

## **Great News from Long Wittenham Primary School**

The school have worked really hard over the past year and I am delighted to say we have completed all the areas identified by Ofsted for change. Even better than that we have made the strategic decision to join the Ridgeway Education Trust (RET), a multi-academy trust, which currently includes Didcot Girls School, St. Birinus Boys School and Sutton Courtenay Church of England Primary School. We have made this decision to ensure we have the support we need to make sure all our children have access to the very best curriculum and opportunities available. Here is a message written just before the summer holidays by our Headteacher and the CEO of RET which gives you a snapshot into some of the things that have been happening and some of the things planned this term.

*Catherine Harrison  
Chair of Governors*

*Here is a quick summary of the highlights from the report below:-*

*New Head Teacher in post for over a year.*

*Year 6 results above national average and other year groups on track to exceed expectations.*

*Open meeting to introduce Ridgeway Education Trust ( RET ) was great success.*

*Significant additional support with music, art and reading is already helping our pupils.*

*We plan to join the trust on 1st November*

*The whole school went to the Science Centre at Winchester.*

*Our pupils benefit from lots of support from both volunteers helping with reading and the PTA organising fund raising fun events.*

*We have also benefited from lots of educational visits to local places of interest*

*Rachael Warwick, CEO of RET and colleagues attended the open meeting on joining the Trust.*

*RET have already provided specialist music teaching and 16 new keyboards for the school with help from the Tony Loy trust and Friends of LW School ( our school's charity trust)*

*Specialist French and Maths support has started this September along with extra reading support.*

*And the Trust has done some building improvements to our school over the summer holidays.*

*Amazing progress in just one term.*



*School Sports day at Bodkin's Playing Field, July 2023*

### **Message from Gillian Fraser, Headteacher at Long Wittenham**

Since joining the school, I have been made to feel most welcome and I have really enjoyed getting to know the wonderful community of Long Wittenham. Having completed my first full academic year as head at Long Wittenham School, I thought it would be good to reflect on all that we have achieved this year and some of the things that we have to look forward to in the next.

### **Our results**

Whilst, as a school, we are not driven by data and always teach children as individuals, we are however very proud of what our children have achieved this year. For the children that took the year 6 SATs papers their results were well above national average.

We are also very proud of the progress made by our youngest children. It has been a delight seeing them develop a love of learning and taking great pride in their work and, although at the time of writing the national data for EYFS and year one phonics screening check has not yet been published, we are confident we will exceed national data in these areas as well. Our year four pupils also did really well in their multiplication checks. Achievements we are all justly proud of.

### **Ridgeway Education Trust**

As you may know we have made the strategic decision to join Ridgeway Education Trust and we have been working at pace on school improvement and all the behind-the-scenes logistics and due diligence needed to ensure the transition to an academy goes smoothly. We are working on 1<sup>st</sup> November as our conversion date. As a school we have already been rewarded by this new relationship with Didcot Girls' School, Saint Birinus and Sutton Courtenay and have felt supported by having a wider pool of professional expertise to draw upon and to share best practice with. The children have also benefited directly from specialist music teaching, an exciting reading for pleasure author experience and we have taken delivery of a class set of

keyboards to enhance our music provision from September. In addition to the support from RET we also have specialist art lessons delivered by a local artist.

### **Parish Council**

I am hugely grateful to the Parish Council for the generous grants we have been awarded this year. This has enabled us to replace some of the furniture in Owls class with a lovely new set (with match funding kindly donated by our PTA), that will eventually move to our new school building of which the Parish Council have helped to drive forward, and we are really grateful for all their work. The Parish Council have also made a generous contribution towards the whole school trip to Winchester Science Centre, enabling us to reduce the cost for parents.

### **Volunteers**

We are very lucky to have so many wonderful volunteers who have helped us over the past year. We are very grateful to everyone who gives up their time and energy to support the school and the children love having volunteers from the community come in and support them with reading and other activities.

We are extremely grateful to the PTA for all their hard work. This year the children have benefited from a range of fabulous experiences such as the spooky disco, the Christmas Fayre, art exhibition, the Zumba workshop, an ice-cream van at sports day, the circus skills workshop for Penguins class, and the inflatable fun at our end of year party. We are incredibly lucky to have such fabulous volunteers.

### **Local area**

Our local area is so rich in history, culture and nature and we love being able to connect the children's learning to this making use of all the village has to offer. Children have benefitted from trips to the forest school site, the replica Anglo Saxon Hall, the church and other buildings around the village. Wider afield the children have been on trips to Farmer Gows, the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford Castle, PGL residential, Winchester Science Centre, Junior Citizenship and Reading Mosque. The children loved being involved in the Didcot swimming gala at the Leys pool in Oxford and I have included some pictures from our Sports Day for which we used the lovely playing field at Bodkin's.

If you would like to know more about our school either as a future parent or a volunteer, you are welcome to e-mail [office.3233@long-wittenham.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:office.3233@long-wittenham.oxon.sch.uk) or to join us for one of our weekly celebration assemblies.

*Gillian Fraser*  
*Headteacher*

### **Message from Rachael Warwick, CEO of RET**

The relationship between the school and the Trust has started extremely well and I'm very grateful to Gillian Fraser and the Chair of Governors, Catherine Harrison, in particular for such a warm welcome.

### **Our Plans for Next Year**

Paul Shaughnessy who joins RET as our Director of Primary Education in September will be working closely with the school from September to identify where further support is needed and to ensure that this support is high quality and delivers real impact for children.

Kat Melidis, Music specialist from Didcot Girls' School, will continue to teach Music to Year 3/4 next year. I am delighted that we have been able to purchase 16 keyboards for the school. Huge thanks to the Tony Loy Trust and the Friends of Long Wittenham for their generous donations to enable us to purchase the keyboards. We will also begin to provide specialist French teaching next term to ensure our children are prepared for a smooth transition into language lessons in secondary school.

Zoe Parks, Maths lead at Sutton Courtenay CofE Primary School, will be acting as Maths lead at Long Wittenham next year and will be spending time in the school each week alongside Andrea Wickham, RET Mastery Maths Lead, to continue the work we have started on the Maths curriculum.

We were delighted that Jo Cotterill, children's author, has launched a creative writing activity inspired by one of her books with the Eagles class. There will be author visits and further opportunities for children to read for pleasure next year as Leoni Barnes, RET Reading for Pleasure Lead, works with the school.

Listening to the feedback from the recent parent survey, we are exploring with the school additional activities and extra-curricular activities for children to take part in next year. We are keen to create a range of opportunities, including sports activities, for the children. Watch this space!

Finally, over the summer holidays, the Trust's premises team have been carrying out some work on the school which will include repairs and decoration to the school building.

I am delighted by the progress we've made in just one term and feel very optimistic about our plans for next year.

*Rachael Warwick*  
CEO RET