



# Connor Downs Academy

Summer 2019



# A message from Mrs Costello

I hope you enjoy reading this term's newsletter and finding out what we have been doing in this busy term. I will summarise the highlights and some staffing news below.

Our children have, once again, made us exceptionally proud. This year, our children out-performed children nationally in every key stage and in every measure: reading writing and mathematics in both key stage 1 and key stage 2, phonics and in the Reception EYFS profile. Children made excellent progress from their starting points, including our children with special educational needs and those who receive the pupil premium funding. However, we are just as proud of the way they have grown this year in resilience, confidence and independence. We continue to have consistently positive comments from visitors regarding their manners and behaviour. They make us all proud, and we thank you as parents for all you do to make our jobs easier. We can get straight on with teaching and learning every day, because we have children who behave well and have positive, nurturing relationships with each other and with adults.

We have so much to celebrate this year as an academy. Connor Downs was successful in our bid to achieve the Trauma and Mentally Healthy School Award. Not only that, but we were the fifth academy in the UK to receive this award. The level of good practice was such that we are now becoming a lead practitioner school for others new to the trauma informed way of working and being. Also, Mr Masters and his Early Years team were awarded the gold charter mark for the standards of care and education in our Reception class. Mr Masters has successfully passed his NQT year and is having an amazing impact on the development of our Reception children. We have been successful with many initiatives to benefit our children thanks to the 'Friends' who work incredibly hard to raise money for us. A huge thanks to our 'Friends' from us all.

Sadly, this term we say goodbye to some familiar faces. Mrs Palmer is retiring after being our SENDCo for 6 years and a learning support teacher for many years prior to this. We will all miss her steadfast support and wise words. Most of all, we will miss her as our role model of inclusivity and professionalism. Mrs Bartaby leaves us to join Nansledon, Aspire's new free school in Newquay. Mrs Bartaby has been our Assistant Headteacher since September 2013 and I also worked alongside her for many years in County Durham, prior to us both moving to Cornwall in 2012 -2013. Mrs Bartaby has made a huge impact on the lives of children in Connor Downs Academy, especially in enabling the youngest children to be keen and able readers. As well as leading key stage 1, she has been the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage, supporting Miss Pollard and Mr Masters, and has successfully mentored newly qualified teachers and teacher trainees. Nansledon are fortunate to have appointed Mrs Bartaby, but we will all miss her. We also say 'au revoir' to Miss Adler who is leaving us to train to be a teacher with Aspire. However, Miss Adler will return to our academy later next year for part of her training. We wish you every success Miss Adler.

Last, but certainly not least, we wish our Year 6 children every success in their new schools. They have all been a pure joy to watch as they have developed into responsible young people. It was wonderful to see them all performing together in 'Cinderella Rockerfella', demonstrating the strong bonds of friendship they have made over the years. This Year 6 class was my first new Reception class, as Headteacher of Connor Downs in September 2012, and I have watched them grow and mature through the school with pride. Throughout the years, we have had many children join this class, each bringing something unique to the academy and becoming part of the family very quickly.

So, as we reach the end of another academic year, on behalf of the staff at Connor Downs Academy, I would like to wish you all a very happy summer holiday.

Susan Costello

Aspire Director

Strategic Partner for Connor Downs Academy



# English

The overarching aim for English in the National Curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment (National Curriculum 2014). Our academy aims to encourage our children to develop a passion for reading through regular exposure to rich vocabulary through engaging class texts, recommending books to others and by encouraging as many children as possible to take part in the 'Summer Reading Challenge' in association with our local library.

Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction (National Curriculum 2014). Reading comprehension activities have continued to take place twice a week in all classes from 1-6. Children in key stage 1 have been inspired by a range of wonderful authors. In Year 1 the children have thoroughly enjoyed reading Roald Dahl and David Walliams. The children focussed on characters from the stories, looking at their personalities and appearances. Children in Year 2 have been inspired when reading biographies. They have discovered that a biography is a factual account of a person's life written in chronological order. The children read a biography of Queen Victoria and thought about what they noticed (time order, dates, 3rd person). Children in key stage 1 have shown fantastic understanding of the books they have read, when answering questions from various reading comprehension activities. Through the excitement of reading in key stage 1, the children continually discover and read new words, adding words to their own word banks, writing and speech.

Where possible in key stage 2, these have been linked to class topics, with Year 3 learning about the history of Roman roads in Britain; Year 4 completing activities linked to the Amazon Rainforest; Year 5 answering comprehension questions linked to their class book by Lemony Snicket; and Year 6 answering questions associated with the circulatory system and the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech (National Curriculum 2014).

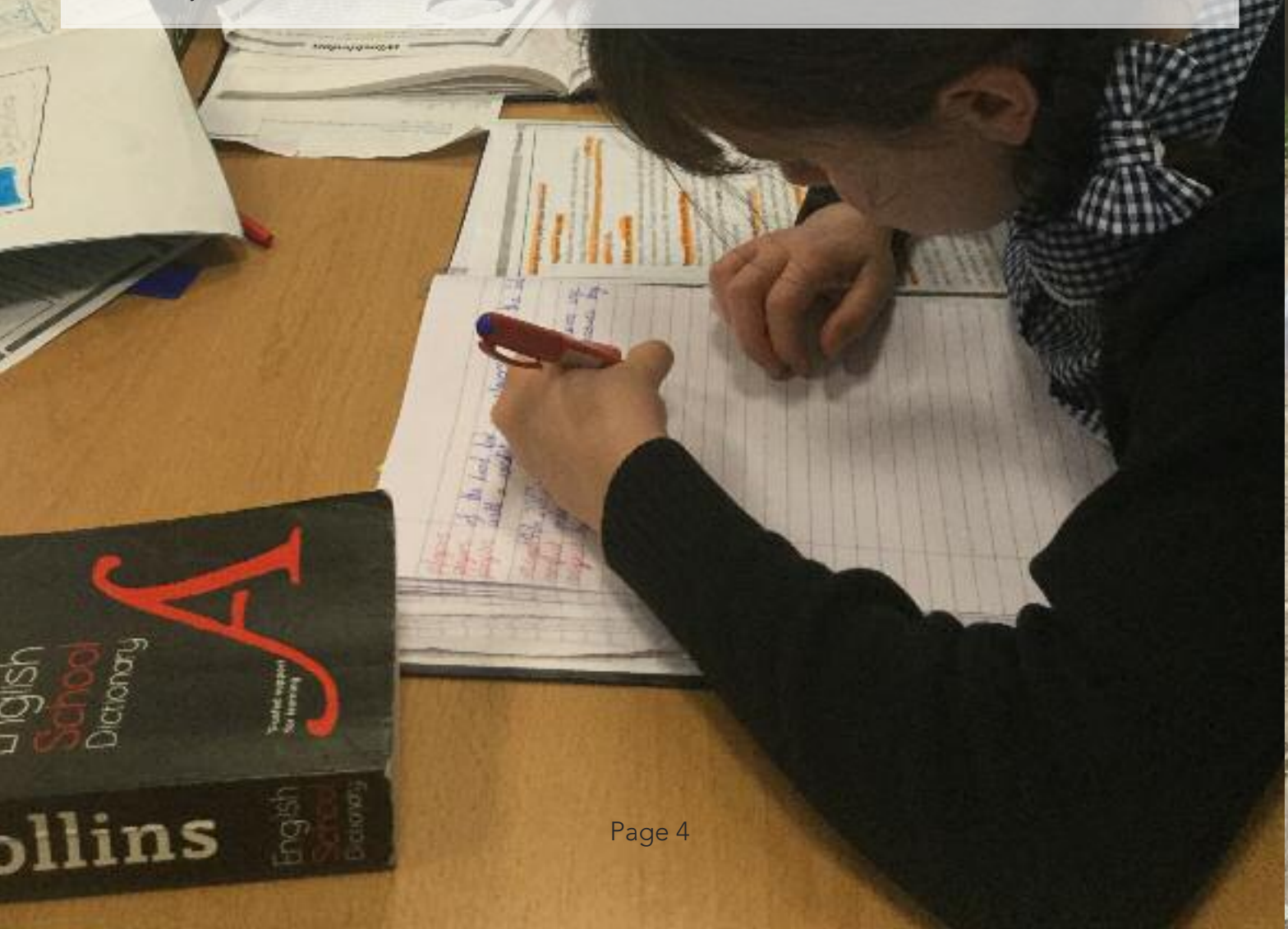
At Connor Downs Academy, we aim for children to be independent writers. We encourage them to write clearly and



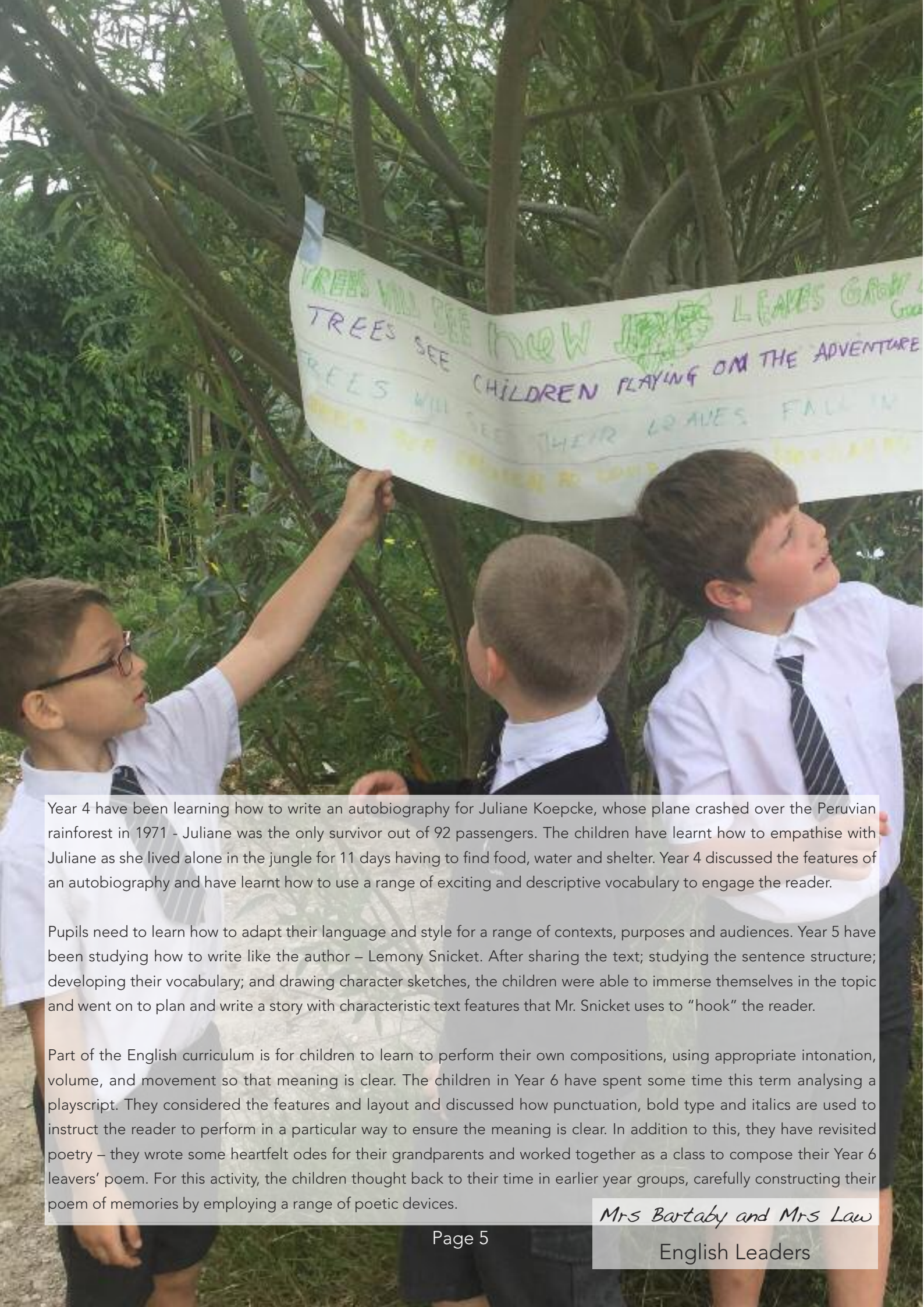
with confidence in any given genre. We teach them to use punctuation and grammar accurately, to be able to proofread their own work and make amendments and improvements. Our system of pen licences encourages children to place value on the development of correct letter formation and neatly presented handwriting. We give children a wide range of opportunities in which to develop their writing skills and display work of which they are proud. Through our English curriculum, we aim to nurture in the children a love of literature and language, and the confidence to continue reading and writing throughout their lives.

Children in key stage 1 have thoroughly enjoyed their exciting topics in class and have produced some fantastic writing as a result of this. In Year 1 the classroom turned into deep space. The children enjoyed writing facts and information about planets, astronauts, space travel and the International Space Station. The children all wrote an exciting space story, thinking carefully about a beginning, middle and end to the story. Children were using exciting words and phrases to capture the reader. Through the fairy tale Cinderella, children in Year 2 have written invitations to a ball and to their class street party. The children began to write biographies of Queen Elizabeth II. As part of their challenge, pupils wrote one or more 'Did you know?' questions and answers to enhance their biographies. This enabled them to demonstrate their reflective learning by thinking back to our SPAG(spelling, punctuation and grammar) focus on question marks. In addition to invitation writing the children created a variety of written items in preparation for the street party. The children made posters to decorate the outdoor area. They wrote menus for the party tea and prepared recitals of their biographies.

Throughout key stage 2, the children continue to be immersed in rich texts to inspire their writing. There has also been a focus on performance. In Year 3, the children wrote their own imaginative Kennings poems about their grandparents, using nouns and verbs effectively to add humour to their poetry. It was great to hear the grandparents laugh and applaud as the children read them aloud with super expression. In addition, Year 3 enjoyed the annual Aspire visit to the Minack Theatre, which was an exciting opportunity for the children to see an open-air theatre performance. Fortunately, their position in the theatre gave them an insight into actors behind the stage and how they performed as different characters in 'Ali Baba and The Forty Thieves'.







Year 4 have been learning how to write an autobiography for Juliane Koepcke, whose plane crashed over the Peruvian rainforest in 1971 - Juliane was the only survivor out of 92 passengers. The children have learnt how to empathise with Juliane as she lived alone in the jungle for 11 days having to find food, water and shelter. Year 4 discussed the features of an autobiography and have learnt how to use a range of exciting and descriptive vocabulary to engage the reader.

Pupils need to learn how to adapt their language and style for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. Year 5 have been studying how to write like the author – Lemony Snicket. After sharing the text; studying the sentence structure; developing their vocabulary; and drawing character sketches, the children were able to immerse themselves in the topic and went on to plan and write a story with characteristic text features that Mr. Snicket uses to “hook” the reader.

Part of the English curriculum is for children to learn to perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume, and movement so that meaning is clear. The children in Year 6 have spent some time this term analysing a playscript. They considered the features and layout and discussed how punctuation, bold type and italics are used to instruct the reader to perform in a particular way to ensure the meaning is clear. In addition to this, they have revisited poetry – they wrote some heartfelt odes for their grandparents and worked together as a class to compose their Year 6 leavers’ poem. For this activity, the children thought back to their time in earlier year groups, carefully constructing their poem of memories by employing a range of poetic devices.

*Mrs Bartaby and Mrs Law*



# Maths

## Maths statement of intent

*For every child to develop a sound understanding of maths, equipping them with the skills of calculation, reasoning and problem solving that they need in life.*

***Our motto for teaching maths is:  
Teach, Learn, Challenge, Understand.***

This reminds us that the maths journey through fluency, reasoning and problem solving is clearly aimed at every child having a deep understanding of each mathematical concept.

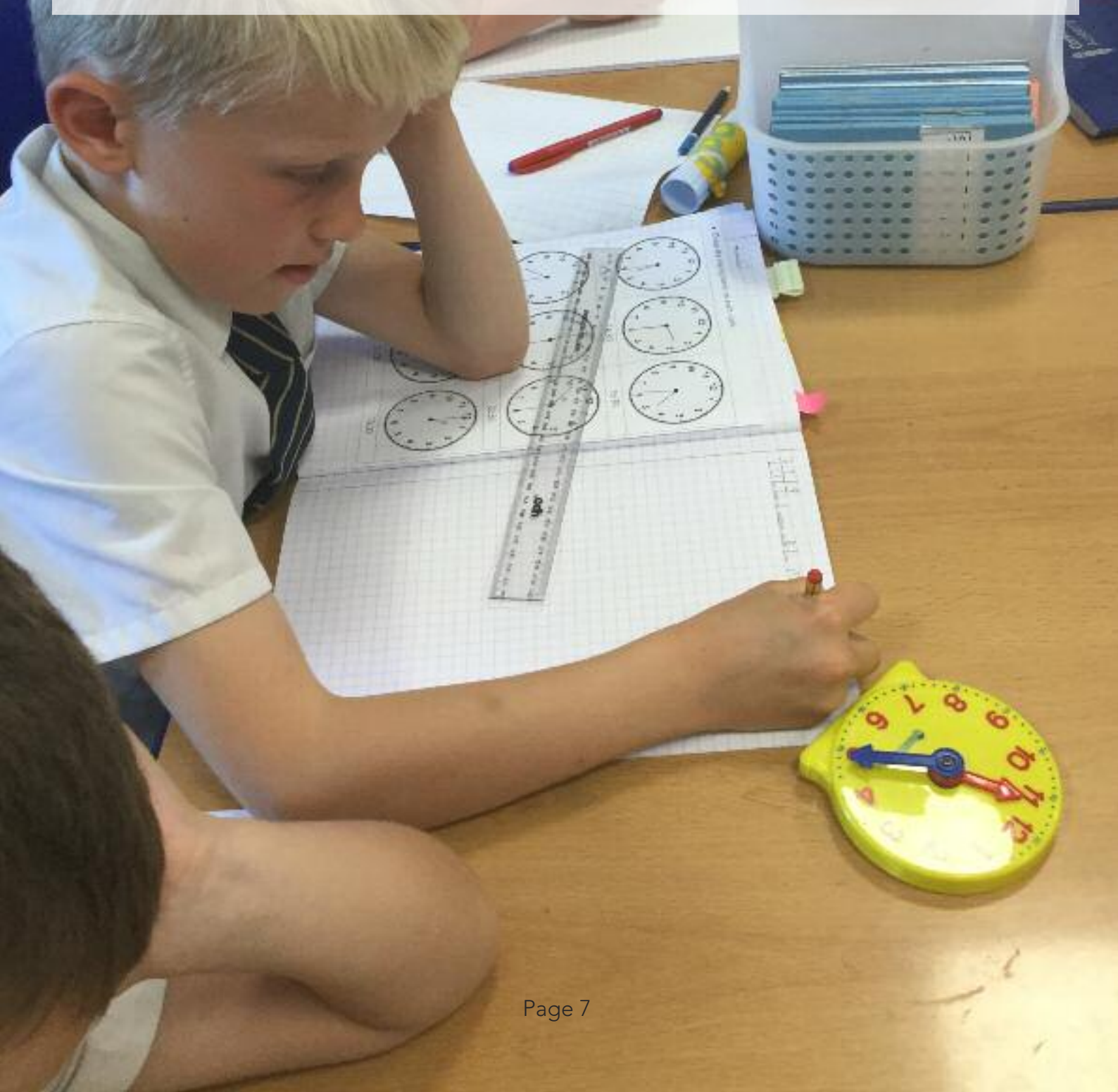
At Connor Downs, we use the White Rose planning framework which ensures that children master objectives in their year group before moving on. A vital part of maths is a secure understanding of multiplication tables. In Year 1, children have shown fantastic progress when taking part in their club 11, 22, 33 and 44 tests each week. Our children are becoming more confident with their 2, 5 and 10 multiplication tables. A key strategy for learning their tables has been through songs with actions. The children are now confident enough to use their knowledge of times tables in a range of word problems. This understanding will prepare the children for their Multiplication Tables Check (MTC) in Year 4.



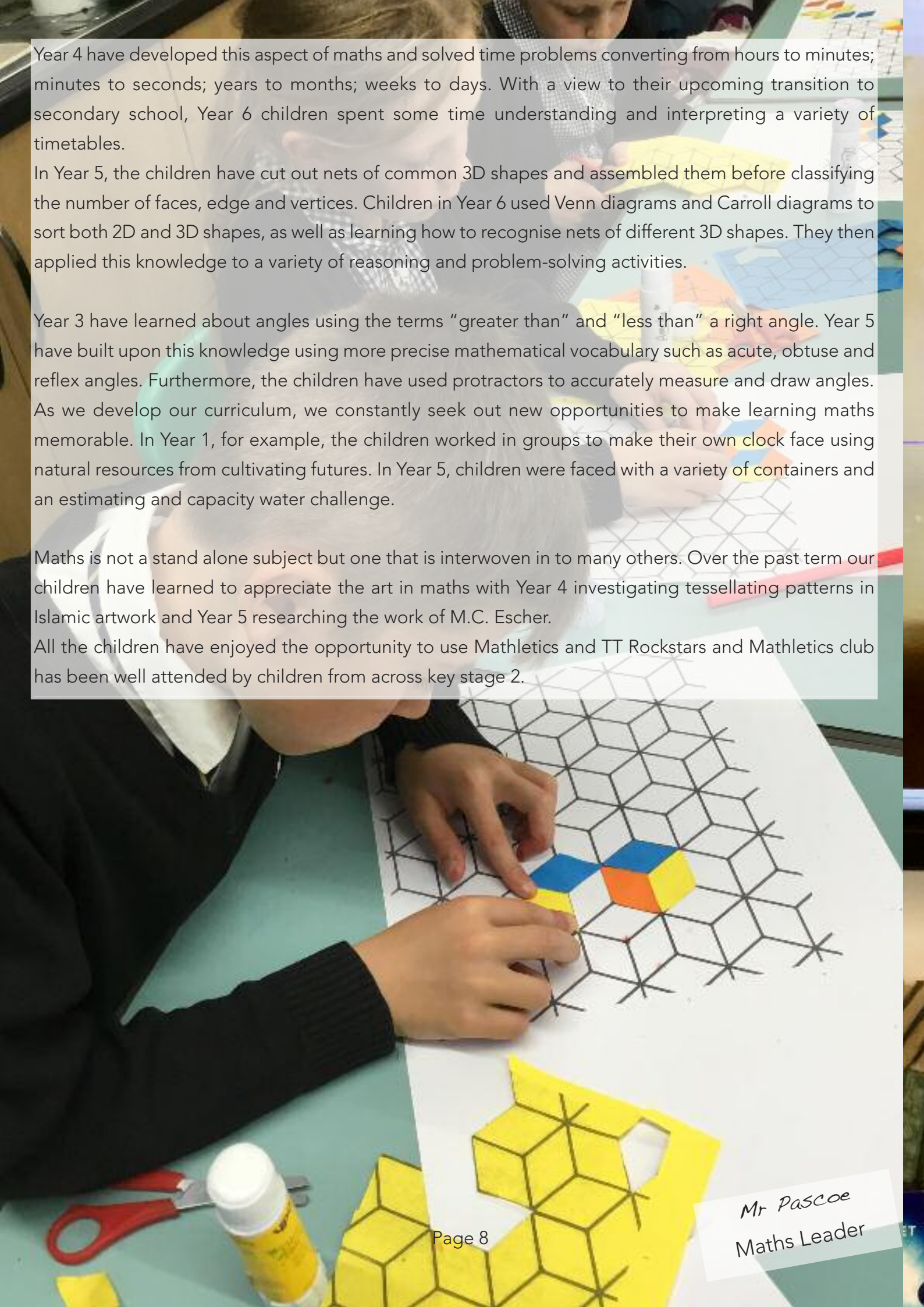


Children have been using TT Rockstars and daily maths starters to enhance their rapid recall. This assessment was administered using the computer. The children were given 25 times tables questions – answering each question within 6 seconds. Everyone made excellent progress in this area throughout the year and we are very proud of their results.

Time has been another significant topic this term. Year 2 have been learning to tell the time. Children read and drew the time to quarter to and quarter past and used their knowledge of fractions and turns to identify quarter past and quarter to. They showed good recognition of the movement of the hour hand and minute hand. They secured their fluency and extended their reasoning skills, explaining their learning in detail and solved problems. (National Curriculum maths Year 2; to compare and sequence intervals of time, tell and write the time to five minutes, including quarter past/to the hour and draw the hands on a clock face to show these times, know the number of minutes in an hour and the number of hours in a day). In Year 3, our children have built upon this foundation and have used analogue and digital clocks to tell the time – writing the times to the nearest minute on both the 12 and 24-hour clock.





A background image showing children in a classroom setting. They are working on a project involving tessellations. One child is using a glue stick to attach a yellow paper shape to a larger sheet of paper that has a black and white tessellation pattern. Another child is visible in the background, also working on a similar project. The children are wearing school uniforms. The overall scene is a busy classroom environment focused on a hands-on learning activity.

Year 4 have developed this aspect of maths and solved time problems converting from hours to minutes; minutes to seconds; years to months; weeks to days. With a view to their upcoming transition to secondary school, Year 6 children spent some time understanding and interpreting a variety of timetables.

In Year 5, the children have cut out nets of common 3D shapes and assembled them before classifying the number of faces, edge and vertices. Children in Year 6 used Venn diagrams and Carroll diagrams to sort both 2D and 3D shapes, as well as learning how to recognise nets of different 3D shapes. They then applied this knowledge to a variety of reasoning and problem-solving activities.

Year 3 have learned about angles using the terms "greater than" and "less than" a right angle. Year 5 have built upon this knowledge using more precise mathematical vocabulary such as acute, obtuse and reflex angles. Furthermore, the children have used protractors to accurately measure and draw angles. As we develop our curriculum, we constantly seek out new opportunities to make learning maths memorable. In Year 1, for example, the children worked in groups to make their own clock face using natural resources from cultivating futures. In Year 5, children were faced with a variety of containers and an estimating and capacity water challenge.

Maths is not a stand alone subject but one that is interwoven in to many others. Over the past term our children have learned to appreciate the art in maths with Year 4 investigating tessellating patterns in Islamic artwork and Year 5 researching the work of M.C. Escher.

All the children have enjoyed the opportunity to use Mathletics and TT Rockstars and Mathletics club has been well attended by children from across key stage 2.



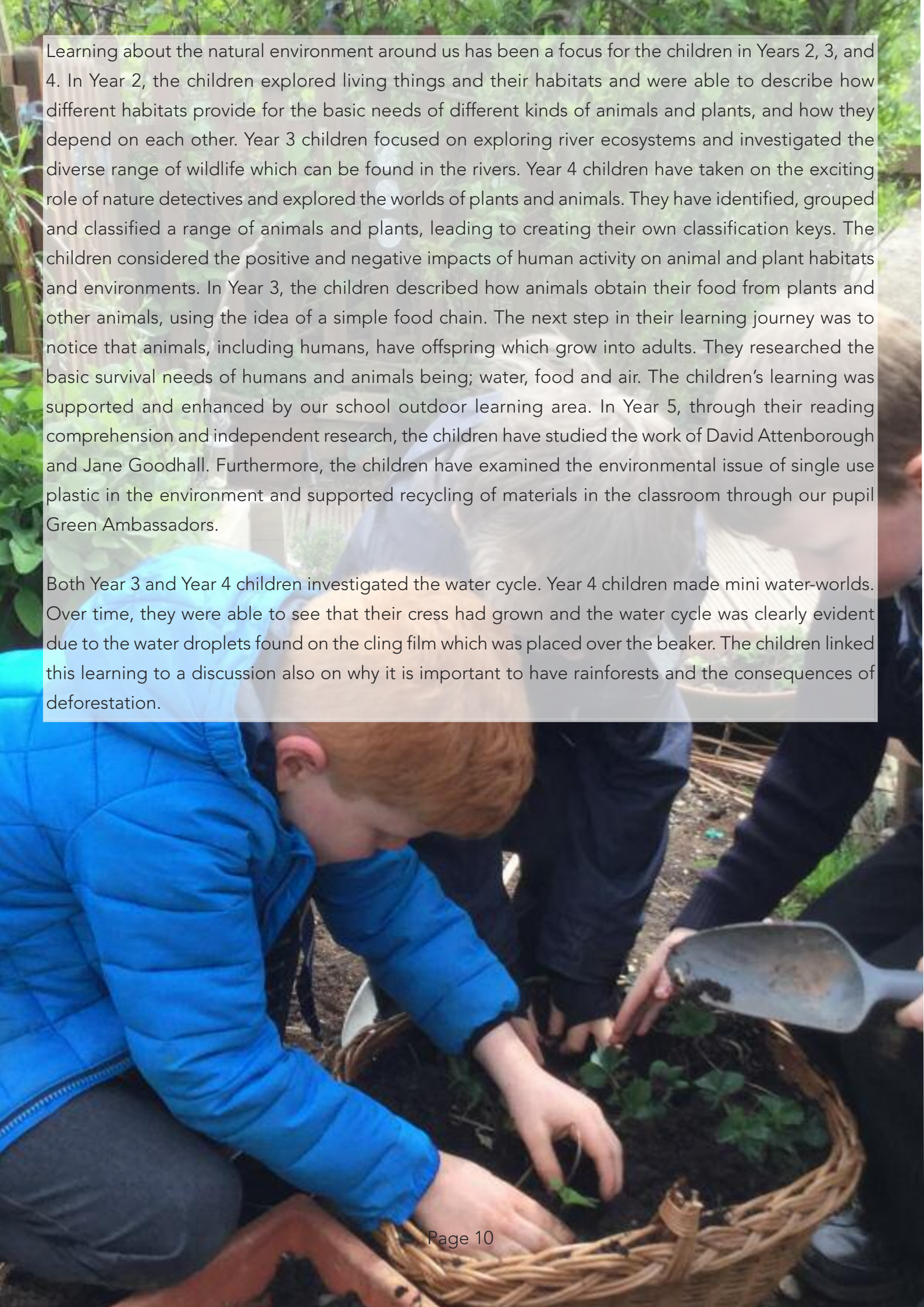


## Science

This term, the children have been busy investigating the scientific world around them, both in the classroom, the outdoor learning environment and during exciting visits to secondary school laboratories.

The children from Year 1 and Year 3 have been exploring space with Year 1 focusing on the solar system and Year 3 investigating the impact of earth spinning on its axis, giving us day and night. Detailed investigations have taken place to measure the length of shadows throughout the day as the earth spins. The important role of the sun has been covered with children also understanding the need to be aware of sun safety. They were fascinated to observe the colourful display when splitting light through a prism. Year 1 children enjoyed researching information about the British Astronaut Tim Peake and his exciting six months spent working in space aboard the International Space Station (ISS). Of course, any space topic would not be complete without learning about the first man on the moon; Neil Armstrong.



A background image showing children in a garden. In the foreground, a child in a blue jacket is crouching and planting small green seedlings into a large, shallow wicker basket filled with dark soil. Another child in a dark jacket is standing nearby, holding a grey plastic shovel. The garden has various plants and a wooden fence in the background.

Learning about the natural environment around us has been a focus for the children in Years 2, 3, and 4. In Year 2, the children explored living things and their habitats and were able to describe how different habitats provide for the basic needs of different kinds of animals and plants, and how they depend on each other. Year 3 children focused on exploring river ecosystems and investigated the diverse range of wildlife which can be found in the rivers. Year 4 children have taken on the exciting role of nature detectives and explored the worlds of plants and animals. They have identified, grouped and classified a range of animals and plants, leading to creating their own classification keys. The children considered the positive and negative impacts of human activity on animal and plant habitats and environments. In Year 3, the children described how animals obtain their food from plants and other animals, using the idea of a simple food chain. The next step in their learning journey was to notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults. They researched the basic survival needs of humans and animals being; water, food and air. The children's learning was supported and enhanced by our school outdoor learning area. In Year 5, through their reading comprehension and independent research, the children have studied the work of David Attenborough and Jane Goodhall. Furthermore, the children have examined the environmental issue of single use plastic in the environment and supported recycling of materials in the classroom through our pupil Green Ambassadors.

Both Year 3 and Year 4 children investigated the water cycle. Year 4 children made mini water-worlds. Over time, they were able to see that their cress had grown and the water cycle was clearly evident due to the water droplets found on the cling film which was placed over the beaker. The children linked this learning to a discussion also on why it is important to have rainforests and the consequences of deforestation.



Year 4 and 5 children investigated states of matter. In Year 4, the children carried out an experiment using ice balloons. In small groups, they added either cold water, warm water, sugar or salt to see which was the most effective at melting the ice. Throughout the experiment, they used scientific vocabulary to describe their observations, offering thoughtful reasons to explain what was happening to the ice. They discussed reversible and irreversible changes and could explain why salt is the best substance to use when the roads are icy. In Year 5, the children have studied the topic 'No way back'. They relished the opportunity to experiment in a scientific laboratory as they explored reversible and irreversible change. They learned about how to carry out experiments safely and to observe the changes carefully.


### Station 8

Year 6 children have held a special focus on human biology this term, examining the function of the circulatory system. To enhance their learning, a real ox's heart was brought into school for the children to observe. They were able to locate the four chambers of the heart. Later, they wrote an explanation text, with a detailed, labelled diagram, to demonstrate their understanding. As well as learning about the different blood vessels and where blood comes from, the children also carried out an investigation involving pulse rates. After recording their resting pulse rates, they exercised vigorously for five minutes; they then checked their pulse rates at regular intervals, recording their findings in a table to measure how long they took to return to normal. This information was then presented in the form of a line graph.



Mrs Eddy  
Science Leader





## Art and Design

Art and design is a subject that never fails to impress, whether you are a budding artist or established master. It is our aim at Connor Downs to encourage and inspire children to push beyond their comfort areas when creating their own master pieces.

The natural world has always been an inspiration to artists through the ages and is no less so for our children. In Year 3' the children found stimulation looking at the flow of rivers and waterfalls. They explored ways of showing the vivid movement of the water down rapids and waterfalls. Year 1 and Year 4 children love animals and have been sketching and drawing a great variety of these, including some found in the wild reaches of the Amazonian rain forest. In these sketches they learned how to create detail using different shading techniques to show features of the head, fur and feathers.

Acting and performance often includes great art and design. Our Year 2 children have been inspired by summer carnivals, particularly the astounding costumes on display. The children learned to draw dancing carnival figures showing light and shade. They learned about the sgraffito technique (a form of decoration made by scratching through a surface to reveal a lower layer of a contrasting colour) and used it to create a busy carnival scene. Year 3 have also been looking at art and performance in their Shadow Dancers topic. The children chose well known traditional tails, considered the characters and their attributes. They then developed these into a final image for their silhouette shadow puppet.

In many cultures there is a theatre in the rituals surrounding death. Year 5 studied the Maya. They have created our own Maya death masks made from 'jade' to help Pakal the Great journey into the afterlife. The children showed great determination and patience as they built up the layers of papier mâché to create the base of the mask before decorating the mask with torn shiny paper.



Art is a real career choice for many, with Cornwall having a proud history of artists. Year 6 were joined by local artist, Jamie Law who shared a collection of his artwork with the children and talking about his artistic journey. He then worked with them to help them to create texture within their own paintings. After sketching their ideas in pencil, the children added sand, string and PVA glue to coloured paint. Stiff card and painting tools were added to create texture within their paintings.

Art is far more than just drawing and painting. Year 2 have analysed Art in history looking at the famous portraits of Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth II. They discussed lines and style used by the artists before creating their own portrait of Queen Elizabeth. The children took a step further using collage techniques to make a 3-dimensional embellished frame for their portraits. As a result, some striking images were created which the Queen herself would have been pleased with. In Year 1, there were excited children learning about the Solar System and they used a range of materials to make models thinking of the size and colour of each planet. The children learned how to use papier mache to make 3 dimensional planets.

All of our classes link their art to the topics that they are learning about. Some notable examples this term include Year 5, who have studied tessellation and its links to maths. The children learned about the life and work of M.C. Escher and how he developed his world-famous techniques for tessellation. Year 6 who looked at the Jewish religion was the stimulus for the children as they designed matzah covers linked to their RE work. They made their designs as colourful as possible and thought carefully about the materials they would need to make them, giving reasons for their choices. Finally, Year 3 Inspired and excited by their class reading book: Babe the Sheep pig, drew a pencil sketch of Babe. First the children analysed the drawings of Van Gogh then practiced marks in his style. They transferred their skills to their own sketch of Babe including the background and foreground.





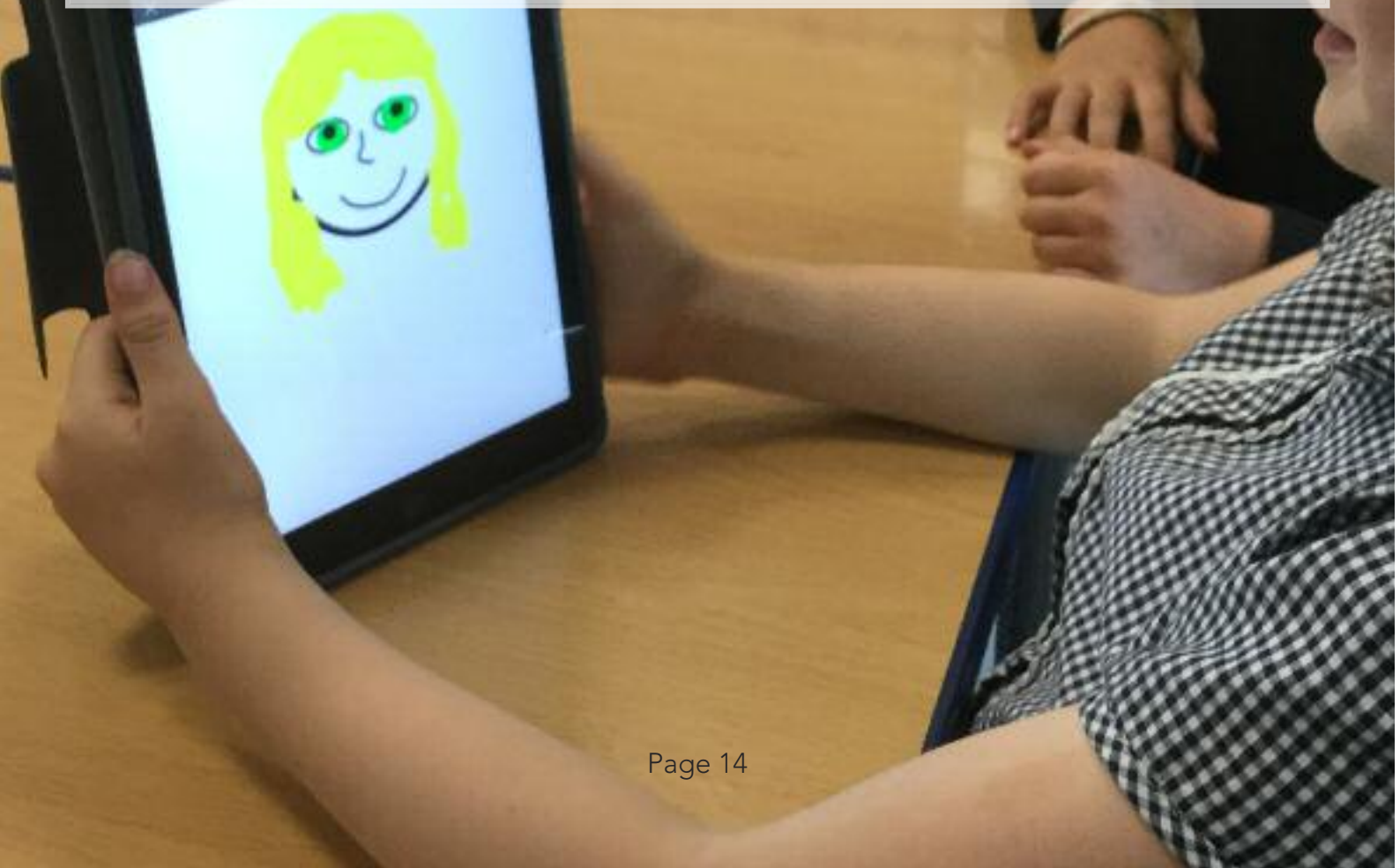
# Computing

With our children being born into a digital world where they are likely to have been interacting with digital devices from the earliest of ages, it could be asked why computing is taught at all. After all, surely all children are competent users of the technology? It is an essential role of schools to hone the existing skills that children have, allowing them to develop and flourish, just as we do for children learning to write, draw or perform mathematical operations. As a core part of our teaching we do not expect children to create documents, spreadsheets and code just to create documents, spreadsheets. Instead, we embolden them to use their computing skills to create solve problems, create designs and develop models that are supported by their own experiences.

With the online world being so open to all, it is essential that children learn the message of staying safe. Both Year 3 and Year 5 have held conversations about different social media platforms that the children have been considering using. Through these children have become better informed as to the benefits and risks that they pose. It is not just the world of social media where there are risks. All classes support children to perform safe searches when finding information. Year 4 spent time this term working on ways to report things that the children found uncomfortable.

It is always great for children to be able to access on line resources to research about their class topics. In Year 1, the children have enjoyed using the iPads each week. They have been using google maps to locate different parts of the world, during our topics 'Animals around the world'. The children have also used the internet to research information during our Space topic. They researched facts and information about the solar system, The International Space Station and various astronauts. Year 5 have used the Chromebooks to research our key topics e.g. the Maya civilisation. The children have used Google Earth to compare and contrast locations and research the areas of our educational visits. In Year 2, we have explored videos of both Queen Victoria's and Queen Elizabeth's diamond jubilee.

An essential skill in the world today is being able to be discerning when evaluating digital content. Year 6 learnt about different inputs and outputs within the computing equipment they use, both inside and outside of school. Within this, they considered how search results are ranked. The children had to reflect on whether the information they had retrieved from





the search engine was useful, interesting and accurate. They also had to think about who had written the information they had found and whether they might be biased, as well as checking that the information was in date.

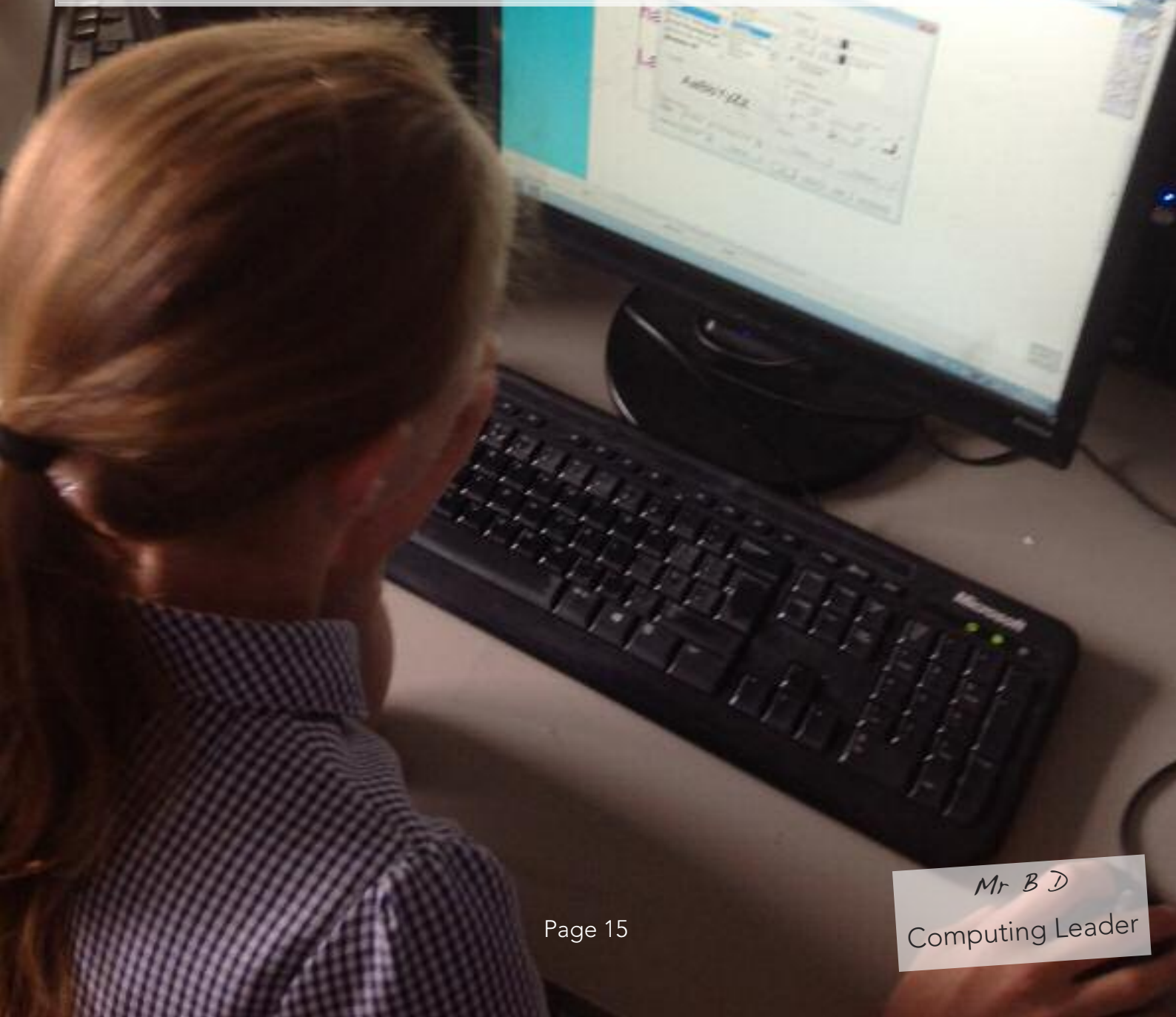
Computers can be used in astoundingly creative ways. Our Year 2 children have been experience taking videos. They used cameras to document their street party and developed a narration similar to what they have discovered in the jubilee videos they had previously viewed online. The children showed effective participation and team work throughout.

At the next stage the children incorporate some basic video editing, combining clips to tell a story of our street party. In preparation for this the children practiced the following skills:

- Uploading video and audio to a computer
- Combining video and audio
- Adding transitions
- Adding text

In Year 3, our children have been creating artwork and music with iPads. They have demonstrated their considerable abilities in these areas through the work that they have created. In Year 5, the children have taken photographs of our activities and the class have discussed how we can use these images responsibly to promote our school using social media.

Programming remains an important part of the computing world. In Year 4, the children have also been learning how to programme using 'Scratch'. Their task was to create an Amazon themed program and code each sprite to move, turn around and speak.

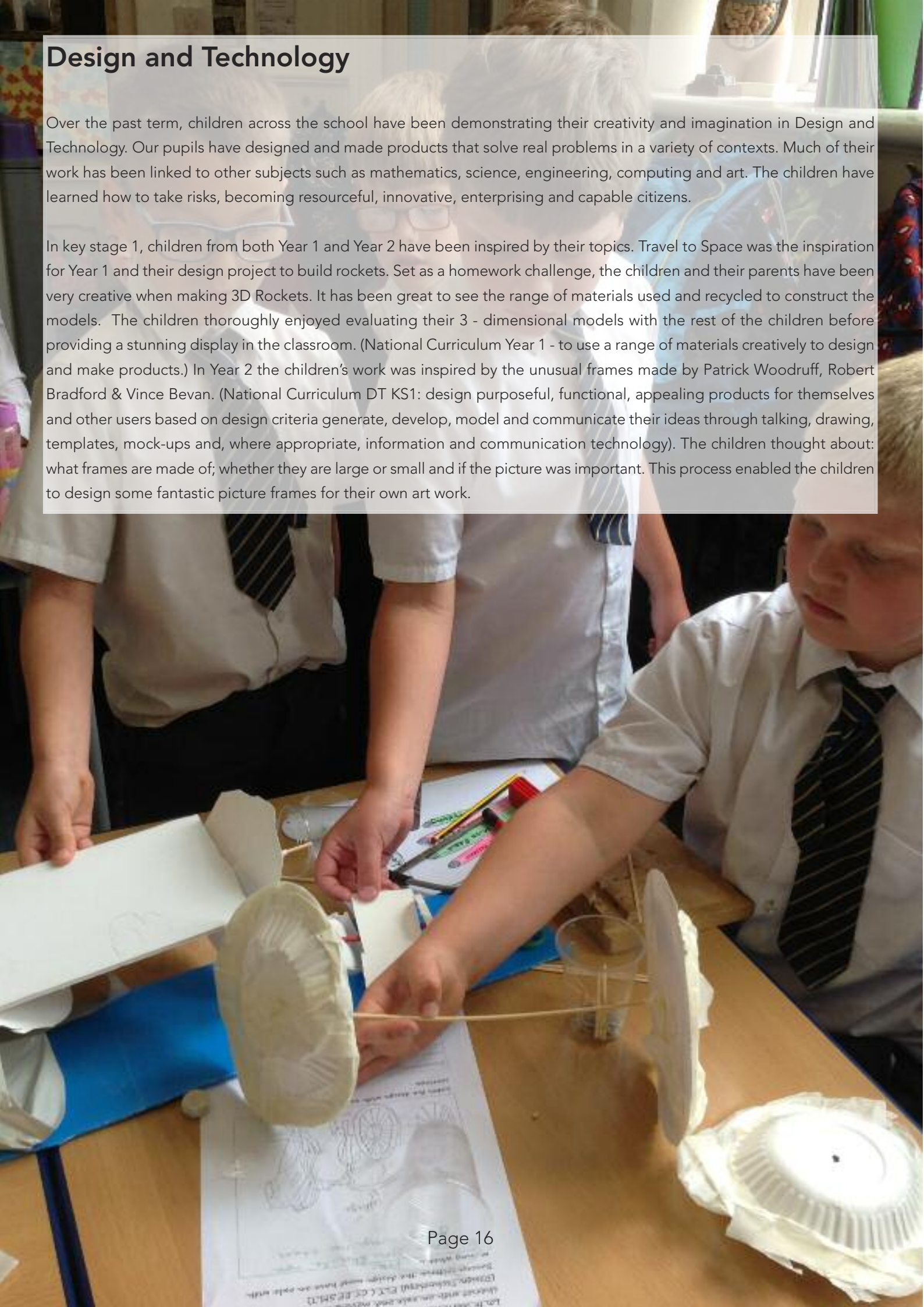




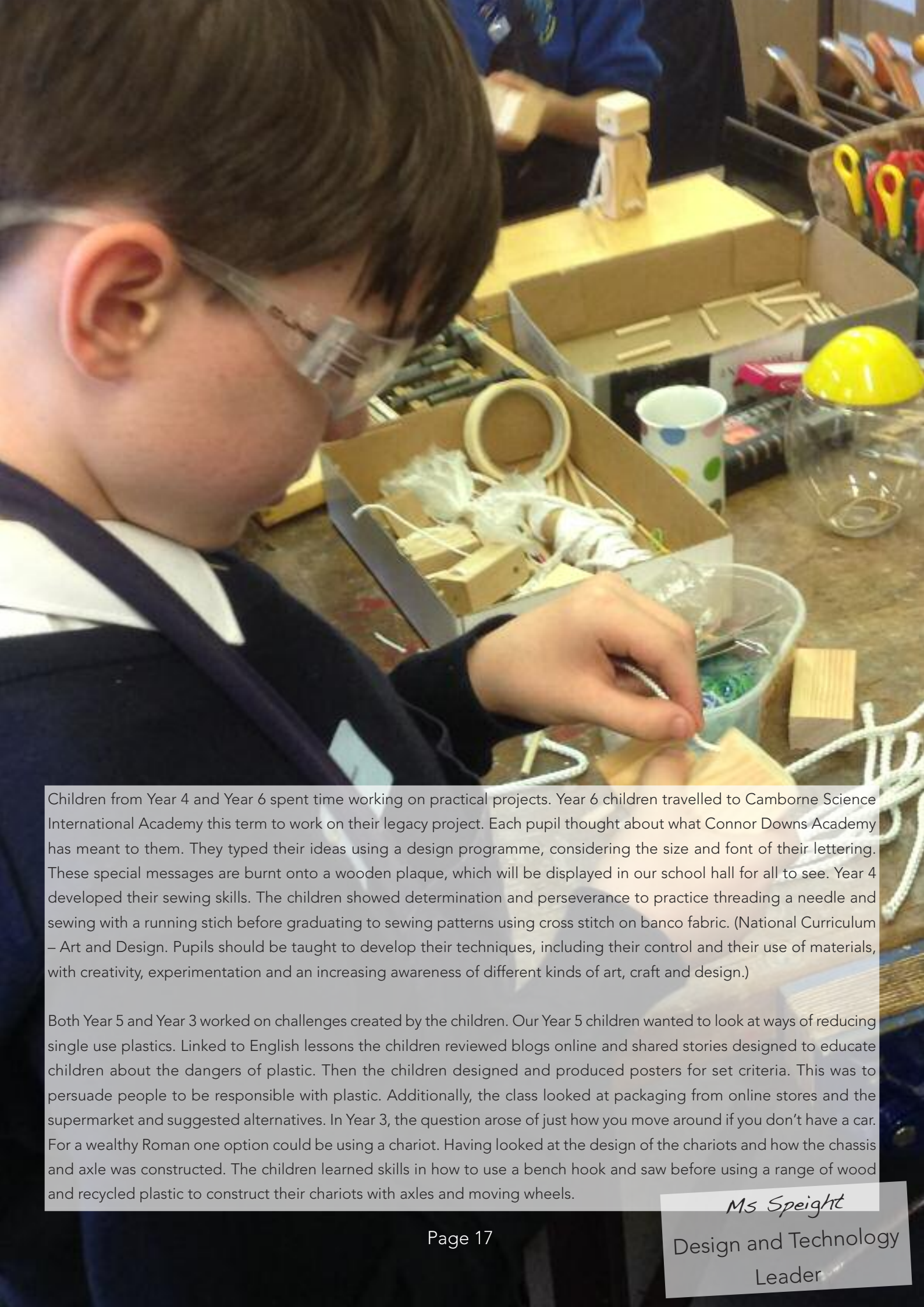
## Design and Technology

Over the past term, children across the school have been demonstrating their creativity and imagination in Design and Technology. Our pupils have designed and made products that solve real problems in a variety of contexts. Much of their work has been linked to other subjects such as mathematics, science, engineering, computing and art. The children have learned how to take risks, becoming resourceful, innovative, enterprising and capable citizens.

In key stage 1, children from both Year 1 and Year 2 have been inspired by their topics. Travel to Space was the inspiration for Year 1 and their design project to build rockets. Set as a homework challenge, the children and their parents have been very creative when making 3D Rockets. It has been great to see the range of materials used and recycled to construct the models. The children thoroughly enjoyed evaluating their 3 - dimensional models with the rest of the children before providing a stunning display in the classroom. (National Curriculum Year 1 - to use a range of materials creatively to design and make products.) In Year 2 the children's work was inspired by the unusual frames made by Patrick Woodruff, Robert Bradford & Vince Bevan. (National Curriculum DT KS1: design purposeful, functional, appealing products for themselves and other users based on design criteria generate, develop, model and communicate their ideas through talking, drawing, templates, mock-ups and, where appropriate, information and communication technology). The children thought about: what frames are made of; whether they are large or small and if the picture was important. This process enabled the children to design some fantastic picture frames for their own art work.







Children from Year 4 and Year 6 spent time working on practical projects. Year 6 children travelled to Camborne Science International Academy this term to work on their legacy project. Each pupil thought about what Connor Downs Academy has meant to them. They typed their ideas using a design programme, considering the size and font of their lettering. These special messages are burnt onto a wooden plaque, which will be displayed in our school hall for all to see. Year 4 developed their sewing skills. The children showed determination and perseverance to practice threading a needle and sewing with a running stitch before graduating to sewing patterns using cross stitch on banco fabric. (National Curriculum – Art and Design. Pupils should be taught to develop their techniques, including their control and their use of materials, with creativity, experimentation and an increasing awareness of different kinds of art, craft and design.)

Both Year 5 and Year 3 worked on challenges created by the children. Our Year 5 children wanted to look at ways of reducing single use plastics. Linked to English lessons the children reviewed blogs online and shared stories designed to educate children about the dangers of plastic. Then the children designed and produced posters for set criteria. This was to persuade people to be responsible with plastic. Additionally, the class looked at packaging from online stores and the supermarket and suggested alternatives. In Year 3, the question arose of just how you move around if you don't have a car. For a wealthy Roman one option could be using a chariot. Having looked at the design of the chariots and how the chassis and axle was constructed. The children learned skills in how to use a bench hook and saw before using a range of wood and recycled plastic to construct their chariots with axles and moving wheels.

*Ms Speight*

Design and Technology  
Leader



# Geography

The aim of geography at Connor Downs Academy is to give the children a wider perspective on their world and to provide the beginnings of an understanding of the human situation.

Alongside important geographical knowledge of people, places and events, children are encouraged to develop transferable skills they can use across the curriculum and in later life, such as perceptive questions, thinking critically and weighing evidence.

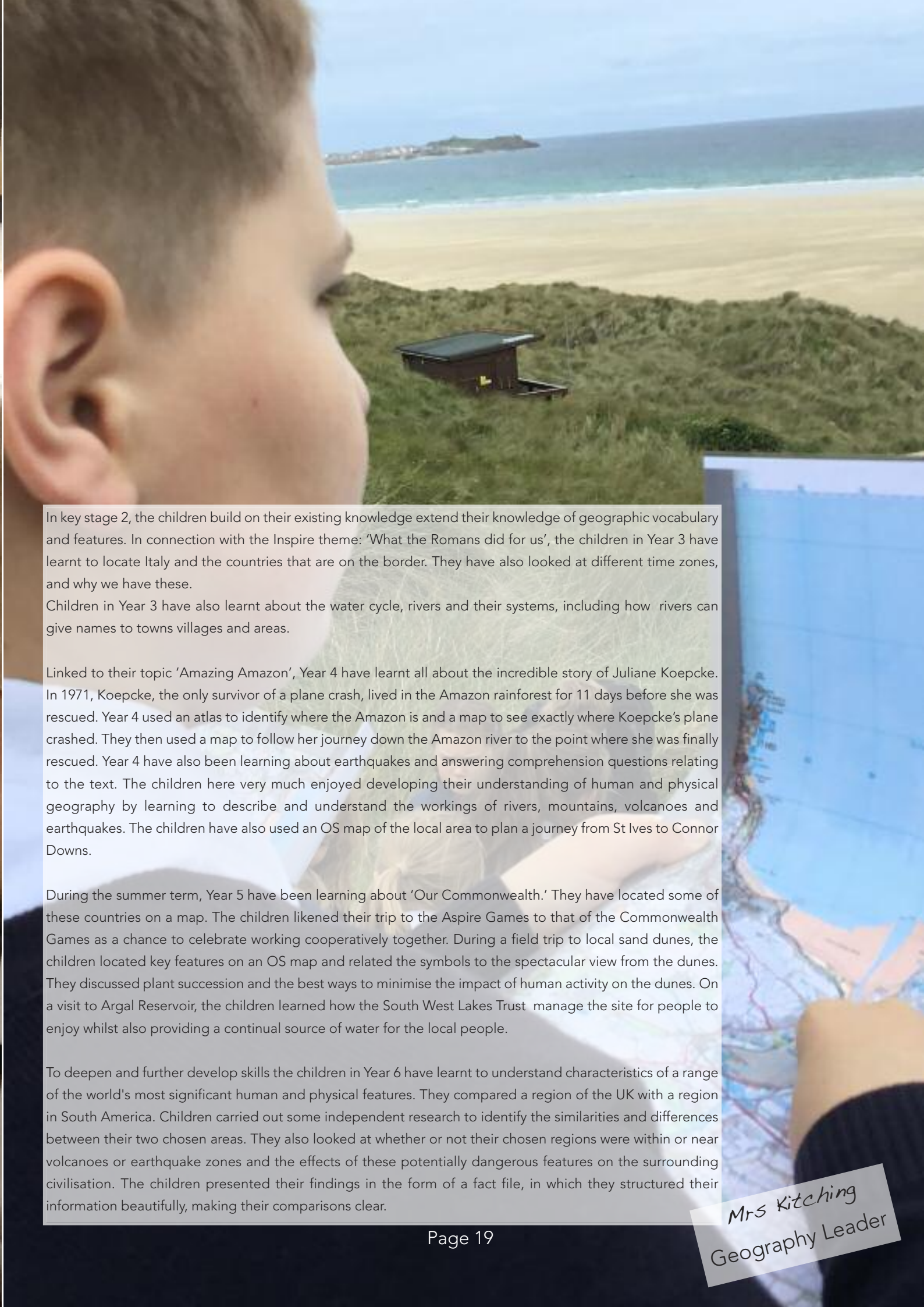
In key stage 1 the children have been learning to use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the United Kingdom and its countries, as well as other countries, continents and oceans. During the Year 1 theme, 'Animals around the World' the children have thoroughly enjoyed travelling around the world and exploring the wild and wonderful animals that live in each continent. The children identified and named a range of animals and the habitats in which they live. They also explored different countries, focussing on the weather, famous landmarks and culture.

The children in Year 2 have taken the next step in their learning journey and learnt to name and locate the world's seven continents and five oceans and understand in simple terms what the British Empire was. The children used a map of the world and located the countries that made up the Empire and labelled them on a world map. They coloured in each country so that they could see how big the British Empire was.

During their theme, 'Home and Away' the children studied the location, physical and human features of The Lake District and Kenya. They studied lakes, coastlines, mountains, valleys and wildlife. Year 2's final theme, 'Trading Places: Britain or Brazil?' helped the children to learn about the South American continent and its location to other countries. The children discovered that Brazil is a country of great human and physical contrasts. They located South America on the globe and describe its shape, located Brazil on a map of South America and named some of its neighbouring countries.







In key stage 2, the children build on their existing knowledge extend their knowledge of geographic vocabulary and features. In connection with the Inspire theme: 'What the Romans did for us', the children in Year 3 have learnt to locate Italy and the countries that are on the border. They have also looked at different time zones, and why we have these.

Children in Year 3 have also learnt about the water cycle, rivers and their systems, including how rivers can give names to towns villages and areas.

Linked to their topic 'Amazing Amazon', Year 4 have learnt all about the incredible story of Juliane Koepcke. In 1971, Koepcke, the only survivor of a plane crash, lived in the Amazon rainforest for 11 days before she was rescued. Year 4 used an atlas to identify where the Amazon is and a map to see exactly where Koepcke's plane crashed. They then used a map to follow her journey down the Amazon river to the point where she was finally rescued. Year 4 have also been learning about earthquakes and answering comprehension questions relating to the text. The children here very much enjoyed developing their understanding of human and physical geography by learning to describe and understand the workings of rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes. The children have also used an OS map of the local area to plan a journey from St Ives to Connor Downs.

During the summer term, Year 5 have been learning about 'Our Commonwealth.' They have located some of these countries on a map. The children likened their trip to the Aspire Games to that of the Commonwealth Games as a chance to celebrate working cooperatively together. During a field trip to local sand dunes, the children located key features on an OS map and related the symbols to the spectacular view from the dunes. They discussed plant succession and the best ways to minimise the impact of human activity on the dunes. On a visit to Argal Reservoir, the children learned how the South West Lakes Trust manage the site for people to enjoy whilst also providing a continual source of water for the local people.

To deepen and further develop skills the children in Year 6 have learnt to understand characteristics of a range of the world's most significant human and physical features. They compared a region of the UK with a region in South America. Children carried out some independent research to identify the similarities and differences between their two chosen areas. They also looked at whether or not their chosen regions were within or near volcanoes or earthquake zones and the effects of these potentially dangerous features on the surrounding civilisation. The children presented their findings in the form of a fact file, in which they structured their information beautifully, making their comparisons clear.



# History

The aim of history at Connor Downs Academy is to allow children to develop an awareness of themselves in relation to their community and the part they can play in alongside a wider perspective on their world and to provide the beginnings of an understanding of the human situation. Alongside important historical knowledge of people, places and events, children are encouraged to develop transferable skills they can use across the curriculum and in later life, such as perceptive questions, thinking critically and weighing evidence.

In key stage 1 pupils should develop an awareness of the lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements. During the Year 1 theme 'Space', the children focussed on famous astronauts from history. They thoroughly enjoyed learning about the British Astronaut Tim Peake and his exciting six months in Space. The children also focussed on other astronauts including the first man on the moon, Neil Armstrong. They have been learning about life on the International Space Station (ISS) and the role of an astronaut. The class thoroughly enjoyed sharing books, facts and videos about the fascinating world beyond us.

History involves the children using a wide vocabulary of everyday historical terms. In Year 2, the children learnt to ask and answer questions, choosing and using parts of stories and other sources to show that they know and understand key features of events. The children were inspired by their study of Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth which coincided with the Queen's ninety third birthday. The children compared the lives of the two queens looking at how Britain has changed. They explored how our country is run, a government is chosen and similarities and differences between both monarchs. British values were demonstrated with a street party. The children learnt to understand the importance of ceremonial events in a country's history.





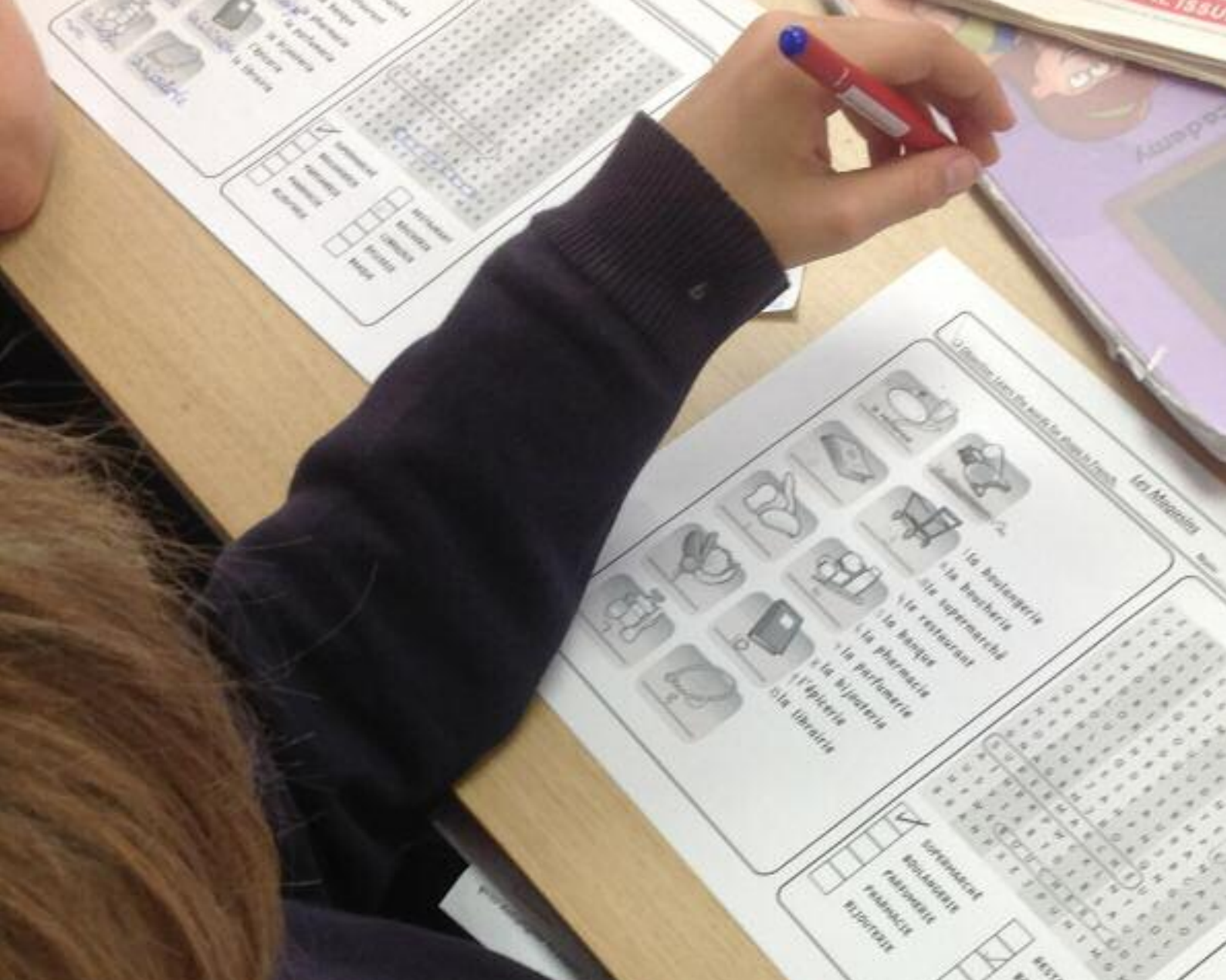


In key stage 2, the children learn to construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information. They learn to develop a chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history. Year 3 have learned through reading comprehension, linked to their theme: 'What the Romans did for us'. The myth of Romulus and Remus and how Rome was named was enthusiastically explored by the children. How the Romans armies built roads in Britain, which we can still be used today. The children developed a secure understanding of our Roman legacy learning about Roman baths and how they introduced many of the features we have today, with heated water, mosaic tiles and underfloor heating.

Linked to their theme 'Amazing Amazon', Year 4 have been learning about the different tribes in the rainforest, their origins and how they have adapted to life in the jungle. In their topic 'It's a Small World', the children found out about people who have moved to the UK in the past and have had a positive influence. They explained why and who moved to the UK in the past and presented their findings in the form of a non-chronological report. The children then researched an area familiar to them (Camborne) and considered the influences and impacts that incomers had and discovered how the area had changed. They carried out research on the famous inventor Richard Trevithick.

During the summer term, Year 5 have been learning about the ancient Maya. The children have researched their way of life, beliefs and rituals. The children used timelines to place the Maya's rise and fall in context and their geography skills to locate Central America. The children studied the rise and fall of the empire and discussed the roles that they may have played in Maya society. The children studied the fashion of the Maya and compared the armour of the invading Spanish troops to that that of a Maya warrior. Whilst studying the structure of Maya society, the children learned about Pakal the Great and his rise to power. In a link to art, the children made their own death masks from "jade" to help Pakal the Great journey into the afterlife. The children in Year 6 visited Pendennis Castle this term. They learned about the part the castle played during WWII, in particular how the artillery and defences changed between Tudor times and WWII. The children developed their understanding during the trip; they asked lots of questions and were able to share their knowledge of WWII with the staff leading the workshop.



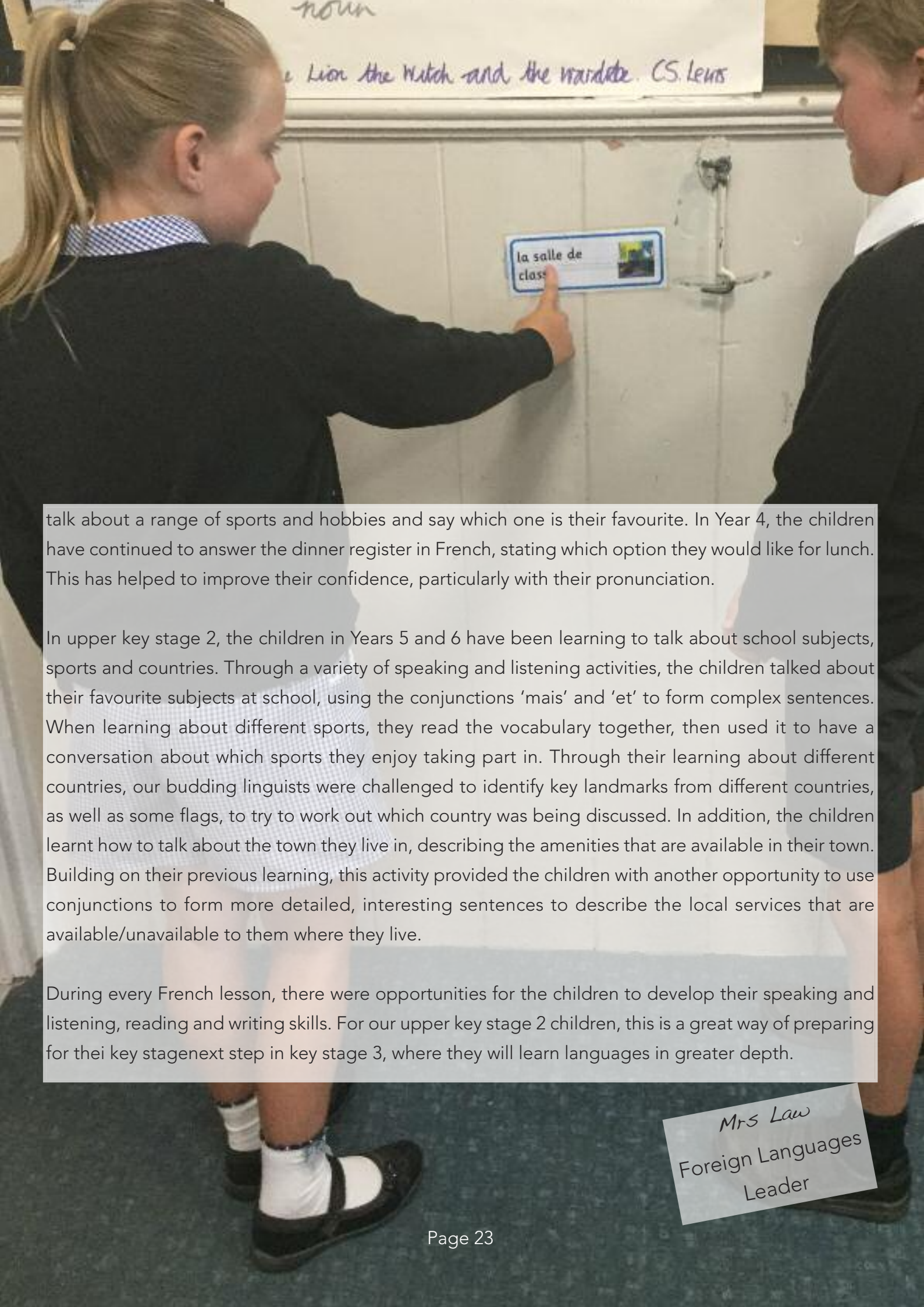


## Foreign Languages

Learning a foreign language is a liberation from insularity and provides an opening to other cultures. A high-quality languages education should foster pupils' curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world. The teaching enables pupils to express their ideas and thoughts in another language and to understand and respond to its speakers, both in speech and in writing (National Curriculum 2014). This term, our key stage 2 children have continued to benefit from fortnightly French lessons delivered by a language specialist from a local secondary school. These sessions aim to encourage the children to listen attentively to spoken language and show understanding by joining in and responding. Our children look forward to these lessons. Not only do they build on the children's linguistic skills, they also improve their social skills as the children are frequently grouped together for discussions and to play games to embed the new vocabulary they are learning.

Our lower key stage 2 children have been learning how to describe their facial features and physical appearance, giving details of their eye and hair colour, height and build. They have also learnt how to





talk about a range of sports and hobbies and say which one is their favourite. In Year 4, the children have continued to answer the dinner register in French, stating which option they would like for lunch. This has helped to improve their confidence, particularly with their pronunciation.

In upper key stage 2, the children in Years 5 and 6 have been learning to talk about school subjects, sports and countries. Through a variety of speaking and listening activities, the children talked about their favourite subjects at school, using the conjunctions 'mais' and 'et' to form complex sentences. When learning about different sports, they read the vocabulary together, then used it to have a conversation about which sports they enjoy taking part in. Through their learning about different countries, our budding linguists were challenged to identify key landmarks from different countries, as well as some flags, to try to work out which country was being discussed. In addition, the children learnt how to talk about the town they live in, describing the amenities that are available in their town. Building on their previous learning, this activity provided the children with another opportunity to use conjunctions to form more detailed, interesting sentences to describe the local services that are available/unavailable to them where they live.

During every French lesson, there were opportunities for the children to develop their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. For our upper key stage 2 children, this is a great way of preparing for their key stage next step in key stage 3, where they will learn languages in greater depth.

Mrs Law  
Foreign Languages  
Leader



# Music

Bono (U2) states so beautifully that "Music can change the world because it can change people". Here at Connor Downs Academy, we can certainly stand by these powerful words as we watch how singing, playing an instrument and listening to music can transform us all. A piece of music can make us feel a range of emotions, it can make us laugh or cry, make us dance or sit still.

In key stage 1, we teach music as part of our Inspire curriculum and this can be found across most topic areas. The National Curriculum (2014) states that pupils should be taught to use their voices expressively and creatively by singing songs and speaking chants and rhymes. In Year 1, the children have continued to thoroughly enjoy singing in class. They sing as often as they can in a range of different genres. A favourite song at the moment is 'Rule the world' and 'This little light of mine'. The children have continued to enjoy playing a range of musical instruments. They have experimented with the different



sounds made by each instrument and how this sound can be changed. The children played loud and quiet sounds, quick and slow sounds and have tried to keep to a rhythm. They have listened to a range of music linked to their topics. In Year 2, the children listened to recorded music played and sung at the coronation of both Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth II and to music which has been composed especially for royal celebrations. They learnt to sing a selection of patriotic songs and performed these at their street party. The children listened to the national anthem and considered why it was chosen and composed for major events. They have learnt to sing and perform as a choir. The children worked on good posture and taking a good breath in well before starting to singing. (National Curriculum music KS1: to use their voices expressively and creatively by singing songs).

The National Curriculum 2014 states that pupils in KS2 should be able to play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using their voices and playing musical instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression. Year 3 had a fantastic time learning how to write a play about shadow puppets. When the play was complete, the children had an opportunity to add a musical arrangement using various instruments to express a range of emotions. Throughout the summer term, Year 4 have had an amazing opportunity to learn a brass instrument under the instruction of Mrs Burden. Children have learnt how to play 'Mary had a Little Lamb', 'The Grand old Duke of York', 'Hot Cross Buns' and 'Flora Dance' on the trumpet, cornet and trombone. The children put on an amazing concert at the end of the term – there were lots of





smiles from both parents and teachers alike. As part of Careers Day, Year 4 had an amazing opportunity to hear a local band, Boundless Brothers, play current and original songs. The band were brilliant and answered questions from the children including how long they had been playing their instrument, who writes the lyrics and music and even which musician inspires them.

In Year 5, the children have been investigating the 'emotion' of each instrument. They have explored simple copy and repeat patterns and learned how to keep in time. The children have also learned how to perform a round and maintain the correct rhythm. The children listened and then watched the story of 'The Piano'. They concentrated on how the piano could convey sadness and excitement in the same musical piece and discussed how this could be achieved. This was a stimulus for extended writing as the children found words to relate to the tempo, rhythm and timbre of the instrument to retell a story with flashbacks. The children in Year 6 have been singing their hearts out this term. They have also been learning some hymns for our leavers' service, as well as two songs for our leavers' assembly. The Year 6 classroom has literally been alive with the sound of music! In addition to this, the children used the 'Isle of Tune' app to practise layering and looping sounds. They worked in pairs to create some fantastic compositions. Once they had shared their work, the children evaluated their performances, giving constructive feedback to their peers. Preparing for the key stage 2 production is a fun and exciting time for our children. They have been busy learning the songs for the play, with several courageous pupils taking to the stage to sing solos and duets, ensuring they are singing in the correct pitch and tone. They all sang beautifully and raised the roof with their fantastic voices.




# Outdoor Learning

As we reach the end of another amazing year of outdoor learning at Connor Downs, it's time to reflect on how our children have gained the ability to experience the diverse learning opportunities that this space offers, which can't be replicated indoors. Our children have been totally engaged in the practical sciences, providing valuable life skills and experiences such as: discovering, observing, analysing and recording real-life data. All our children have been caring for our animals, observing wildlife, and digging deep to find out what's under our feet.

Our Year 6 children have enjoyed learning exploring habitats and comparing the wildlife that visits over the four seasons. Pond dipping has been a favourite activity, allowing them record the diverse range of creatures and present this data on a graph. They have also been learning about innovation and design. This was enhanced by the James Dyson design programme which allowed our children to look at various Dyson products, take them apart and think of ways of improving the product. They used this new knowledge to develop their own ideas for new products, which was fascinating to see. All our Year 6 children have been learning new gardening skills, planting and harvesting vegetables and carrying out plant investigations using a fair test. Other highlights have been class debates about zoo animals, cooking using our own produce, creating 3D natural art and most recently fire safety and the fire triangle.

Year 5 children have been enjoying learning about the weather and climate around the world, using weather instruments and recording the results onto a chart. We looked at how clouds form using a scientific experiment and explored how the different air masses impact on the changeable weather in the United Kingdom. Following this, we looked at weather forecasting, which gave our children the confidence to present their own weather forecast using an interactive map with weather symbols. Many of our Year 5 children have been taking part in the RHS 'I can grow' project and learning essential gardening skills, whilst learning how to help plants grow. This project has inspired a number of Year 5 children to develop their own gardens and help others learn from their knowledge. They particularly enjoyed working as a team to build dens and tents along with participating in team games and pond dipping. Their latest topic has been comparing the life cycles of different animals including frogs, beetles and dragonflies.





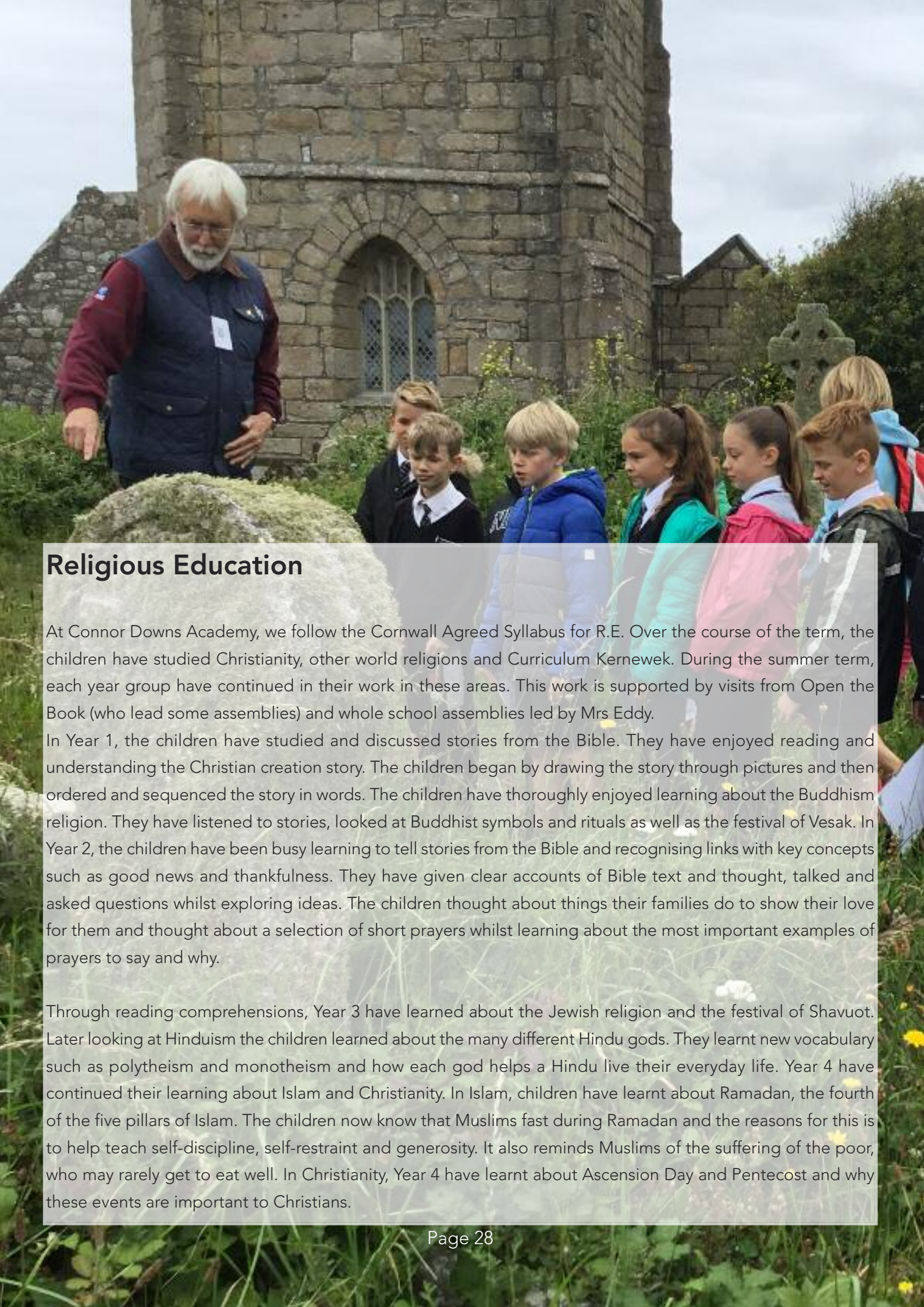
Our Year 4 children have enjoyed learning about living things by comparing all our animals and those in the many habitats within Cultivating Futures. We have taken part in the BBC Live Winter and Spring Watch programmes, learning about migration, hibernation and adaptations. With Miss Pedley, our children have thoroughly enjoyed participating in the RSPCA 'Compassionate Class' programme, learning about how to care for pets and wild animals including conducting full health checks on our rabbits. Our ever-changing pond habitat has gripped our Year 4 children with the adaptations over the seasons. Children have observed the frog spawn changing into tadpoles and then froglets, discovered dragonfly nymphs of various sizes, watched the newts, the caddisfly, pond skaters, water boatmen and appreciated the beauty of the many dragonflies, as they emerged from their exoskeleton. This rich ecosystem alone has not only enthused our children, but allowed them to ask thought provoking questions that has enabled them to teach others about the natural world.

Our Year 3 children have been equally fascinated by their year of exploration and discovery, finding out about the natural world, learning about habitats, food chains and life cycles. They have particularly enjoyed the hands-on experience of holding our stick insects and giant African snails, complementing their learning about the invertebrates. Earlier this year they highlighted the impact that litter has on wildlife both on land and out at sea. We visited the Bodmin materials and waste plant where we all learnt about what happens to our waste interactively and through a tour of the facility.

Children in Years 1 and 2 have thoroughly enjoyed getting closer to nature by exploring Cultivating Futures, discovering the diverse range of creatures around them and observing them closely. Pond dipping has once again been a firm favourite, enthusing them in the natural world and encouraging them to ask all those important inquisitive questions. We have noticed the changes in the seasons and what this means for wildlife, looked at the weather, how we record this and why. Our children have also been busy planting a variety of seeds including seed potatoes before harvesting a fine crop at the beginning of June. Our children in key stage 1 have also been learning about animal footprints through scavenger hunts. Finally, everyone has been discussing the importance of plants in our diet by sowing seeds, harvesting vegetables and observing the parts of a plant that we eat.

As part of Muddy Mondays, our Reception children have been exploring, observing and discovering what lies beneath our feet. They have also been discovering 2D and 3D shapes in Cultivating Futures and learning how to care for our animals. Miss Pedley and I are looking forward to a whole new year of outdoor learning, where we hope to enthuse even more children with outdoor learning and inspire them to reconnect with nature.





## Religious Education

At Connor Downs Academy, we follow the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus for R.E. Over the course of the term, the children have studied Christianity, other world religions and Curriculum Kernewek. During the summer term, each year group have continued in their work in these areas. This work is supported by visits from Open the Book (who lead some assemblies) and whole school assemblies led by Mrs Eddy.

In Year 1, the children have studied and discussed stories from the Bible. They have enjoyed reading and understanding the Christian creation story. The children began by drawing the story through pictures and then ordered and sequenced the story in words. The children have thoroughly enjoyed learning about the Buddhism religion. They have listened to stories, looked at Buddhist symbols and rituals as well as the festival of Vesak. In Year 2, the children have been busy learning to tell stories from the Bible and recognising links with key concepts such as good news and thankfulness. They have given clear accounts of Bible text and thought, talked and asked questions whilst exploring ideas. The children thought about things their families do to show their love for them and thought about a selection of short prayers whilst learning about the most important examples of prayers to say and why.

Through reading comprehensions, Year 3 have learned about the Jewish religion and the festival of Shavuot. Later looking at Hinduism the children learned about the many different Hindu gods. They learnt new vocabulary such as polytheism and monotheism and how each god helps a Hindu live their everyday life. Year 4 have continued their learning about Islam and Christianity. In Islam, children have learnt about Ramadan, the fourth of the five pillars of Islam. The children now know that Muslims fast during Ramadan and the reasons for this is to help teach self-discipline, self-restraint and generosity. It also reminds Muslims of the suffering of the poor, who may rarely get to eat well. In Christianity, Year 4 have learnt about Ascension Day and Pentecost and why these events are important to Christians.



Year 5 have learned about religious symbols used in Sikhism, for example, the Khanda. The children learned about each component of the symbol and understood its significance for Sikhs. They were then set the difficult task of designing their own symbol to represent themselves. The children have also learnt about the 5 Ks of Sikhism and how these beliefs influence the daily lives of Sikhs. Furthermore, the children learned about the teaching of the Gurus, in particular, Guru Gobind Singh illustrated through the story of The Donkey and the Tiger. As part of an Aspire Spirited Arts project, Year 5 were visited by Mary Judkins (Hub Councillor) who challenged the children to think about the 'big questions' and how different people have different beliefs. During the educational visit, the children worked alongside children from St. Uny and Penryn Academy at St. Uny Church to unpick these challenging questions in more detail. Upon their return to school, the children completed an independent art project in response to all that they had learned. As part of their educational visit to London, The children in Year 6 have continued to study Christianity and Judaism this term. In preparation for their leavers' service, which takes place at Phillack Church, the children learnt the popular and well-known hymns: Jerusalem, Make me a channel of thy peace and I vow to thee, my country. They have also learnt about what is included in a kosher diet and why this is so important to Jewish people. The children created a table to show which foods are considered kosher and which are not; they were able to explain why they had categorised the different foods in this way. They have also learnt about why Passover is such an important Jewish celebration and designed matzah covers and afikomen bags, both of which are traditionally used during the Seder. As part of their residential to London, Year 6 had an amazing opportunity to visit a Gurdwara (Sikh place of worship). The children learnt about the Sikh religion, were able to sit quietly in the prayer hall, had a look around the incredible building and stayed for a delicious lunch. It was an amazing experience for all involved.



*Mrs Patterson*  
Religious Education  
Leader





## Early Years Foundation Stage

Firstly, I am extremely proud to announce that our EYFS setting has been successfully awarded the Aspire Gold Charter Mark. This was awarded in recognition of the high quality teaching, learning and provision that is afforded to our Reception pupils here at Connor Downs Academy. On behalf of the entire EYFS team, I would to thank all of our Reception parents and carers for their ongoing support.

Secondly, in celebration of their successful year in Reception, I would like to give a huge 'firework clap' to each and every child in Class R. The children have all made fantastic progress during their first year at Connor Downs Academy and have now reached the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. As class teacher, I am so proud of the children and everything they have achieved this year, both collectively and as individual learners.

### Prime Areas:

#### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development:**

This term, the children have thought about the importance of taking turns and playing collaboratively with one another. During circle time sessions, we have shared and discussed our thoughts and emotions; this has enabled the children to think reflectively and show sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others.

In preparation for their transition, the children have considered the different ways in which they could prepare themselves to meet the exciting challenges that they will face in Year 1. The children were able to recognise the importance of being a 'brave learner' and 'having a go' at learning tasks independently. This has enabled the children to improve their growth mindsets, understanding that is okay to make mistakes, as this is how we learn.



### Physical Development:

The Reception children have been working hard to refine their fine and gross motor skills in a broad range of learning contexts. In our P.E. lessons, the children have practised showing improved control and co-ordination in large and small movements. We have enjoyed enhancing our learning in P.E. by introducing music to our sessions; the children have practised interpreting music through expressive movements.

In the context of our classroom learning, the children have been demonstrating their fantastic pencil control by producing brilliant drawings and pieces of written work. The children's improved pencil control has enabled them to form cursive letters with precision and skill; some children are even beginning to join their letters together in continuous script.

In addition to this, during our swimming sessions this term, the children have thoroughly enjoyed developing an understanding of basic swimming techniques and water safety. They have practised moving through the water independently in a range of ways; playing team games to develop their confidence in the water; practised jumping into the water and recognising when it is and isn't safe to do so.





## Communication and Language:

Building upon the communication and language skills they have acquired thus far in Reception, the children are now able to listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. The children are able to give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in different activities.

This term, the children have demonstrated their ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They are able to answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events. For example, we have developed our comprehension skills by discussing the characters and key events in a range of stories. We have then acted out those stories collaboratively, reflecting on how and why certain events have or have not occurred.

In the context of our classroom provision, both our permanent home corner and our evolving role play area have generated lots of fantastic opportunities for the children to refine their communication and language skills. For example, our evolving role play transformed into 'Jurassic World' this term; this enabled the children to discuss and compare dinosaurs, their lifestyles, habitats and factual history.



## Specific Areas:

### **Literacy:**

Through our sustained daily phonics sessions, the Reception children have now successfully completed Phases 3 and 4 of the phonics scheme 'Letters and Sounds'. This scheme has been taught in conjunction with the mnemonic songs of 'Jolly Phonics' and the cursive letter formation rhymes of 'Read Write Inc.' In our recent phonics sessions, the children have enjoyed exploring Phase 5 of the scheme; they have begun to develop their understanding of split digraphs, as well as how to identify them and how to read them.

Following the huge success of Class R's sponsored welly walk at Tehidy Woods last term, the EYFS team have been able to enhance the Reception classroom's reading library with new books. This has enabled the children to explore an exciting range of new texts, improving their reading and comprehension skills as a result. In addition to this, during our writing sessions this term, the children have enjoyed using their phonic knowledge to independently write a range of sentences, letters, fact-files and stories. The high quality of our children's writing in Reception continues to be a huge strength within our setting.

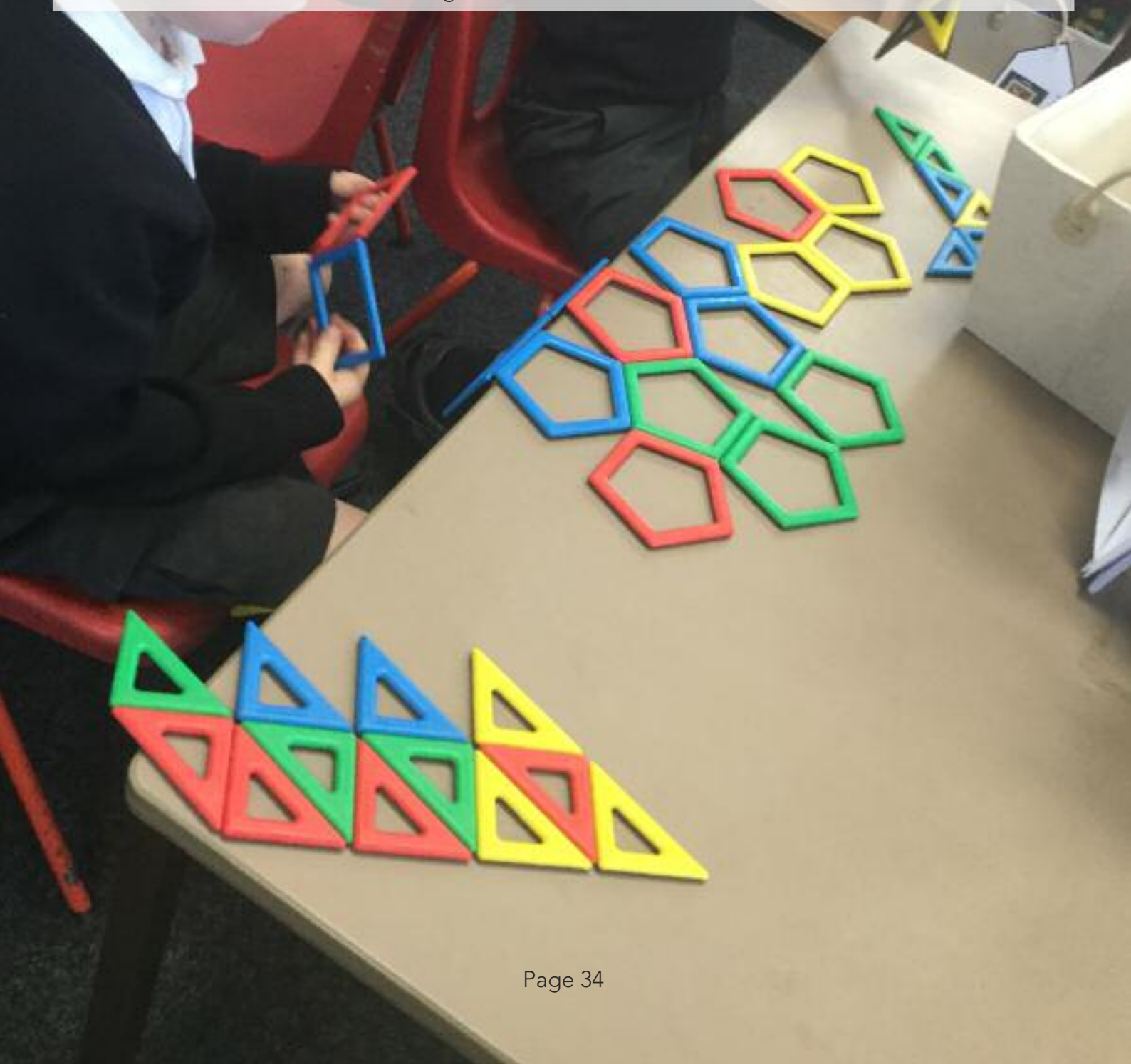




## Mathematics:

In Mathematics this term, the children have consolidated their understanding of the core mathematical skills and principles they have explored during their time in Reception. They are now able to count reliably with numbers from 1 to 20, placing them in order and recognising which number is one more or one less than a given number. Using quantities and objects, they are able to add and subtract two single-digit numbers, counting on or back to find the answer. In addition to this, they are able to solve problems, including doubling, halving and sharing.

During our outdoor learning sessions, linking to our Mathematics learning, the children have practised using everyday language to talk about size, weight, volume, capacity, position and distance. They are able to use accurate mathematical vocabulary when solving problems involving these areas. In the context of their playful learning, the children have also enjoyed consolidating their understanding of shape, time and money. The children have been encouraged to practise using this vocabulary in practical and purposeful contexts; this enables the children to relate their learning to real life scenarios.







### **Understanding the World:**

This term, the Reception children have enjoyed learning about similarities in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They are now able to talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another. In addition to this, during their 'Muddy Monday' sessions with Mr Costello and Mrs Malyan, the children have made observations of animals and plants, considering and 'having a go' at explaining why some things occur and change over time.

In the context of our playful learning, the children have enjoyed exploring a range of everyday technology. They have learnt how to use this technology safely and effectively, for a chosen purpose. For example, some children are now able to use a keyboard to write their names correctly.


### **Expressive Arts and Design:**

In preparation for our Reception graduation assembly, the children have enjoyed learning and performing the song 'Reach' by S Club 7 this term. The children have successfully learnt both the song lyrics and a sequence of dance moves, which they are now able to perform with confidence and skill. Class R performed the song during Grandparents' afternoon, which was a huge success.

In the context of their independent learning, the children are now able to safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function. The children are able to apply what they have learnt about media and materials in original ways, thinking about uses and purposes. In addition to this, they enjoy representing their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through design and technology, art, music, dance, role play and stories.

*Mr Masters*  
Early Years Leader



A photograph of several young children in white t-shirts running in a race on a grassy field. In the background, adults and a stroller are visible, watching the event. The scene is outdoors with a wooden fence in the distance.

## Physical Education and Sport


At Connor Downs we recognise that it is essential for children to be active to help prevent future health conditions. We are very proud of our sporting achievements and of the numbers of children who participate in different events across the year.

During the summer, athletics is a key part of our sporting program in school, culminating in our sports morning. Our Reception and key stage 1 children have been developing their athletics skills ahead of sports day, practising basic running, throwing and jumping skills. They have analysed running technique by identifying the correct head, body, leg and arm positions, as well as played tag games to support this. In the key stage 2 classes, the children have been practicing specific jumping techniques such as the standing long jump and triple jump, looking at techniques to improve performance. We have also looked at throwing a vortex and shot puts too, again analysing technique. In the last term, we have watched the older key stage 2 children progress to hurdling and distance running.

Striking and fielding games such as cricket and rounders are something that most children are passionate about. Years 1 and 2 were fortunate to have a cricket coach join them for the afternoon to have a chance to field and bat. The children have begun to learn how to hit the ball, into different areas and the best ways to field safely and efficiently. In key stage 2 we have looked at tactics such as how many runs you can make; how to play the ball into areas; how to hit the ball high and low; fielding technique; how to ball accurately using the correct technique. Year 6 also played rounders to develop their understanding of the tactics and rules behind the game.

Swimming continues throughout the year at Connor Downs. Our Year 1 and reception children have been swimming this term. They have been developing their water confidence and beginning to use strokes to swim. It has been wonderful to see the progress that they have made.





Year 6 have developed their dance skills for their end of year routine - showing great energy to choreograph and perform their own routine.

Over the past term, we have sent pupils to lots of different competitive and non-competitive sporting events.

In June, all of our Year 5 children went to Carn Brea to take part in a day of athletics, representing a variety of countries in running, throwing and jumping events. All the children participated brilliantly and behaved well. The children representing Netherlands (including Jac, Lewis and Rowan from Connor Downs) were the victorious team and Kian and Jac also picked up medals for their throwing ability. Special mention must go to 8 of our Year 6's who supported this by marshalling events.

Our Year 1 children had the opportunity to go to Camborne to participate in a variety of outdoor sporting activities, supported by the leaders at CSIA. This was based on the theme of athletics. The children had a wonderful time tackling all the different activities on offer.

We relished the chance for some of our reception children to go to Truro to take part in the Aspire reception games. They competed in a range of different sporting activities alongside other schools.

In addition to all the other events, some of our key stage 2 children went to Carn Brea to compete in the Trevictus games, representing the school in a variety of sports.





Despite being the summer, football has been continuing. Our girls team played their county cup semi-final against Mount Hawke in brand new kits, playing some great football against a strong side. Although they ended up losing 3-1. We couldn't be prouder of them for their efforts and performance- well summed up by Taya's goal. Our boys, Year 3-4 team went to Mounts Bay to play in a Penwith tournament. They played some great football as a team winning the majority of their games. This year sees the introduction of a Year 1-2 football event; two teams attended on the 17th July, with both playing with great skill and enthusiasm.

Summer has seen the end of the school rugby season. Our team played at Hayle Rugby Club in the Penwith tournament in late April, winning the majority of our games to progress to the area finals in Redruth. Here we played a variety of sides from peninsula and Penwith, against winning lots of games and scoring an abundance of tries. In June the team went to St Austell to play the other Aspire schools. We qualified from the group stages after beating other schools in our group, including an emphatic 10-1 win versus Treverbyn. We were unfortunately knocked out in the semi-final by the eventual winners, Bude.





## Inclusion

As you are aware, we are delighted to have achieved the Trauma Informed Schools (TIS) National Award. A consultant from Trauma Informed Schools visited our Academy on 27th June, to decide if we would meet the criteria for the award which we did admirably, being recognised as a school with exemplary practice.

Some of the many strengths identified through the visit were:

- The importance the school places on adult /child relationships and the subsequent nurturing and caring culture is the core of the school. Time after time adults and children talked about the 'family' of the school and how the school is a loving, caring community to be part of.
- Behaviour in the school is excellent because children's needs are met and they are treated with kindness , fairness and respect as well as individuals where one size does not fit all.
- The use of the natural environment for encouraging and promoting positive mental health as well as for outdoor learning and play is outstanding. (TIS UK 2019)

In summary the report stated:

Connor Downs is an inspirational school where children are cared for and nurtured by a team of highly trained and supportive adults. It is a school that enables children to develop within an environment that is sensorially rich, and carefully planned to support emotional wellbeing. The value placed on the natural environment and the opportunities provided is excellent, enabling children to explore the world through horticulture, animal husbandry and engaging in outdoor play.

The school is calm and purposeful. Children talked with enthusiasm about the school and clearly enjoy being part of the Connor Downs family. Staff also love being part of this team and enjoy their work. The school richly deserves the Trauma Informed School Award. (TIS UK 2019)



## Year 6 residential



Residential visits have an important role to play in the development of a child during their time at school. This June our many of our Year 6 children visited London. All the children we took with us grew as individuals becoming more confident and aware of the world around them, demonstrating that they could positively interact with individuals from many different backgrounds.

This summer our Year 6 children started their visit to London by stopping at Longleat, a very welcome break after on a long drive. The children were able to explore seeing many different animals near the house, some even had the chance to handle some exotic snakes and spiders. To build on this we also visited the safari park to observe the famous Lions of Longleat.

We built on the experiences at Longleat by visiting the natural history museum, where our children were able to demonstrate their biological knowledge and expand this further talking to staff and volunteers about the animals on display. The natural history museum also gave the chance to explore the geological activity and history of Earth. The simulation of the 1995 Kobe earthquake was very eye opening.

London is a vibrant city that holds many keys to life in the United Kingdom. One of the key institutions in this is parliament. We were lucky enough to be able to visit and learn about what goes on. Whilst we were there the children were able to talk to our local MP George Eustice, Leo Docherty (MP for Aldershot) and Member of the house of Lords, Lord David



Blunket, the education secretary from 1997 to 2001.

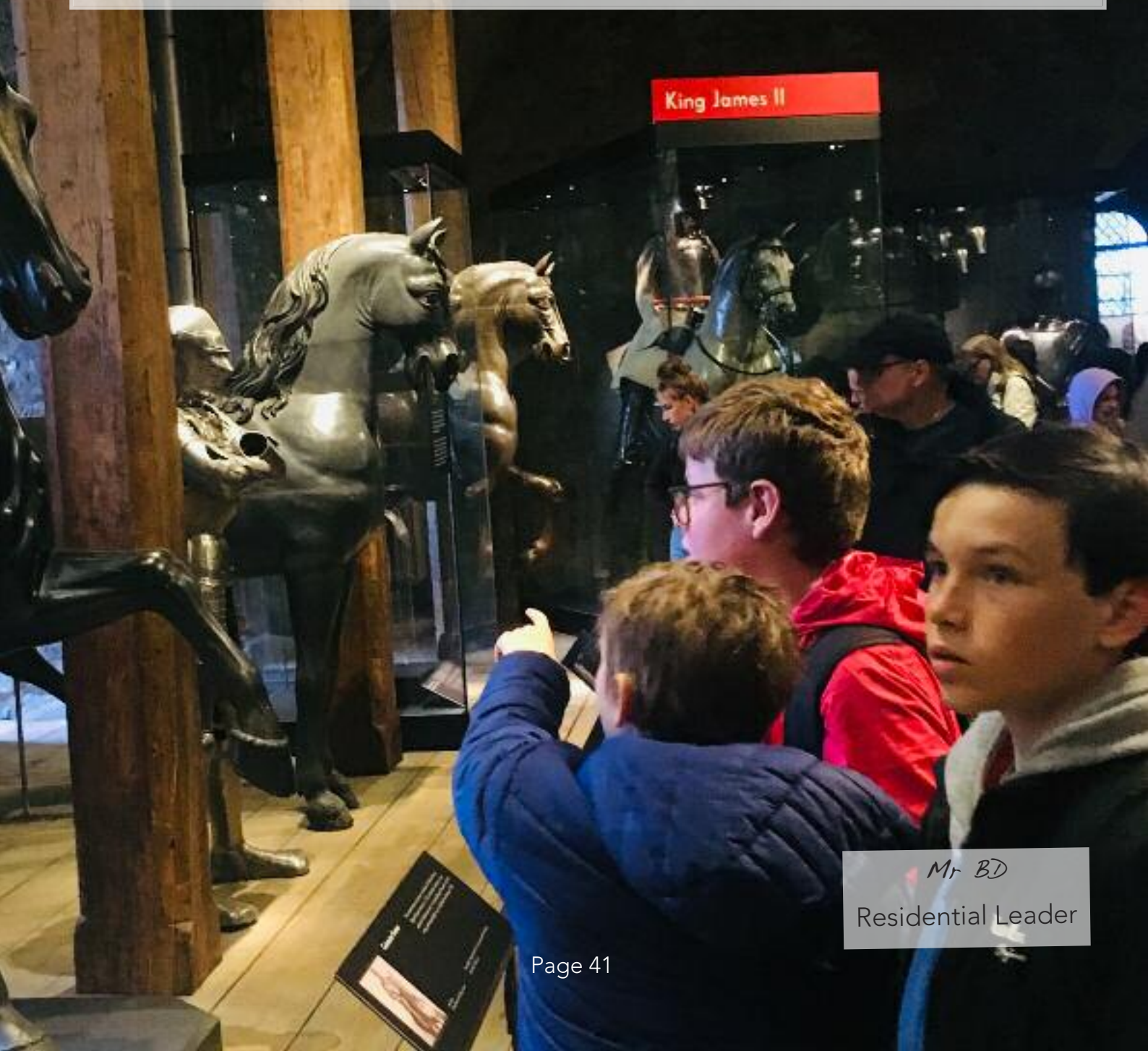
The London Eye gives the most amazing views of the city but it is not just the views that you gain. Our children were able to see the geographic layout of the city and understand how many key parts link with each other. This helped them to understand how a vast city such as London works.

We live in a rapidly changing world where it is important to know how the technology we take for granted today has come from. The Science museum gives an unparalleled opportunity for this. The children were fascinated to see the way space exploration has developed and were able to find out much about the way in which we communicate has advanced.

Pomp and ceremony are at the heart of many key moments in British history and there is nothing to rival the Crown Jewels for this. Our Year 6's were dazzled by these and by the artefacts shown in the Royal armouries.

There is nothing quite like a West End show for seeing the best in live acting. The children were amazed at the spectacle that was 'The School of Rock'. This wonderful show inspired those with a desire to follow careers in acting or music.

London, like the rest of the UK, is a multicultural city. We had the fantastic chance to visit a gurdwara during our residential. The children were able to find out about the way that Sikh's worship and their beliefs, meeting and talking to several different people who work at the gurdwara. We were also invited to participate in a meal whilst visiting.



Mr BD  
Residential Leader



## Friends of Connor Downs Academy

Once again, we are very grateful to the 'Friends of Connor Downs Academy' for their valuable contributions over the summer term. The support that is provided by 'Friends' benefits the school, not only financially, but also socially, as the Connor Downs 'family' enjoy the fun and excitement of the events that are put on.

This summer term the children have again enjoyed their regular disco which continues to be a popular event where the children enjoy dancing, games and plenty of snacks and drinks from the 'tuck shop'. The summer fair this year was an enormous success and raised over £1,000 towards resources to enhance the children's learning. We were blessed with amazing weather and many families took the opportunity to enjoy a meal bought from the kitchen while sitting in the sunshine. There were a number of successful stalls and games including a gardening produce stall, which was enthusiastically run by some older children who regularly tend their own patches of the 'Cultivating Futures' area.





'Friends' also continue to sell 'preloved' school uniform. Please take advantage of this, as some items of uniform are grown out of, rather than worn out – enquire at the office if you are interested.

As part of our fundraising activities we would ask that you use 'Easyfundraising', a free service that allows us to raise money everytime you shop online in over 3700 retailers including ebay, Amazon, Sainsbury's and Argos.

We are also grateful to 'Friends' for providing refreshments for sports day and our key stage 2 performances this term.

'Friends' have contributed directly to school funds and also supported the school to apply for funding for 2 exciting projects which will benefit the academy financially in the long run and also help us to be more environmentally friendly. During the Easter holiday, solar panels were installed on the roof of our key stage 1 building which will reduce our fuel bill. Also, a 10, 000 litre tank has been installed alongside an irrigation system which will collect rain water and use it to provide water for the plants growing in the Cultivating Futures area.

Many thanks to the 'Friends' committee for their support in all these ways and to parents and other family members who help out at events. If you would like more information about 'Friends' or would like to be more involved, please enquire at the school office.





## Careers Day

For the children in Connor Downs Academy the world of work is still a long way off, however it is important to ensure that all children are aware of the different jobs that people do. It is also important that children are aware of the route that people take to get to their jobs.



In June we held a careers day where we invited parents and members of our local community in to our school to discuss their jobs. The children were very lucky to be learn about jobs that people have including those in the emergency services, the armed services, engineering, environmental control, floristry, banking, art, vets, computing, music and overseas voluntary services. In our Year 4 class, the children had the chance to join in with a band during the day. In Year 3, children were able to work in small groups with many adults from different roles. Our Year 6 children found out about the importance of serving the community both locally and further afield. They also found out how being an artist can be very satisfying. Year 5 worked with an award-winning florist, making buttonholes, something that demonstrated the skills that are needed in this. They also found out about running a business. Our Year 1 children met a veterinary nurse and a Royal Mail manager.

We are very grateful to everyone who came in and supported us and the children in the school on this day.