

Ickford News

To say this has been a difficult week would be an understatement but, I have no doubt some of you will have been struggling without the internet just as we have. It is only when you lose something that you realise just how much you have come to depend on it and my head has been spinning this week wondering how it came to be that our network, photocopier and even our telephone system are all internet dependent!

In addition to the chaos caused by Giga-Clear, we have been a number of staff down due to sickness so I have to be grateful to the team for pulling together and covering the gaps as best we could. I know that many of you are grateful that we managed to keep the school open when industrial action shut down most of the schools around us on Wednesday. It was made clear that we would support the decision of any member of staff who did feel the need to strike but it was not something people felt comfortable with and, as is always the case, Ickford chose to, 'keep calm and carry on.'

We had some fun in the sporting arena on Tuesday when Mrs Ellis and I took a minibus full of girls to the Henry Floyd School to see if they could, 'bend it like Beckham' in a girl's football tournament. Unfortunately, we discovered...no they couldn't and I don't think the current Lionesses will be worried about their places in the England Squad just yet. Nonetheless, in spite of an ostensibly reluctant ball that appeared to avoid the opposition goal at all costs, the girls had fun and enjoyed the sing song on the mini-bus.

I am hopeful that your children came home on Thursday evening demanding that you remove plugs from sockets and forbidding you to charge your mobile phone through the night. Mr Preston (Dan), a firefighter by trade, came in to school on Thursday and delivered some fantastic fire safety talks to all of the children. The feedback from teachers is that all of the children were really engaged in the sessions and fascinated by some of Dan's stories and his demonstrations of equipment. The children in class 5 were particularly engrossed and they asked lots of pertinent questions. I am so grateful to Dan because not only do these talks give the children an insight into the job of a firefighter, they could actually help to save a life and hopefully, the children will have learned how to decrease the risk of a fire starting in the home. During each talk, Dan emphasised the importance of having working smoke alarms in the home and, when talking to me, he explained that the Fire Service will come and fit alarms in homes that don't have them, completely free of charge. This is an offer that must not be turned down.

Finally, on Thursday evening, our Year 5/6 mixed Netball team began their league campaign by travelling to Mandeville School to play three matches. Let's just say, at times, they were on fire and the opposition might have wished for Mr Preston to put them out! We got off to a great start beating Cuddington and Dinton without conceding a goal followed up with a second convincing win over Ashmead School. In the final game we got off to a slow start against a very tall Hayden Abbey side and, before we knew it, conceded the first goals of the evening and went 2 down in the first quarter. A little tweak in organisation, a chat and a refocus and we got into our stride finishing the match as 12 – 3 winners. Our next round of matches will be on February 23rd but, before that, we are hoping to play Buckingham Park School here at Ickford. It may be an opportunity to get a crowd out to cheer the team on.

I am not sure what Giga-Clear plan to do about the internet but whatever they decide, I hope they do it quickly. We have Science week next week and I would be really fed up if the children missed out on any of the activities Miss Honey has planned. I believe the theme this year is 'space' and I have no doubt it will be an exciting week.

Have a good weekend.

Mr Ronane

Actual message from Dan Preston

"Could I ask if any children express concern or worry after this visit or mention they don't have smoke alarms, please pass on my email address to any parents/carers who live within Oxfordshire I am more than happy to assist where possible. (With home address in Bucks I can assist and pass on information to Bucks fire and rescue)"

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