

OUR YEAR IN REVIEW 2023-2024

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I am writing this report at the end of a half term full of wonderful Team Bridgewater events including The Big Dig, sports days and class assemblies. It is always so lovely to meet and speak to parents and children at The Big Dig and this year we really lived our 'Together Rain or Shine' ethos as parents carried on despite the weather. We also reflected on your feedback from last year and included a 'quiet zone' in our Sports Day provision to help support all children to enjoy the experience. We have enjoyed watching our Reception children perform in their first ever class assemblies and Year 6 have impressed us in their end of school production of "Pirates of the Curry Bean".

We have lots to celebrate this year and I hope that you enjoy reading about it in this review. Academically, our Key Stage 2 SATS results continue to be strong and above national average and we are also very proud of our Year 1 Phonics results. We continue to believe that the emotional wellbeing of our children is our highest priority and our expanded SEN support team have worked alongside many families this year to meet the needs of all children.

Thank you to all of the parents, staff and children who completed our biannual and SEN surveys. We have identified key themes and we will be prioritising actions to develop and improve next year. I will share these priorities with you all at my 'Meet the Teacher' talk in September.

I would like to wish Year 6 all the best for the future and I hope they come back to tell me how they are getting on. I wish all staff, parents and children a restful summer break. After my exciting adventure in Australia last summer to watch the Lionesses, I will be having a more relaxing break with my two sons this year in Tuscany.

Thank you for your continued support,
Andrea Bettridge

Message from Mrs Alexander

I am writing this at the end of my second year as Deputy Headteacher at Bridgewater and it's been a bit of a crazy one with a few challenges! Due to a member of staff leaving us at Christmas, since January I have been juggling a full-time class teacher in Year 6 role as well as my deputy head role. While very busy, I have loved being a Year 6 teacher again; although I am looking forward to September and being able to commit fully to one job!



Mrs Brown and I enjoying the Llama song & dance routine



Our KS2 SATS results

Provisional KS2 results	Achieved the expected standard	
	School	National
Reading	92%	74%
Writing	87%	72%
Maths	82%	73%
Spelling, punctuation & grammar	88%	72%



A brief moment of relaxation in Osmington Bay!

PE and Sport

What an exciting summer of sport we have had, with Wimbledon, the Men's Football Euros and the Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games starting shortly! Here is a little of what Bridgewater has been up to over the past year.

Our cross country season started with 4 year groups representing Bridgewater at Ashlyns, with boys and girls teams from years 3,4, and 6 winning their events. Congratulations to all who took part. Further opportunities for cross country were available at Turnfurlong, Beechwood Park and of course at home, at our Bridgewater event. Nearly 50 runners from years 3-6 participated, alongside 14 other schools and fantastic determination and resilience was demonstrated by the children .



Our boys and girls football teams and the netball team competed against tough opposition to win, getting through to the second round of the district competition. The year 5/6 girls football team successfully won their pool in the second round, getting through to the district final in April, which they won! Throughout the competitions all of the teams were so supportive and encouraging, it was inspiring to watch the Team Bridgewater spirit being modelled so well. We entered a team into the Dacorum Sports Network Dance competition for the first time in March. Amy Butterfield choreographed the routine and led rehearsals. The evening itself was a wonderful celebration of dance, with over 20 enthusiastic dancers from Bridgewater taking part, alongside other primary and senior schools from the district. Multi-sports events were attended by some of the younger year groups and year 4 were able to enjoy a tag rugby tournament. All children from years 3-5 took part in a cricket workshop held at Bridgewater in April.

The year 6 girls cricket team maintained Bridgewater's winning streak at the Dynamos district cricket tournament for the third year running. For some this was their first experience of playing competitive cricket, but they all tried their best, supported each other and really enjoyed playing together as a team.

We were fortunate with the weather for both of this year's Sports Days. The children thoroughly enjoyed the mornings and their ice lollies afterwards!





Music



Music continues to thrive at Bridgewater and we are very proud to hold the Music Mark award, which demonstrates our commitment to high quality music provision across the school. From Year 1 upwards children receive curriculum lessons from specialist music teachers and our Year 5 children treated us to a super ukulele performance in assembly this month, showing us their new skills.

Every week, children perform in front of their peers in a safe environment at our music assemblies. This can include singing or playing instruments and it is always well received. We hold end of term music assemblies where children who are chosen by the peripatetic music teachers perform to an audience that includes parents.

Our choir have performed at several venues this year including St Peter's Church, St Mary's Church and we met the Mayoress when we sang at the unveiling of the new Berkhamsted town plaque. Year 5 also had a super time at Wembley Arena for the annual Young Voices concert.

Our new Music Development Plan can be found on our website [by following this link.](#)





Art



Our first shared task of the year was set for each class to create a banner for their class to represent our Bridgewater School values for a display board outside Mrs Bettridge's office. Each class talked about the value and what it means to us as a school, to collate pictures and drawings. These were then hung up in year group order, to show the progression of skills throughout the school and to display the values together.

Other displays across the year included skills learnt through art to show wonderful winter themed art, learning in science, and diversity in our class and school. We also linked our Art to R.E as we created Artwork to understand the importance of Ramadan and other religions.

Year 5 enjoyed two visits to the Berkhamsted Art Society exhibitions, where they met artists and learnt about the process of developing artwork.

The children in Year 4 and 5 were invited to submit artwork for the annual Dacorum Young Artist competition, which is hosted by the Berkhamsted Rotary Club. Well done to Sam Fox, who was chosen as 'Best in School'.

For the celebration of 25 years of Access Art, the scheme offered a draw along for children via zoom. Some classes across the school joined in with this and enjoyed 45 minutes of drawing along with someone else, following the instructions carefully. The children enjoyed completing the drawing exercises and drawing an object that had a special meaning for them.

We have had another year of fantastic artwork across the school!



Outdoor Learning & Forest School

It's been another very busy year in Forest School. We continue to offer parents taster sessions, which proved popular, in the Autumn and Winter term but surprisingly, not as popular in the summer term.

Thanks to the generosity of Bryn Young, we now have a permanent shelter in the woods, which has come in very handy during the wet weather. We have called it the 'Bug Snug'. Since the deer proof fencing was fitted we have seen a much broader array of flora, the children have particularly enjoyed the sticky weed! There are also dock leaves for the first time, which helps, should the children get stung by stinging nettles.



We are so lucky that we get to play and learn in our fabulous grounds at Bridgewater and that we get to see the impact of the passing seasons. We have celebrated two National Outdoor Classroom Days, as well as spending time learning in the outdoors every week.



The saplings that we planted last year are doing well. We have been able to take off the plastic covers off, as there are no deer on site. For the first time, Year 6 had a cook out at Forest School, during their last session at Bridgewater. They cooked their lunches on the fires and then ate it alfresco!

You may have seen the willow dome above the top playground. This provides a sheltered space for the children to learn in, as well as being somewhere to read, sit and chat with their friends during lunchtimes. Nursery children have enjoyed sharing stories in it and as it grows, we will be able to use the willow in a variety of ways, including creating more willow classrooms, as well as using the whips to make wreaths and other crafts.



Taking on board feedback from the children in Y5 & 6, we set up a lunchtime club in the summer term. This gave them a chance to let off steam in the woods and take part in activities such as whittling, making rope swings and woodland sushi!



School Council

The School Council were elected in the autumn term and they helped to decide which charities we would support this year. In the summer term they met with Mrs Bettridge, as part of our Relationship and Sex Education consultation. They were asked to explain what they enjoyed about the lessons and what they would like changed. The School Council then went back to obtain the views of their classes and they reported their findings to Mrs Bettridge. Their views are being used alongside parents and staff to help shape the new policy, which will be published in the autumn term.

House News

This year we had a focus on diversity and we started the year by celebrating food from around the world, by making lots of wonderful and delicious recipes. Lots of lucky teachers were able to sample some of the brilliant creations.

Our next task was to learn games from around the world. There was certainly a diverse mix, seeing games learnt from Italy, Peru, France and Pakistan, to just name a few!

A competition to design a poster about a Paralympian, ahead of the Paris Olympics this summer, saw a fantastic range of talented sportsmen and sportswomen from around the world.

Throughout the year, there have been lots of opportunities to gain house points in PE lessons. At the end of a teaching unit, the children have by completing a mini house competition in their classes.

Summer saw the return of Bridgewater's traditional sports days with the results going towards the house totals for the year. In Early Years and KS1 Griffin were announced as winners and in KS2 Griffin also retained the sports day trophy.

In the last week of term, Mrs Stewart calculated the all-important house totals. Congratulations to Roc, who won.



Eco Council

The Bridgewater Eco Council have had a busy year again, promoting being green and looking after our environment.

We started the year with brand new recycling bins for every classroom. The Eco-Council members made clear labels for these to make sure the correct waste was put in each one and that bins weren't contaminated.

In the Autumn term we held a sale of our homemade Christmas labels. Sales were a bit slow but the team were relentless in their pitching and we managed to make around £50 for charity. In the same term we also held our yearly Be Bright, Be Seen sale. This was manned by members of our fabulous Eco team and we raised a whopping £478 – well done everyone for supporting the cause and staying safe walking to school on those darker days!

Spring Term saw the Eco Council promoting the Great British Spring Clean by raising awareness of the dangers of litter and organising school litter-picks.

In our final term, we joined Berkhamsted Council in celebrating Great Big Green Week, where the team participated in an activity sharing ideas of what we already do to be green, and what things we could do in the future. This was displayed in the Civic Centre for the public to view. In school, we encouraged pupils to walk to school at least one day and we held a Green Day where we were all invited to wear something green to raise the awareness of looking after our environment.

On top of all this, we won a travel award, which resulted in a visit from the Mayor – what an exciting year we have had! Well done to our committed members!



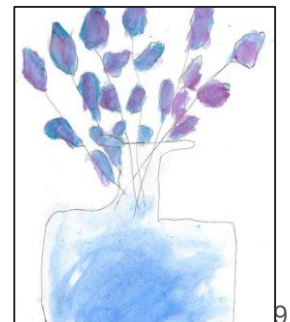
Extra Curricular

Our excellent club provision continues to be popular. This year we offered more extra-curricular opportunities, including Drama Club, Story Writing Club, Chess Club, and a new Athletics Club. These activities were delivered by both school staff and external providers, aiming to broaden the range of experiences and interests for the children.

We welcomed back Chess in Schools after several years which has been well received by the children. Each week they have been learning new moves and strengthening the skills they have already learned. John, the tutor, has commented on how remarkably well the children have engaged in and behaved during this club and how enthusiastic they are.

The new Drama Club, run by Emma, was so popular that we had to split it over two days to accommodate all of the interested children. The club goes beyond just acting; its drama-based activities and games help children develop confidence and creativity, and most importantly, they are loads of fun.

Beautiful artwork from Canvas Crew, including Stella H's pop art meercat, selected from thousands to be featured in the Royal Academy's Summer Show. You can see it at the Royal Academy online exhibition until 11th August. [Follow this link for details.](#)



School Provided Clubs (free of charge)

Target Games (tri-golf/archery)

Striking and Fielding (tennis, rounders, cricket)

Invasion Games (football, tag rugby, netball, basketball)

Multi-sports

Running Club

Knitting, Careful colouring, Gardening, Lego club

Choir

External Clubs (outside providers – a charge is made)

Ross and Andy's Football

Tennis

Street Dance

Musical Theatre

Chess Club

Canvas Crew Art

Tech Club

BSA Annual Activity

Looking over the last year in photos and selecting what we think best represents the fun we've had, brought a proud smile to our faces. It's not often we take a step back and appreciate all the hard work that goes into our fundraising efforts, and the memories that we hope our families take away from BSA events. The support from the Bridgewater community makes it a really special school to be part of and we see that on our children's faces when we look back. This is my last year as Chair of the PTA, finishing on a whopping total of £25k, experiencing my first Christmas fair and trying some new things along the way, whilst keeping the majority of my hair. I just wanted to say thank you to those who work so hard to pull it off, listen to crazy ideas and get stuck in where you can. That money, those resources and those experiences happen because of you, and we are forever grateful.



Parents and Community in Partnership



Thank you to the parents, grandparents and volunteers, who all form part of Team Bridgewater, helping make our school such a special place for the children to learn and grow in.

We are grateful to our Governing Body, a skilled and dedicated group of volunteers, who do a fantastic job of supporting us and holding the school to account, to ensure the best outcomes for our children. Please read the Governor's Gazette to find out more about their work.

The BSA, particularly the dynamic committee, are truly amazing. They contributed massively to the building of treehouse built last year and thanks to their efforts, we will soon be installing new playground equipment. They also provide all sorts of other financial support for the school, such as subsidising residential trips, or coaches to the panto, or resources for the library.

Thank you to the parents, grandparents and other volunteers who come into school. Our regular volunteers really love being part of our Bridgewater Family. Alex, who reads with Year 3 every week with Year 3, brought his wife into school to meet the children he reads with and to thank them for the beautiful diamond wedding anniversary card which they had given him.

It was our wettest ever Big Dig this June, but undeterred, an amazing group of volunteers tidied, weeded, swept and painted, leaving the school looking fantastic. Thank you to them all and we encourage you all to come and join in next time. We can pretty much guarantee that the weather will be better than it was in June. If you are interested in volunteering in any capacity, please contact the school office. We would love to hear from you!

Trips and WOW days

Our WOW days and trips are always a highlight of the term for the children. Our pupils enjoy so many enriching activities, which bring their learning to life. We can offer these activities thanks to the voluntary contributions made by parents and we ensure that no children miss out. Thank you for your generosity this year. All of our children have had opportunities this year to experience trips and WOW days and they have covered many areas of the curriculum.



Once again, Year 5 made the trip to Wembley Arena to participate with lots of other schools at the Young Voices event. They also took part in a Remarkable Rivers WOW day and visited a local art exhibition at the civic centre.

Year 4 took part in a Science WOW Day as well as a Roman WOW Day..



Year 2 took part in a Mad Science WOW Day in the autumn term. On a very wet day in the summer, they visited Tiggywinkle's animal sanctuary where they saw lots of hedgehogs! They also had scooter training and a Great Fire of London WOW day.

Other highlights including Reception visiting College Lake for a Teddy Bears' Picnic; Year 4 and 6 taking part in a BMX workshop; Year 3 visiting Celtic Harmony to experience a day in the Iron Age and they also took part in a Greek WOW day and a Norman Conquest WOW day; Year 1 went to Whipsnade Zoo, visited Berkhamsted Castle and the local allotments and had a seaside day in the hall. Year 6 visited the trenches and went back in time to celebrate a Tudor Christmas. The whole school celebrated an RE WOW day where visitors from different faiths came into school and taught us. What a fun and busy year we've all had!



Library and Love of Reading



We continue to cultivate a love of reading throughout our school and want to create and support passionate, enthusiastic readers.

We are extremely fortunate to have a well stocked library, which all of the classes use. Our library is open during some lunchtimes, thanks to the support of a fantastic group of parent volunteers. This means that the children can browse the books and find a quiet corner to read in, if they choose. The library is run by our keen Year 5 Junior Librarians, who operate the library system, checking books in and out, as well as putting new books onto the database and reading to our younger pupils.

Reading is at the centre of our Early Years teaching - we read every day and our learning is based around the story we have just heard. The adults model a love of reading, talking about the characters and emotions within the pages. Throughout the school, the children are read to daily in their classes. We have a group of dedicated reading volunteers who come and read with specific children to encourage their reading and support their development.

We strive to run a purposeful World Book Day, where teachers change classes and share one of their favourite books and their love of reading with a different class. During the week of World Book Day, we run a Scholastic Book Fair, where parents can purchase books. The commission we make means that we can purchase new books for the library and class book corners. We ask for the children's input into which books or magazines they would like to read.

Our ethos is captured in the quote below:

'There is no such thing as a child who hates to read; there are only children who have not found the right book.'

— Frank Serafini

Our hunt for the right book for every child continues.

Year 4 Residential

What an amazing time Year 4 had on their residential to Phasels' Wood this summer term. It was a huge achievement for all of them - staying away from home, eating different foods, challenging their fears and climbing to heights that they never thought they could.

The activities included abseiling, human hungry hippos, cresta run and high ropes/crate stacking (shown in the photo). We are so pleased that the children left with a great sense of achievement and pride.



Year 6 Residential

Mrs Alexander, Mrs Brown, Mrs Francis, Mrs Coleman, Mrs Pope, Mr James and 58 Year 6 children set off from school on Monday 20th May for the journey to Osmington Bay. The sun was shining at that point!

Having stopped for lunch, we arrived at PGL Osmington Bay in good time and got ourselves organised into our rooms and explored the site before heading to the dining room for our first meal together as a Bridgewater family! That evening, we played a huge game of outdoor Cluedo, before the children settled down for their first night away from home. They coped extremely well and unbelievably, everyone (including the adults) was in bed and asleep by not much after 10.30pm.

Over the next few days, we settled into our PGL routine: breakfast, activities, lunch, activities, evening meal, evening activity and bed. There were lots of smiles and laughter and the joy on the children's faces when they achieved something was incredible to see.

Unfortunately on Tuesday afternoon, the rain came and by Wednesday evening, we were all soaked through. It didn't stop us and it was fortuitous that Wednesday morning's activity was raft-building, as this meant getting wet anyway! By Thursday morning, the sun had come out again and we were able to enjoy the rest of the time in the dry.

We enjoyed a huge range of activities which were so much fun and so exciting. There was a real sense of camaraderie and encouragement too: Jacob's ladder, the giant swing, dragon-boating, raft-building, zip-lining and abseiling were some of the highlights.

Once again, a wonderful (if exhausting) week was enjoyed by all and we returned home on Friday evening with many new memories.



Together Rain or Shine

