



Once again I'm proud to say that Bancroft's Prep School has boldly gone where no school has gone before: we've ripped up the rule book; we've dared to be different! Some might have raised an eyebrow when we announced we'd be staging our Christmas Concert in January but I'm very glad we did, as were all who witnessed this very special event. Yes, it was disappointing that the pandemic prevented all of the Prep children from performing under the lights of the Great Hall. But this scaled-down version under our own roof had a charm of its own. It also showcased the incredible resilience and can-do spirit of our children, some of whom had to switch roles and step in at the last minute for classmates who were unwell. We're a school that likes to say 'yes', we love to innovate, we persevere and we get things done. Our Christmas Concert 2021 demonstrated all these attributes as well as the fact that we like to be ahead of the curve- with the world's very first Christmas concert of 2022!

Joe Layman

ELHAP



Love was in the air this week as the Senior School came down to the Prep to sell us fragrant home-made soaps and padded fabric hearts! This was all to raise valuable funds for ELHAP (Every Life Has A Purpose). ELHAP opened in 1976 in Woodford Bridge and for over 40 years has delivered adventure play opportunities to disabled and disadvantaged children and young people from across North East London and Essex. ELHAP is one of only eight specialist adventure playgrounds for disabled children in the whole of the UK. Set in a five and a half acre woodland site, ELHAP is the biggest specialist adventure playground in the country. The products were really popular and made everyone very happy - we hope you are the lucky recipient of one of these romantic gifts! Sarah Strong

IT TAKES A VILLAGE



On Monday 24th January, Christmas returned to Bancroft's in the form of the Prep 1 nativity! The Prep Hall felt magical with Christmas lights adorning the stage and a fantastic band accompanying the songs. 'It Takes A Village' is the traditional telling of Mary and Joseph but told all through rhyme and song which 1SE and the Prep 1 choir loved performing. Despite some setbacks, 1SE showed fantastic resilience even with a new Joseph, Gabriel and some Innkeepers being drafted in on the morning of the performance! Changes in the cast did not dampen the enthusiasm of the children who celebrated not only the Biblical tale, but the important message of love and kindness through lively songs and drama. 1SE have worked incredibly hard with, at times, unusual props (a pig chasing away mice in the stable!) and some speedy costume changes. Nevertheless, they delivered a fantastic performance and I could not be prouder of them all. It has been a fantastic experience and even Ilyas, who to begin with was not a great lover of drama, said 'I loved being in the spotlight!' A huge thank you to Mr Baum and Miss Akroyd for all of their incredible hard work to get the year group word perfect and to parents for your support.

Hannah Sylvester



BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

You may recall your child asking you if they could buy a Bancroft's 'Snack Pack' last term...these were created and manufactured by our Prep 2 Business Enterprise Team and turned out to be a roaring success! After the final Snack Pack had been sold and any surplus items snapped up in our pop-up tuck shop, we counted the profit and are extremely pleased to say we made a whopping £1200! All proceeds have been donated to the Environmental Rewilding Project, currently being organised by Mr Hall. A huge well done to all those children who worked hard on the venture; the business enterprise doors are closed for now but we look forward to re-opening them later this year.

Alex Adams

LA CHANDELEUR

Every year on 2nd February, France observes La Chandeleur, or Candlemas; a day dedicated to eating crêpes. The Betas celebrated this festivity in their French lessons last week, hosted by our French assistant Pauline Gouarin. We ate crêpes and learnt about the history of this French tradition. The Catholic religious holiday is exactly 40 days after Christmas and marks the midway point of winter. The round shape of the crêpe represents the sun and the circle of life, while the act of eating and sharing with others commemorates a historical tradition of the Pope giving out food to the poor. It is also the most superstitious day of the year in France. Some people put a coin on top of the crêpe during the cooking process for luck, while others believe that you have to hold a coin in your right hand while flipping over the crêpes with your left - if you can do it without dropping any on the floor, you'll be prosperous in the year to come. Who would have thought that eating pancakes could bring you so much good luck?

Sarah Strong

French Co-ordinator



CUBS

Cubs is a charity founded by Robert Baden-Powell in 1916. In Cubs we do many activities, such as badge work and team activities. The badge work may be fun, but it is meaningful as we learn life lessons through doing them. On Wednesday, 26th January, we had a Cubs meeting where we were split into three groups. One was given a little juice, the next were given a picnic mat, sandwiches and a little juice and the last were given an entire feast including a table and chairs! We learned some people were less fortunate than us and we should try to share what we have. Then we were introduced to the Whitechapel Mission. The Whitechapel Mission is a homeless shelter, established in 1876 by Henry Hill, run by a group of volunteers. The Whitechapel Mission rely on donations of food and clothing. The day care centre is open 365 days a year, and opens at 6am in the morning. Breakfast is served from 8am, and offers a wide variety of cereal and hot breakfast choices. Showers are available Monday to Friday from 8:30am-10:30am. People are then offered advice services to improve their lives and move on to get jobs. In 2020, over 2500 people were offered advice. The Whitechapel Mission operate one of the largest clothing stores in the UK; the batches of clothing come every week from people all over the country. As a school we have collected many cans, food and clothes to help the homeless. The Whitechapel Mission are very thankful for our donations and so is our Cub pack.

Ololade and Anya 2AA



CONSERVATION DAY

At the end of this term, the School Council are planning a 'Conservation Day' to help the environment. Some of the activities we are considering are: making birdfeeders, planting trees or other plants or making hedgehog and bird houses. This is thanks to Mr Hall, because he is organising and inspiring us with this venture. Of course, this is not the only way School Council have been helping out with this initiative. We have been taking it in turns to weed the planting bed just outside the Beta entrance and we are hoping to create some more large wooden planters close to the hard court. I'm sure you'll have a lot of fun on 'Conservation Day' and we hope that we can motivate you to help wildlife before it's too late!

Nell 2CP

MUSIC CONCERTS

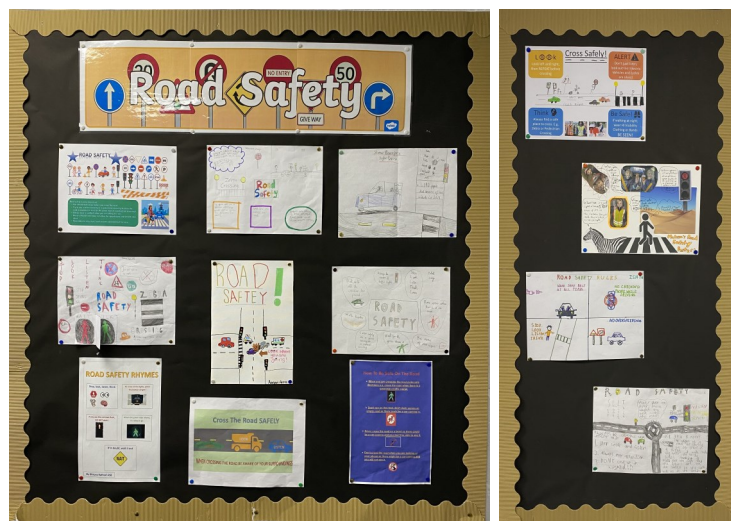
It was so lovely to showcase the musical talents of the youngest members of our school in the first of our special lunchtime concerts. We were treated to two group pieces from the Alpha and Beta Orchestra, which is directed by Mr MacManus, along with a number of excellent solos from a selection of the orchestra members. Everyone played so brilliantly, particularly those Alpha children who were performing in their first concert at Bancroft's. The Flute and Guitar group were the headline act for the second lunchtime concert. Directed by Mr McGee and Mr Spence, this unique ensemble played a number of pieces, including the 1970 Eurovision hit *Knock, Knock, Who's There?*, and a belated Christmas tune: *Jingle Bell Rock*. A particular mention must go to Ruhaan and Sienna who stepped up to perform at a day's notice and filled in gaps in the programme created through illness. Both played incredibly impressive pieces flawlessly. We also heard another amazing performance from 'The Prepettes' – this time the Madness classic *Our House*. A big thanks goes to Ms Tarrant, their musical director, for helping Sienna, Arjun, Advait, Percy, Shalen and Xavier put the performance together.
Jenny Akroyd



KEEPING SAFE

In our PD lessons this half term, the Alphas have been learning about 'keeping safe'; keeping safe at home, at school, out and about, online and when crossing roads. The topic has led to lots of discussion about what to do in various situations and it has helped the children to reflect upon the decisions they might make. We have spent time talking about staying safe online, not just in terms of keeping passwords safe or sharing personal information, but in maintaining a healthy relationship with our screens! The Alphas have considered how screen use can affect their emotions. At best, 'screen time' feels good, relaxing or exciting, but often it can lead to frustration, tiredness or even anger. Then our attention turned to road safety. Many of us will be familiar with the Green Cross Code, taught to generations of children and, whilst the Code has undergone several changes over the years, the basic principles have remained more or less the same. Although much of this might seem like common sense, it is important to open up these discussions at school as we always have so much to learn from sharing our experiences with each other.

Laura Dalton



TURN IT OFF!

We are writing to you today with a simple plea. Please do not leave your engines running when waiting for your children in the Prep car park. Some parents arrive as early as 2.30pm and leave their engines running for approximately 40 minutes! Mr Foley, Head of Geography at the Senior School, recently conducted a survey where he measured the levels of nitrogen dioxide in the area surrounding our school. The laboratory reported that the greatest level was by the turning circle. This is where children wait for their parents to collect them. This shocked us and was very frightening. Ways in which you can help us further are by walking, scooting or cycling to school, car-sharing and consider your next vehicle to be electric! Please look at the signs around the car park, think of our school and your children! Thank you.

Aaria and Imani BCB

NETBALL

It's been all systems go for the Beta, Prep 1 and Prep 2 girls on the netball court this half term. There have been a number of fixtures played against Chigwell, St. Aubyn's and St. Cedd's with some outstanding performances from a number of our teams. The Beta and Prep 1 year groups have enjoyed an abundance of success on court whilst our Prep 2 girls have come up against some very strong opposition. That said, Miss Dack and I have been blown away by their resilience on court and all girls should be very proud of their performances. Fixtures are huge part of our Games curriculum and it's always a pleasure to watch our pupils compete against other schools, it really is a memorable experience for them all, as are the delicious doughnuts at the end!

Kelly McNelis



HOUSE SKIPPING

We pounced on the opportunity to take House Skipping to the outdoor arena last Thursday. The sun shone and there was a feeling of Spring in the air. We all witnessed some amazing skipping on show and the support from the bouncy crowd was a leap ahead of previous years. Monkham's hopped into an early lead, however it was Manor that jumped ahead of them in the 'Big Skip' to claim victory. After half term, the House Chess competition is taking place and we'll battle it out to see who can be King or Queen of the board.

David Archer



INTRODUCING MISS KELLY

Hello, my name is Miss Kelly and I am starting at Bancroft's after half-term in the PE Department! I have nine years' experience of teaching, which has included roles such as 'Head of PE' and 'Head of Year'. Alongside teaching, football is a huge passion of mine and I have played for clubs including Watford FC, Tottenham Hotspur FC and West Ham FC. When not teaching, I like to spend my time socialising with family and friends, listening to music and going on long scenic walks. I cannot wait to start at Bancroft's and meet all of the amazing children for some fun in PE and Games sessions.

Here are two truths and a lie - can you guess which one is the lie?

I have won a Women's Premier League medal

I have only ever broken one bone in my body

I am a huge Manchester United fan

Find me next half-term for the answer. See you all soon!

Sasha Kelly



HOCKEY

The boys' hockey season got off to a flying start in all age groups. Their stick skills are improving noticeably in each session and their understanding of space is more apparent. There are a few more close encounters to come before the end of term and more opportunities to develop their teamwork, tactical awareness and perseverance.

David Archer

GIRLS' RUGBY

This term, Mr Archer introduced an after school rugby club specifically for girls. At first I was not convinced that I would enjoy it, but my friend Anastasia, who has played rugby before, encouraged me to give it a try. I am so glad she did because the sessions have been great fun. Around 10 girls took up the challenge and have learned new skills, such as catching, passing and defending; it is a great way to let off steam at the end of the day! I would encourage more girls to step out of their comfort zone and give it a try!

Lucy 2AA