



# The Vale Academy

## Newsletter

### Spring 2 – Easter 2016

Dear Parents/Carers,

What a wonderful term this has been.

The school has 'buzzed' with energy and excitement throughout. The ever changing learning environment has provided many children with the opportunity to get involved in something different.

Sport at the academy has been at the forefront of these terms extra- curricular opportunities. We hosted a local football tournament with our neighbouring schools, St Christopher's and Hadrian. The children had the chance to take part in a Tae Kwon-do and we ended the term with a run for Sports Relief.

The Arts have excelled this term culminating with our magnificent performance of The Wizard of Oz. So many children and so much talent!

The achievement of our children continues to improve and thank you to those of you who continue to support your children through attendance at parents evening, open classroom event and the parent forum.

Attendance is the highest across the Shared Learning Trust and we continue to celebrate those who are in school every day and those who have significantly improved their attendance.

Our newly opened rewards room has proved very popular with the children. Each week staff members nominate children for achievement, effort and attendance to spend time in the rewards room.

We have a number of support staff leaving us today to explore new horizons. We would like to thank them all for their time at The Vale and wish them every success for the future.

Once again thank you so much for your continued support of all that we are trying to achieve here at The Vale Academy. It does make a difference.

Have a wonderful two weeks, whatever you are doing and we look forward to welcoming you back on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> April.

Happy Easter.

Bex Howe

### **Change of gate for KS2 children**

Now that we have very few KS3 children, we would like to trial moving the KS2 entrance to the main gate.

Staff who were supervising on the top gate will move down to this area and the children will have the opportunity to play in the hub in the mornings.

Staff will continue to walk their classes out at the end of the day so that you are able to have those informal conversations that are so valuable.

Please, as always, let us know your thoughts with regarding how this is working through either a) an informal conversation with any of the staff or b) by emailing the school directly.

### **News from The Vale Nursery**

**We will be opening on Friday afternoons from January 2016  
Our new hours will be 8:45 – 15:15 each day.**

**There is no change to our hourly rate of £4.00.**

In design technology, 5CT are looking at the theme of space; they have been researching, planning, designing and are making their t-shirts.

### **Design Technology with 5CT**



They have had the opportunity in lessons to practice their sewing techniques by hand and by using the sewing machines.

They are now busy painting, sewing, cutting and decorating their space theme t-shirts in lessons so they will be finished before Easter.

## Once upon a time...

The Vale Academy started to build an **outside reading area**. Mr Hooft and his helpers, Kai Reid and Luke Lynch, prepared the site where there will be logs and soft bark to sit on underneath the protective shade of the trees.



The Outdoor Area has been enhanced by planting more trees.

## Continuing with the theme of planting ...

### **Space Seeds have been planted at The Vale!**



Our pupils are preparing to become space biologists having embarked on a voyage of discovery by growing seeds that have been into space! The Vale Academy has just heard it will be taking part in the Royal Horticultural Society's Rocket Science Experiment.

The RHS Rocket Science project, in partnership with the UK Space Agency, is a UK wide experiment and a fun, interactive way to get students thinking about how plants might grow in space. It will help them understand the difficulties of living, growing and eating in space.

The Vale was one of up to 10,000 schools to receive a packet of 100 seeds from space, which they will grow alongside seeds that haven't been to space and measure the differences over seven weeks.

The seeds had been flown to the International Space Station (ISS) on Soyuz 44S where they spent several months in microgravity before returning to Earth in March 2016.

The pupils won't know which seed packet contains which seeds until all results have been collected by the RHS Campaign for School Gardening and analysed by professional biostatisticians.

Miss Knight, Head of Science says: "We are very excited to be taking part in Rocket Science. This experiment is a fantastic way of teaching our pupils to think more scientifically and share their findings with the whole academy."



More planting: we now have a fabulous new **Sensory Garden.**

The plants were chosen and planted with care for their variation in colour, scent and texture.

Helping Mr Hooft on this occasion was Phoebe Pender.



**Certificate of Achievement – Level One** from the **RHS School Gardening Awards** for the re-generation work we have been doing around the academy and the plans we have in place to become a forest school.



We have also received the **Bronze award for Excellence in sustainable travel** due to the high number of our students that bike and scoot to school





**Sharnie and the catering team** were awarded a **Hygiene Rating of 5** (again!) A great achievement!

Thank you to everybody who sent back the reply slips to The Student Support Centre. This has meant we have been rewarded with some dictionaries which will be an invaluable resource for the children.



**Our mini-beast area is now finished** and we enjoy discovering all sorts of bugs and insects making their home in our community.

The Vale Academy spent a fantastic afternoon exploring different aspects of Science during our **Outdoor Science Enrichment**, in preparation for British Science Week. Pupils were very excited to take their learning outside, and each class utilised our outdoor space very well.

EYFS became explorers and searched for natural materials during their Nature Hunt. Year 1 planted seeds for their own outdoor environment. Year 2 investigated friction – Barney Bear was brave enough to zoom down a zip-line, using different materials! They also investigated how to calculate the age of trees, using their mathematical skills as well as working scientifically!

LKS2 used microscopes to explore plants and mini-beasts on a larger scale. They were very interested to see how a plant looks when it has been magnified!

UKS2 used their artistic skills to study plants under the microscope and sketch them in detail. There were some beautiful sketches- we definitely have some budding artists as well as Super Scientists!

KS3 pupils even made rockets to set off in the playground!

Pupils across the Academy had a wonderful time. It was fantastic to see them work scientifically outside of the classroom, and see that Science is in fact everywhere around us!



**World Book Day** was, as ever, a resounding success with everyone (including the staff) dressing as a character from a book. A great effort from everybody involved in making the day another fun day for learning.

Get Caught Reading was an opportunity for the children to read as much as they could which resulted in house points!



**The Wizard of Oz** was performed during the last week of term following weeks of rehearsals involving children from Year 1 to KS3.

A huge effort from everybody involved resulted in magnificent performances from our talented children.

The whole school worked together with so much enthusiasm creating a fantastic buzz this whole term. We are extremely proud of everyone who took part.

We would also like to thank the staff who gave up hours of their free time and without whom this performance would never have taken place.

**Parking**

We would like to remind you the car park is for staff use only between the hours of 7.00am-4.00pm

Thank you for respecting this space.

**Have a very happy Easter break.**