, contact the office or get advice from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). This safeguarding hub seeks to enable the sharing of information so that risks to children can be identified at an early stage. It is a link between universal services, such as schools and GPs, and statutory services, such as police and social care. **If you have a concern about a child, please call MASH on 0345 050 7666.**

This website is a useful place to find out about lots of support and information about a range of issues that may be worrying you:

[#https://fisd.oxfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/oxfordshire/directory/practitioner_toolkit.page #](https://fisd.oxfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/oxfordshire/directory/practitioner_toolkit.page)

Handwashing advice



It is essential that everyone washes their hands more often, using soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Hand washing with soap employs mechanical action that loosens bacteria and viruses from the skin, rinsing them into the drain. Drying hands afterwards makes the skin less hospitable to the virus. Hand sanitiser can be effective if soap is not available or the situation makes using soap less feasible (i.e. when outside).

