

THE TREEHOUSE SCHOOL UPDATE

Issue 138
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The Treehouse School

Team work: Members of The Gang create fat balls for our new bird café



Don't Miss... Ace BBC presenter Angie Walker's news report, featuring Green Unit's eco-pods, on South Today, Wednesday evening.

DIY SOS!

We would like to add some lightweight 'real' power tools to our outdoor construction area (electric drill, electric screw driver etc.) which can be used by the children when playing. If you have any (broken) tools that you no longer use, we would be very happy to take them off your hands!



柔道 Judo

The Gang are all really throwing themselves into our **judo** sessions with Steve. Extra classes are available on Saturdays at Fir Tree Junior School in Wallingford, from 8.45 – 9.30 am, for those who fancy them.

Good News from Devon: Good friend of The Treehouse, Ellie Denno, gave birth to a baby boy, named Rupert on Tuesday morning. Rupert weighed in at 8lb 10oz.



All in a Day's Work...

One of the advantages of working at The Treehouse is that we get to know the children, I mean, *really* get to know the children. Although this is a real advantage, it can also be a bit of a disadvantage too, in that sometimes we forget just how far the children have come.

Take yesterday for example (Friday)...housebound during the morning, because of the heavy rain and quagmire in the garden, we swapped our day around and spent the morning indoors. The children were all given a task to do in preparation for 'The Big School Birdwatch' which takes place later this month. Without exception, they all worked hard, and well, for just over two hours. As always, they were flexible, adaptable, industrious and good-natured. The outcomes were, as we have come to expect, spot on.

Lunch followed - homemade leek and parsnip soup and cake for dessert, this week made by Jess and Will, independently. Whilst three children cleared the table and stacked the dishwasher, the rest finished their game of 'Bird Bingo' which lasted approximately 45 minutes. Not only is The Gang's ability to collaborate in groups of all sizes, and interact with children of all ages worth noting, they are developing essential skills for the future.

Finally, some fresh air! During our seasonal visit to Red Cow Cottage and after a good romp around the meadow, the children listened attentively and politely, absorbing every last detail that Tony shared with them. And as if that wasn't enough, today, the year sixes have organised a trip to Wallingford together!

Do you see what I mean...

Dates for Your Diaries

Mon 25th Jan	Robson Family Music Choice
	Claire Middleton, student teacher, joining The Treehouse for a week's placement.
	Boot Camp at the park. PE kit to be worn to school please, with hat, gloves and waterproof coat. 3.15 pm Collect from the park.
Tues 26th Jan	Judo
	Tuesday Trading
	New Houses – Handwriting homework due in please.
Weds 27th Jan	Star Wars Premiere at The Heydon's House. Please collect your child/ren from 10 The Forty at 3.15 pm. Fancy dress optional.
Fri 29th Jan	Will's 7 th birthday.
	Friday Forest at Lollington. Home drop off.



Going for Gold!

Keeping You in the Loop – Stages in Spelling

Just like many other areas of their development, children pass through different stages when they are learning to spell.

The first stage, known as **precommunicative (1)**, is when a child uses a series of random letters and numbers. They can 'read' the writing, but every time they do, their message changes.

Next, comes the **semi-phonetic stage (2)**, where the child represents the main sounds in a word with a just one or two letters.

After that, the child starts to include all of the main sounds in the word. This phase is known as the **phonetic stage (3)**, typically taking place between the ages of 5 and 7.

During the **transitional phase (4)**, which follows usually between the ages of 7 and 11, there is a transition from sole reliance on sounds for representing spelling to use of visual information too. In other words, children use spelling patterns that they have seen whilst reading.

Finally, at the **correct stage**, typically from the ages of 10- 11 years, almost complete mastery of even the most complex sound-symbol principles is evident. By this stage, children now have a wide range of strategies for checking and self-correcting words, although they may still make some errors. Obviously, children need to be supported in different ways, depending on the stage they are operating at. Next week, I will list some key strategies for each of the phases, so that when your child is writing at home, you know how you can best support them. In the meantime, if you get the chance, take a look at your child's unaided writing to see if you can identify their spelling phase.

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2. R [are], U [you],
B [be], YL [while] RSK
[ask], KS [kiss]

3. DUN [done], JOORS
[jaws], HOPT [hopped],
ACSITING [exciting]

4. YOUSUAL [usual],
CORGHT [caught]
strait [straight].

Looking for something to do at home....

Nature Smarties:

- Set up a bird feeding station in your garden. At this time of the year, birds need our help to survive. Don't forget to top up the food and water on a regular basis. Tony Rayner recommends 'wild bird seed' and apples which are cheaper options.

Body Smarties:

- Design a fitness course at home, either in your garden (trampolining, skipping, space bouncing, hula hooping) or indoors (stairs) so that you become even fitter! A 10 minute-a-day workout will really pay off.

Self Smarties:

- Update your diary, remembering to make a note of any tasks (handwriting, Take-5, reading, exercise) that you have been asked to do at home. Get into the habit of checking your diary every day, ticking tasks off as you complete them.

This week, a special mention to parents Paul Kennedy and Barry Robson for their contribution towards our new outdoor construction area.

CAUTION
AREA UNDER
CONSTRUCTION

