

Ickford News

It is dark and it's cold and this morning there was ice on the playground but what warmth there was in our assembly. Nothing to do with the heating, let's be fair we were without any for long enough, but simply the warmth of the children towards each other as we celebrated the week's many successes.

I often watch the children coming in to the hall for assembly in the mornings and this week I was struck by the way that the youngest children thank the older children who are monitors for holding the doors open. It wasn't their manners that touched me, although how lovely that each child thanks the person holding the door, it was the fact that they all know the names of the older boys and girls.

I often get asked by prospective parents whether we have a 'buddy system in place so that when the children begin in Reception, they are 'buddied' up with a child in Year 6 who looks out for them and I have to say "No we don't." The reason being, I want every child to take the responsibility for looking after each other and every child to be considerate and kind. In addition, I don't think that the enforced buddy systems really work as, in my experience, the year 6 children can often be quite overzealous in their responsibility and more often than not the children new to the school are more than capable of finding their way around and making friends.

Being a small school certainly helps our children to know every child by name but there are, I believe, other factors that lend themselves to a strong sense of community amongst the pupils. Our mixed year groups, for example, may make planning more difficult but they do ensure that the children have

opportunities to form friendships across year groups. Ensuring that every child is at play at the same time and on the same playground also helps the children to be sociable and ensures that they learn to be aware of the need to adapt their play or behaviours to safeguard the happiness of others.

The warmth in assembly emanates from a genuine feeling of camaraderie that develops amongst the children and not just gradually, but very quickly once they join the school. Sometimes I reflect on whether we should have a celebration assembly and whether we should celebrate individual success but from where I stand, I can see the children applauding their friends and I know that, although undoubtedly most would like to change places and be receiving an award, they are delighted for those that do get a certificate or a Golden Book mention.

As I said this morning, the most difficult time in a teacher's week is writing their certificates because usually there are so many contenders and often every child could qualify for an award. Nonetheless, I think we have got the balance right and I think the children aspire to be successful and the opportunity for recognition on a Friday morning just encourages them to aspire that little bit more.

Today I was also pleased to hand out the winners medals to our Year 3/4 Badminton team who, having already won the Waddesdon Area competition in November, competed at Buckingham School last Wednesday for the Regional title and the chance to represent the Buckingham Schools Sports Partnership in the County Finals. Playing against the winners and runners up from each area competition they had to be at the top of their game and led by the indomitable Cassie O'Kennedy, they amassed an

overall score that left the opposition in their wake.

Life is a little bit competitive and as long as we teach the children to be, 'humble in winning and gracious in defeat', then, through our competition at school we are helping them to develop necessary life skills.

Tomorrow (Saturday) we have a small team competing in a cross country event at Wendover School. It is going to be close to freezing! Perhaps a life skill we need to start teaching is, 'choose your events wisely and look for those that take place in the summer!'

Have a good weekend,

Mr Ronane

Ickford News from the office

Dates for your diary...

24 th January 9am	Ballet Assembly
28 th January – 1 st February	Science Week
5 th February	Parents Evening
7 th February 9am	Class 2 Assembly
7 th February	Parents Evening
14 th February 5-6.30pm	School Disco

School Lottery

If you would like the chance to win, and support the school, please click on the link below and get signed up!

<https://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/lottery/school/ickford-school>



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