

# The Vale Academy Newsletter Summer 2017



Dear All,

What a whirlwind of a year! I truly cannot believe that we are at the end of another academic year. There have been so many wonderful events and achievements this year: both personal to individual pupils and collectively as year groups.

A big thank you to both Harmony King and Keaton Herd for being our head pupils this year. They have both been exemplary ambassadors for the academy and have modelled high levels of academic diligence, friendship and perseverance.

The Vale Academy is a wonderful place to learn and work. So much of the learning takes place as a result of the learning environment. Great staff provide great learning and opportunities. Great pupils achieve great things and great parents provide great support. This learning triangle of children, parents and staff is what makes the Vale community so successful.

On behalf of all the Vale team I would like to wish our year 6 leavers the very best for their future years: we know that each and every one has the character to shine. To other families who are moving away we wish you the very best in your new adventure; we are always here if you need us.

Finally, to you all have a wonderful summer, enjoy time with each other and make lots of happy memories.

Thank you for three wonderful years.

Bex Howe

**Twitter: You can follow us @TSLTValeAcademy  
and on Facebook**

**Head Boy and Head Girl sum it all up!**

Since we have joined The Vale Academy it has been a thrilling experience in all the years we have been here.

With exceptional teaching and the best resources this is the most amazing school that you can ask for.

Keaton Herd – Head Boy



Harmony King – Head Girl



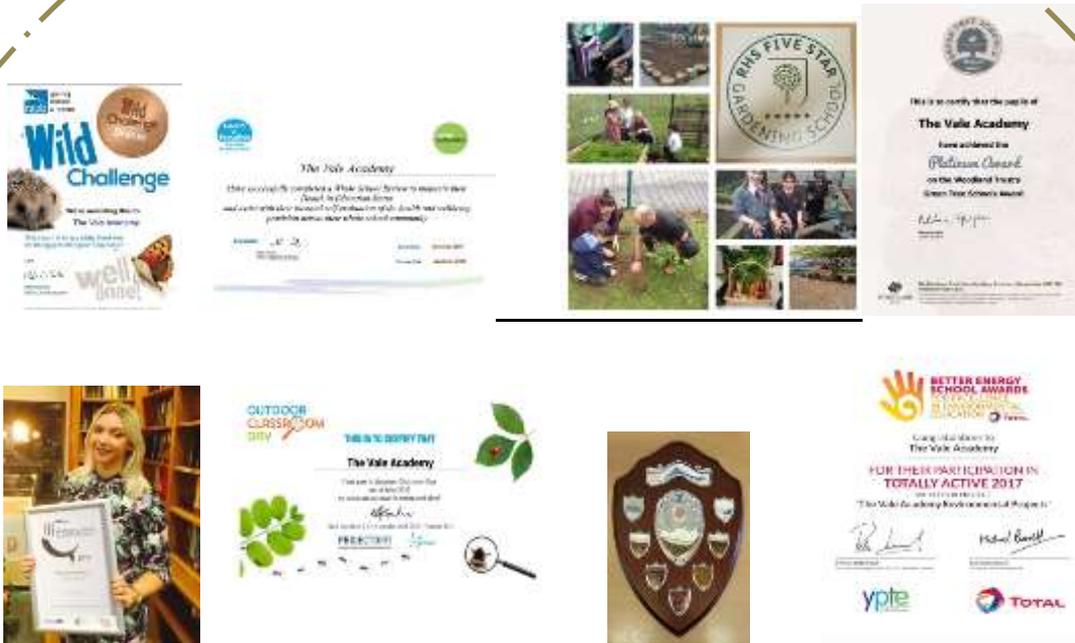
## Our Outdoor Space has blossomed



This year The Vale has been very busy transforming the outside spaces around the academy. Here's a list of things we have participated in:

- **RHS School Gardening initiative** and as a result were rewarded with 30,000 vegetable, herb and flower seeds for their school.
- Green-fingered pupils at the Vale Academy have pledged to support the **RHS 'Greening Grey Britain'** campaign by transforming their schools grey spaces into a bright and beautiful wildlife habitat for bees and butterflies.
- Pupils have sown a pollinator mix of cornfield seeds supplied by the RHS including charlock, cornflower, corn chamomile, corn marigold, field forget-me-not, field poppy and white campion.
- The pupils have taken part in the **Bulbs4Kids campaign** where they created layered bulb displays with different patterns for a long lasting spring display.
- As part of the 'hands on' learning approach pupils and staff have created a fabulous bug hotel in their **Mini Beast Area** using recycled materials from around the school.
- The school grounds are full of **wonderful recycling ideas** including old lockers turned into planters.
- Pupils have also planted a **Wheelie Fantastic floral barrow in the 'Flower Power'** theme.
- Staff and pupils love a challenge and have also taken part in **Grow Your Own Potatoes, Sow and Grow and Wildlife Challenge** campaigns and have won plenty of awards for their hard work.
- All plants are grown by the pupils from seed and sapling trees are grown on in a nursery bed for planting elsewhere in the school.

## Awards for the Academy



The children have achieved some fabulous awards this year and are so proud of each and every one. Here is a list of our achievements:

- We became a Five Star Gardening School recognised by the RHS
- We won Best Academy in the Dunstable in Bloom competition
- Platinum Award for Green Tree Award with the Woodland Trust
- Silver in Primary Science Quality Mark
- Bronze in Wild Challenges with RSPB
- Silver in Wild Challenges with RSPB
- Maintained the Health in Education Status
- Participated in outside classroom day
- Participated in the Better Energy School Award

## Year R

We have had a busy year in Reception with lots of exciting things happening. We enjoyed our visits from Sleeping Beauty in the Autumn term and the Reptile lady in the Summer term but nothing has compared to the Spring term visit from the dinosaurs who left footprints in the hall and laid eggs in our classrooms!

As well as this we have had Fireworks, a visit to Mead Open Farm, a look inside an ambulance, our sponsored triathlon, sports day and lots of magical hours spent exploring and learning in our wonderful Forest School area.



## Year 1

As the year comes to an end it gives us an opportunity in Year 1 to recount on just how amazing a year it has been.

The children have developed so much and alongside their learning they have had lots of fun. We have taken part in a wide range of different activities both within the classroom and outside (which the children have loved). With access to a number of different outdoor areas and resources the children have been able to enjoy their education.

Each term our topics have differed and we have had days for the children to be superheroes; bring their toy to school day; have fun on Diwali day and embrace Chinese New year day.

We have had so much fun on our visits to the Incredible Edible garden; to explore different fruits and plants; our visit to Stockwood discovery centre; to look at different types of transport and the children were really intrigued by just how the world has changed.

Our last trip and the biggest trip of the year was spectacular! Although the weather was unreliable the children behaved impeccably and were able to talk about and admire a variety of exotic, wild and even farm animals.



## Year 2

We have had a fantastic time in Year 2 this year – with many exciting learning experiences.

We loved using our Forest School area to have a campfire, complete with toasted marshmallows to celebrate Bonfire Night during our Gunpowder Plot topic work. We spent a whole morning in the Forest School just a few weeks ago, and made stick picture frames, mud pies and went on a mini-beast hunt for our science work.

We were visited by the Fire Brigade in January, and learnt lots about fire safety including practicing the Stop, Drop and Roll moves and had a chance to use the fire hoses (with a little bit of help!).

Keeping with the safety theme in the spring term, we were also visited by Buzz Road Safety team, who turned the hall into a roadway for us to practice using zebra and pelican crossings.

Tuesday Enrichment sessions are always a favourite in Year 2 – this summer we particularly enjoyed building dens in the outside area, a visit from the Guide Dogs Association and making fizzy-pop rockets during Science Week.

In the summer term all of our work paid off with a fantastic set of results for the end of KS1 SATs. We would like to say a huge well done to all of the children, who should be feeling very proud of all they have achieved this year.



### Year 3

We started our year off as Time Travellers; during this topic we particularly enjoyed reading *Stig of the Dump* which is a book about a little boy who becomes friends with a cave man living in a dump. To help support our learning in this first half term, we visited the Stockwood Park Museum to see their Stone, Bronze and Iron Age exhibits. Year 3 then moved on to learning about Chocolate and the Mayans, we particularly enjoyed the stunning start - chocolate tasting.

After the Christmas break our topic was 'Raiders of the Pop Art' the children took Andy Warhol's artistic approach and applied it to some key buildings in our local area. This was followed by a Rainforest topic in which we all enjoyed learning about interesting animals and their habitat.

Our favourite topic of the year was the Evacuee topic; the children in Year 3 were really intrigued by how the war impacted on the lives of children just like them. To celebrate all our hard work in this topic, Year 3 hosted their very own Victory in Europe party, complete with newspaper party hats and ration recipes.

Our last topic of the year was, 'What a Wonderful World', through this topic we enjoyed learning about the extreme weather conditions faced by people around the world. To celebrate the end of the year we visited Kidzania in London, an amazing and exciting day. The trip was enjoyed by all the children, who even now are still talking about how much fun they had. Well done for all your hard work Year 3!



#### Year 4

What a fantastic year it has been for Year 4! We have been working like superstars all year, and have really risen to any challenges faced to us.

Our 'Mixed-Up Fairytales' topic gave us a visit from the one and only Shrek! It was so exciting to see him and have our photos taken with him. Even some of our parents couldn't resist a pose with the giant ogre!

Our confidence has grown and we have been showing how keen we are to participate in class and whole academy performances, from our Christmas performance about Papa Panov, to some of us performing in 'The Lion King' as well as our Academy Performing Arts Show. We have been developing our knowledge of how performances are constructed through our Playscripts unit, and were lucky enough to visit London's West End to watch Disney's Aladdin at the theatre!

We have developed our knowledge and understanding of Ancient History, and loved learning about Howard Carter's discovery of King Tut's tomb. Our 'Ancient Rome' topic included us discovering who Julius Caesar was and how the Roman Empire affected our local environment. We also had lots of fun learning about legends of Dunstable!

Our teachers are very proud of what we have achieved this year, and we are excited to see what adventures Year 5 has in store for us!



## Year 5

A wonderful year has been had by Year 5. The year started with a spaceship crash-landing in the school field and ended with a trip to Condover Hall, where we really pushed ourselves to the limit. Highlights of our year were searching for clues that an Alien had landed in our back garden and trying to find out where it had gone. We learnt about Mary Anning in History and followed that up with a trip to the Natural History Museum in London, where we found the dinosaur fossils she had discovered many years ago. During that trip, we also discovered what it felt like to be in an earthquake and we saw how big a blue whale was!

Our year 5 boys' football team were able to reach the final of the district competition and only narrowly lost out on winning the whole competition. They did themselves proud, having never played together before. Members of our year group also dazzled on the stage, as many of the key characters in the school musical 'The Lion King' were played by Year 5 members.

We also had success in academic competitions, as a team of 'Mathletes' reached the final of the 'Explore Learning Maths Competition'. This success is doubly special because they defeated teams of year 6s to reach the final. Even more impressive was a wonderful victory in the inaugural 'Manshead Debate Competition', our team were dominant, using impressive vocabulary and confidence.

Finally, our trip to Condover Hall was a fantastic opportunity to push ourselves to the limit and we supported each other to complete activities that the children didn't think they could do at the start of the week. The children were a credit to themselves!

Well done Year 5 on an excellent year.



## Year 6

What a fantastic year this has been for pupils in Year 6! There have been many highs and an abundance of enjoyable moments.

Every pupil has worked extremely hard this year to get themselves ready and prepared for their SATs - which showed how amazing they truly are. They have had to re-cap and learn numerous grammar terms, numeracy methods; spellings and make sure their arithmetic skills are quick. They performed creditably and demonstrated their maturity towards the testing process.

Throughout the year pupils have studied different topics and literature. They have embraced the subjects and trips, where they gained vital information and also made sure they enjoyed themselves. They studied *Harry Potter*, and with their parents produced their own wand, which represented their personality. At Harry Potter World pupils were able to deepen their knowledge about the books and turn into witches and wizards for the day to cast spells, ride broomsticks and drink butter beer.

In the spring term, Year 6 pupils were lucky enough to be visited in school by staff from Dell Farm and had the opportunity to act out battles that took place in the Viking and Saxon times. Dell Farm staff brought along weapons and armoury that would have been used in the battles; they allowed pupils to try the armour on and feel the weight and effect of it. It has been such a positive year and every pupil should be proud of what they have achieved.

The year 6 staff would like to wish them all luck for next year at their new schools and for the future.



An absolutely outstanding year at The Vale Academy; everyone involved in exciting learning and taking advantage of the wonderful experiences offered.

Term dates are available on the Key Dates list and website.

Time for a well earned rest ...

## Have a happy and safe holiday

