

Ickford News

We have seen more strikes in recent months than a supporter of the New York Yankees and our journey to France last week was subliminally burdened by the revolutionary desires of the French customs officers who downed tools at the drop of a beret. Thankfully, we managed to get to Calais undeterred and arrived at the Chateau du Broutel in Rue on time, ravenous and ready to Roquefort!

Rooms were assigned, bags unpacked and our first meal together, enjoyed before the children went off with instructors for evening entertainments and the staff went through health and safety procedures and familiarised themselves with the fanged cat (I kid you not) appropriately called Ninja and said to be the current owner of the Chateau and estate.

Our trip to the French market the next morning was a rain sodden affair but this did not dampen the spirits of our Ickford tour party who were eager to part with their euros at the first sight of a gallic bargain. That well known symbol of French chic, the epitome of Parisienne fashion, the NYC baseball cap in lurid colours, soon adorned the heads of the few whilst those with a little more discerning taste preferred a woollen beanie. I am in debt to Mme Basnett who at least managed to step in at the last minute and thwart excessive payments to covetous French stallholders whose eyes lit up at the sight of 40 children waving their euros around!

In the afternoon, the rather more salubrious surroundings of Le Touquet were our destination and a packed lunch overlooking the beach a less expensive pastime. Though cold and windy, the children enjoyed the beach almost as much as Miss Howe who delighted in making sand sculptures and had to be dragged kicking and screaming back on to the coach.

The week passed quickly and it is impossible for me to say what the highlights were for the children. Our visit to the museum in the town of Albert and the site of the Somme battlefields, certainly held the interest of the Year 6 children who have studied the great wars and hopefully inspired the younger children to take value learning about the past in history lessons. Where Ickford children all shine and what makes them such special children to take anywhere, is their behaviour and the respect they afforded such moving monuments to the sacrifices made by those who died in the trenches. Our walk around the Thiepval Memorial with its 72,000 names was a moving reality check, lest we forget.

It is possible that you may have been surprised by the generosity of your offspring and are enjoying looking at your Eiffel Tower snow globe or fridge magnet (the less fortunate may be wondering what to do with plastic sword!) they are a kind bunch your children. Not only are they kind, they are also good company and great ambassadors for their families and their school. Yes, we had a few midnight bunk bed hoppers and sweet gorgers but nothing we couldn't sort out and, even when we had to clear up some sick, the staff team and I were never anything but positive we had done the right thing in travelling abroad again.

Another journey that came to an end this week was the route pursued by our older Netball players. Following, the success of the children in Year 3 and 4 who won a tournament last week, it was hoped that we could finish the term on a high by retaining the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes County Championship title that we won last year.

This is no easy task and our squad played and won numerous matches to reach the finals, winning the regional league on the way. Alas, we were eventually runners up this year and took home silver medals rather than the, much coveted, gold.

The team chosen had to play 8 matches in one day and, these finals are not only contested by state schools but also independent schools and middle schools. To be honest, we played superbly well throughout the competition but the gale force wind made conditions really difficult particularly for shooters. I am not sure what it was like in Ickford yesterday but in Milton Keynes it resembled Chicago!

Nevertheless, we are not making excuses and we lost one match to Olney Middle School the eventual winners. My heart goes out to the team who, understandably, were disappointed particularly those in Year 6 for whom it was their only shot at the title. It was the only defeat of the year (first since 2019) and I have been so proud of their commitment and dedication to the game and the way in which they have dealt with the pressure that comes with being an Ickford Netball player. To give a little context the challenge our teams, in any competition often face, the majority, if not all of the schools present yesterday, have over 400 children on their role.

The whole squad this year have been superb and I hope that, for the remaining term, we can play more matches and keep developing our game. It is a very difficult sport to play and it requires athleticism, skill and team work on a level that not many other team sports do. I know and hope that most of our squad will keep playing when they leave Ickford and one of the highlights of yesterday was to bump into former pupils playing in the senior finals.

Whilst we were away yesterday, Tesco (every little helps) were in school engaging the children in Class 4 with a 'Field to Fork' workshop arranged by Mrs Honey and Mrs Hagues to enhance their Sow, Grow, Farm topic in Geography. The class learned about where our food comes from and the processes by which it ends up in the store. Throughout the session, they enjoyed tasting a range of foods and investigating where they originated from. The Tesco team were really impressed by the children's abundant, prior knowledge and congratulated them on being such an enthusiastic and responsive group. If prices in stores get much higher, I might be making the 'field to fork' catch phrase a reality and going out in the hours of darkness to by pass the middle man, every little helps!

So, another term finishes and we can look back on some positive achievements in spite of some unforeseen challenges both internally and externally. Miss Vukomanovic has had her baby and we shall miss her but life goes on and we are strong enough as a team to deal with whatever we need to in order to maintain the high standards of education we provide.

Thank you to everyone for your support throughout the year so far and I hope you all enjoy the Easter break.

Mr Ronane



French Award

Lizzie Landragan, Ella Rose Cantwell-Wilkinson, Phoebe Gapper, Beatrice Johnson, Florence Arnold, James Harris, Sophie Winspear

German Award

Neve Woodley

Latin Award

Sophie Winspear

P.E. Award

Lizzy Landragan, Benjamin Herratt, Xavier Flood, Oliver Every, Melek Younis, Evie Evans, Max Smith

Music Award

George Middleton, Phoebe Gapper, Annabel Neal, Asees Samrai, Percy Jenkins

Headteacher's Award

Molly Parry, Bella Hawkins, Lucy Hird, Thomas Ansell-Hawes, Sam Pierpoint

Easter Prize

Finlay Bennett, Zeynep Konak, Stella Anzarouth, Anabel Stevens, Oisin Harrell, Orla Kerry, Ella Cooke

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