



Strathmore Grapevine

**It's
Christmas**

*** December 2021**

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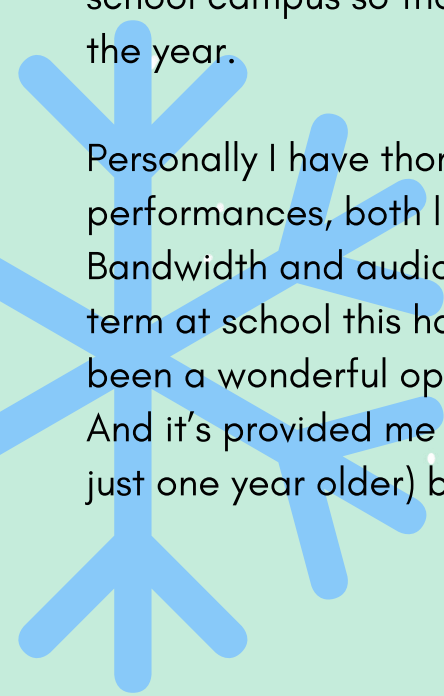


Head's Piece

This time last year....

This time last year I remember I was scratching my head whilst reading the 27-page handbook explaining how school was to become a Covid Testing Centre. It seems strange now that at the time I was filled with concern and anxiety about getting it right: testing ourselves has become like pouring milk on your cereal, just another routine part of the day. So a big thank you to everyone who has supported us to keep school open by testing, following the government guidance and understanding if we have had to contact you. The virus is not going to disappear overnight and we will continue to do everything possible to keep school open for you children.

When everyone came back to school after the holidays I think we all felt that we were returning to a sense of 'back to usual.' Ofsted certainly thought so! But we are instead back to restrictions and, like most schools in Richmond, the seasonal festivities and concerts have typically been held on-line. Not how you, or we, would ever want it. But like everyone, we are getting better at using Teams and other on-line video platforms and we can say that more of you are looking in to the videos and photos of your children's learning. One positive experience we have had was a much higher 'virtual' attendance at school events – it seems that many of you appreciate the opportunity to join in without needing to come to the school campus so that is something we are going to keep available for the rest of the year.



Personally I have thoroughly enjoyed watching the pupils in their rehearsals and performances, both live and on screen, and whatever the quality of the Bandwidth and audio, I know they have had fun. For those children whose first term at school this has been, being able to participate in the group activities has been a wonderful opportunity to show how well they have settled into school. And it's provided me with great enjoyment to see those older children (even those just one year older) being such positive role models.

I wasn't such a good role model last Friday as I don't have a Christmas jumper (although I did wear my Christmas tie and socks) but it was fun to see everyone else wearing theirs. Although suddenly we haven't had to be wearing such warm clothing, we certainly did need it earlier and I am delighted that so many of the community visits and educational visits have taken place - which you will read about in other pages - and it is important to think over the whole term and not just the last few weeks. I know that those parents who have joined in their children's class visits have enjoyed the opportunity and experience and we look forward to those continuing.

So I will allow you to enjoy seeing the videos on the school YouTube channel and looking at the photos that follow.

Whatever you are doing, if you are celebrating or not, on behalf of the staff, governors, trustees, the school leadership team and especially from me, we wish you a happy, peaceful holiday and look forward to seeing you in January.

Ivan



Strathmore at St Richard Reynolds

By Eleanor Bukht, Head of School St Richard Reynolds campus



COP26 - UN Climate Change Conference

Many of you will have heard about the meeting of world leaders in Glasgow recently for the COP26 event. The WWF website showed an introductory video and the analogy was powerful and comparable to the work of a school: "A leaf on its own may seem small, but many leaves together allow trees to grow... that single leaf becomes powerful, a force for growth and for change." (<https://www.wwf.org.uk/get-involved/schools/cop26>)

Tori, Paul and the Estates Team have managed to negotiate a very positive recycling agreement with our co-located site and this means that we can expand on our school efforts to reduce our impact on the local environment by starting to recycle our disposable plastics, tins and food waste. By developing the knowledge and skills to sort the recycling and understanding our social responsibility, we maintain alignment with the Strathmore vision of championing independence in our learners and supporting them to contribute to their community.

Laura (Perseus HLTA) has been a real champion for learning outside the classroom and being more in touch with our natural surroundings in order to generalise skills. With our integrated HLTA leads for Strathmore specialist strategies, we continue to combine therapeutic approaches into our learning, and this has been particularly prevalent in our educational visits over the last 18 months – more important now than ever before in a Covid-impacted society.

Penel (Andromeda) led a trip with a special "first time" experience: cycling to an offsite educational visit. This is so good for physical development, maintaining good health, developing independent skills and social awareness and also reducing our carbon emissions. The learners have been fantastic in their commitment, behaviour and efforts. They seem to have really enjoyed the experience of being in the community and practical application of the skills learnt in the playground.

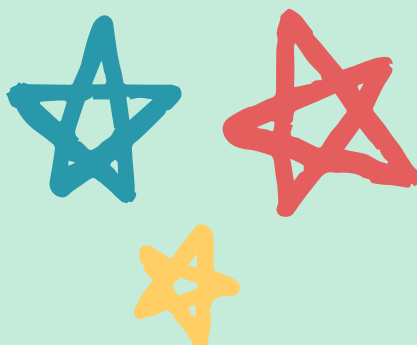
As with everything we do, there are many people involved with the behind the scenes logistics and compliance. Thanks to FOSS for the charitable support for funding our variety of accessible bikes and to our staff for always being up for the next challenge in order to ensure our learners are making holistic progress and mustering the enthusiasm for doing the things that may be out of their comfort zone, in order to expand the opportunities for the learners.

Superstars on the Swings

By Lauren Crew
Assistant Headteacher
Strathmore at St Richard Reynolds

At Strathmore at SRR Campus we have been achieving great things!
Our staff have supported our wheelchair users to use the hammock swing in the playground for the first time! We used our portable hoist so that learners could safely be moved onto the swing.

There was lots of smiling, laughter, and communication for 'more'.
Thank you to the staff who made this possible.





Strathmore at The Russell

By Sarah Hurtado, Head of School at The Russell and Grey Court campuses

What an incredible term!

Despite the constant reminder that things are not quite back to 'normal', Strathmore learners have been phenomenal. Progress has been seen in so many ways and it is magical when these steps of achievement are noticed and acknowledged.

If you don't use our assessment tool, Earwig', to see those amazing moments of success, please make this your one New Year's goal and log in.



EMBRACE
the amazing potential
MAGIC
of today's small everyday
MOMENTS



A big shout out to all our families who work with us as a partnership towards educational goals. Supportive partnership working is the way to go. Our school vision is to prepare all Strathmore learners to become active contributors to their communities and the work we do every day in school is dedicated towards this.

This cannot be achieved without the hard work of everyone at Strathmore. Staff work hard to set up classrooms to prepare learners for each next step in their individual journeys, with an emphasis on independence, communication, and engagement. Each classroom uses 'zones' which are planned for using our new Strathmore Curriculum Framework which supports all learners to progress in all aspects of the curriculum as meaningfully as possible.

This year, Strathmore is dedicated to improving opportunities to learn in the wider community and each learner will be going out more than before, whether it is to a park, a shop, the swimming pool, a theatre, cinema or to join friends at another Strathmore campus. Fingers crossed, inclusion opportunities with our co-located schools can resume as before and preparation is underway to make this happen.

Highlights at Russell Campus:

- Learners in Leo Class have developed their swimming skills at Teddington Pool, supported by Annabelle, our swimming teacher.
- Learners in Hercules Class have developed gross motor, social and communication skills at weekly park trips and especially enjoyed visiting the large sandpit at Richmond Park.
 - Learners in Luna Class enjoyed festive fun sessions at Holly Lodge.
 - Learners in Delphini Class joined peers from SRR at weekly sessions at Marble Hill Park.
- The student council bought our annual Christmas Tree, kindly funded by FOSS and set it up in our front entrance for all to see.

Enjoy time this winter holiday with your families and friends and stay safe. See you in the New Year, with best wishes, Sarah



Strathmore at Grey Court

By Adriana Martyr



As we approach the end of this term and the end of the year we continue to celebrate with staff and families the progress and achievements of the learners at Strathmore.

We punctuated the term with the **Jack Petchey Award** ceremony, which took place virtually and highlighted how resilient and determined our learners are to overcome barriers and to try new experiences. The learners were Jordan Horniak, Robert Walter, Vincent Molnar-Evans, Deividas Svencionis, Zane Taylor and Josh Owen.

Two members of staff who made exceptional contributions to the learners at Strathmore were also celebrated: Renata Stachniak and Sergio Martinez Dominguez.

The school council at St Richard Reynolds and Grey Court campuses played a crucial role in keeping the momentum going throughout the year, electing winners, and voting for purposeful items and equipment to be enjoyed by all learners.

The Jack Petchey cycle has begun again and with it, the reminder that we are aspirational, and that Strathmore keeps moving forward and promoting its vision of supporting learners to become leaders and contributors to their community.

Highlights at Grey Court:

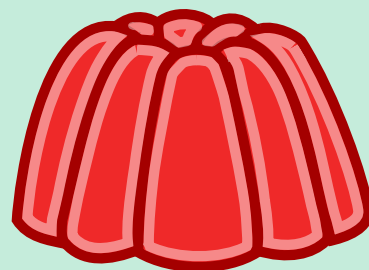
- Learners in Mira class have worked hard this term to reopen Café Vanilla at Ham Library.
- Learners in Aquila class have been going out to explore Ham Common and the local coffee shop to develop their independent skills in the community and to enjoy a hot drink.
- Learners in Pegasus class have attended PE sessions at St Mary's University, some travelling by public transport.
- The Wednesday communication sessions led by Kathryn, Ewelina and James have continued to have a positive impact on developing learners' communication skills.
- We are also welcoming Sophia Delano, a new student at our campus, who has made a great start and will be joining Pegasus class.

Enjoy the Winter holidays!
Adrianna





Delphini class ...get messy!



Delphini class have enjoyed getting messy this term with a variety of materials such as paint and shaving foam. We like to explore different textures whether that be in our learning zones, mark-making during Literacy or themed art.

Messy play has helped some of us begin to overcome our sensory aversions to certain textures and develop our fine motor skills. Messy mark-making is also encouraging us to work on our transcription skills such as pre-writing shapes.

We also enjoy exploring jelly, wet cornflour, dry flour and lentils. If you get messy at home we'd love to see it. Please show us by uploading it to Earwig 😊





Hercules Class



This term has been a great one for Hercules Class!

Our theme this term has been 'The Greatest Show'. In Autumn 1 we focused on our favourite Disney films and in the second part of term we have focused on the circus.

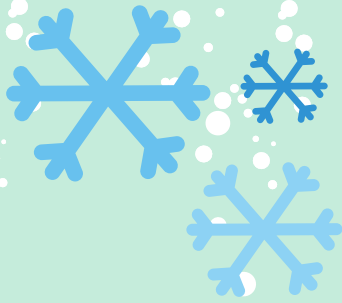
In our construction area some of our learners made circus tents using bricks, materials, and task planners! Task planners support our learners with independence when completing tasks and activities in the learning zone.

We have been to the park to work on our gross motor skills – climbing equipment, digging, and making sandcastles and a focus on ball games. This means we are generalising our learning from the classroom to the community!

This term the learners have built new friendships and are turn-taking, sharing their space and sharing resources.

Well done to all of Hercules class learners and staff for such a fantastic term!





Leo class



This



term,



some

of



Leo



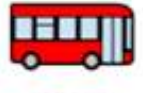
class

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getting

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bus

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supermarket

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buy



ingredients

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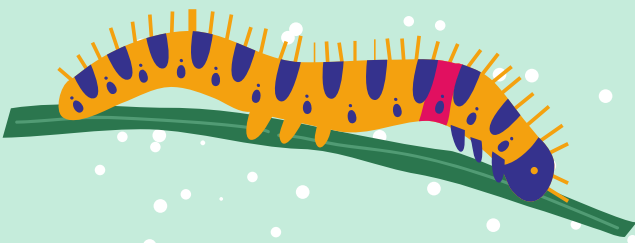


cooking



lessons.





Luna class



This term has been a great one for Luna class!

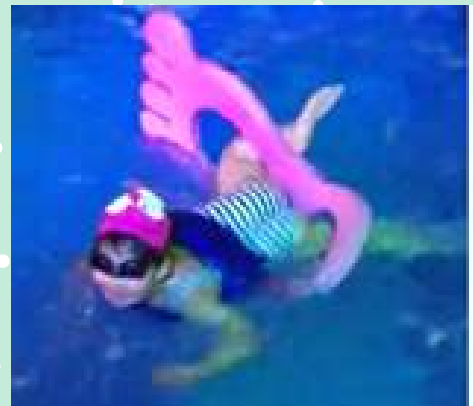
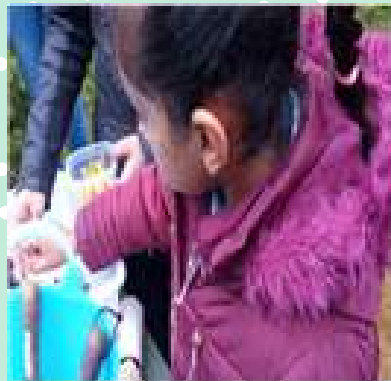
We have been very active this term. We've been getting confident in the water whilst at the pool.

Our trike session has focused on putting on our helmets and using our strength to pedal. We have also been making sure we are safe whilst we go round the road track.

At Holly Lodge we have been exploring along the sensory nature trail learning about caterpillars and mini-beasts. In our last trip we smelt lots of winter and Christmas scents like cinnamon, cloves and pine cones. The trip also helped us to get used to walking in different environments especially as the ground was uneven at times!

We have working hard at generalising our learning from the classroom into the community. This term our learners have built new friendships, sharing their space and sharing resources.

Well done to all of Luna Class learners and staff for such a fantastic term!





Andromeda class



Andromeda class have had a wonderful action-packed, Autumn term.

They have been reading recipes and practising writing shopping lists, counting money and buying items in our community learning zone. They took their shopping lists to Waitrose and bought ingredients to make mango lassi in celebration of Diwali. Later in the day they used the ingredients they had bought and followed the recipe to make the delicious mango lassi.

Andromeda class also observed Remembrance Day, by making poppies and sharing a minute's silence at 11am on the 11th of November.





Capella class

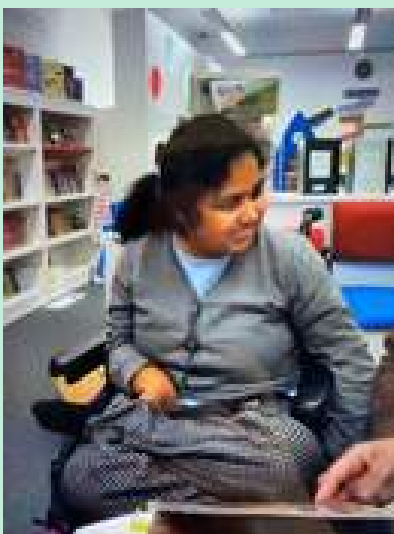


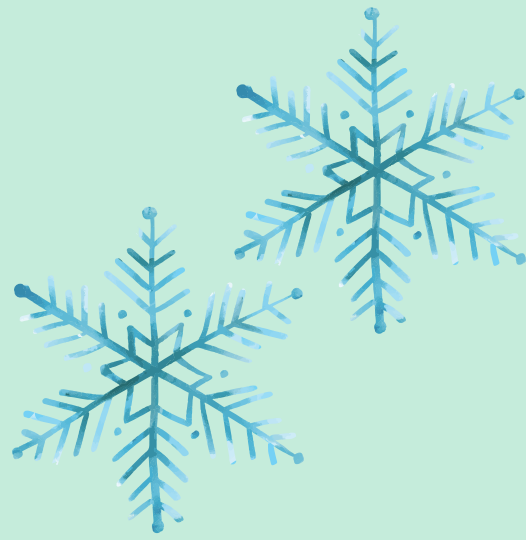
Exciting experiences outside Strathmore!!

Our pupils walked to different places in the local community. Xintong visited the local library in Twickenham for the very first time. Being a new place for her, she transitioned to and from the Library without displaying any challenging behaviour.

Qasim walked around the school block with a familiar adult. He followed verbal and gestural instructions while crossing the street.

Hajra and Klara went to the Saint Richard Reynolds School library.





Nova class

.....Love to explore

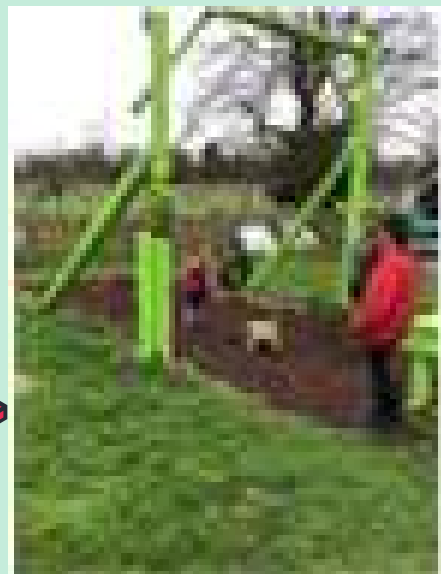
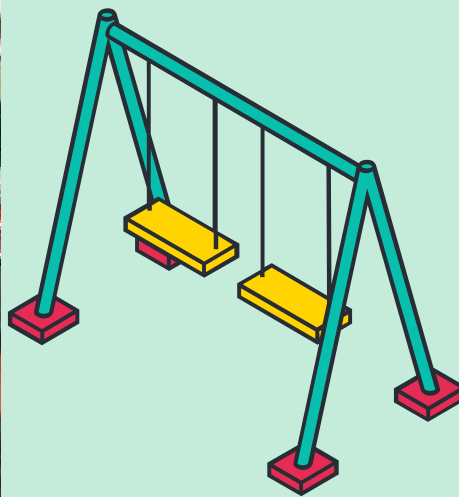
Marble Hill Play Centre



Nova class have thoroughly enjoyed exploring the play centre at Marble Hill. We have been visiting the site every week for the whole of Autumn 2.

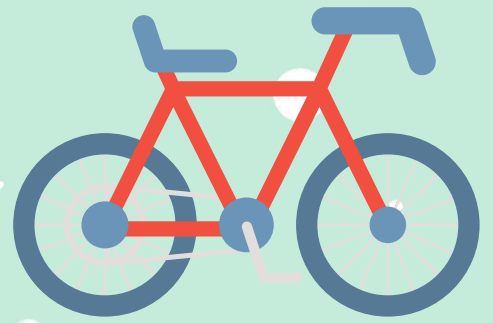
The play centre has supported the learners to begin to overcome some physical barriers and supported the development of our gross motor skills.

The learners have made huge amounts of progress during these visits, some of the children have developed their core strength enough so that they have been able to use the zip line, balance beams and swings independently. We also enjoyed seeing our link class and making closer bonds and friendships with our peers. The learners have been able to develop social interactions with their peers during these visits. 😊





Perseus class



Perseus class have had a great Autumn term.

We have started our weekly walks to the sensory park not far from our campus. The boys have been learning how to walk along on the pavement in a group and cross the road safely.

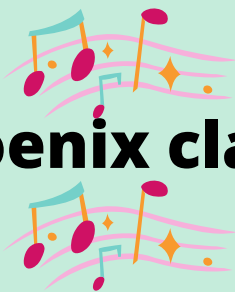
Every week the pupils have continued to have Balance Bikes and they have participated very well, showing progress. One learner has started riding the bike independently.

We love being active and exploring our senses.





Phoenix class



In Phoenix class we have been preparing for our extra-special trip to the pantomime to see Cinderella. All of our learning zones have been given fairytale themes such as Princess and the Pea, Jack and the Beanstalk, Princess and the Frog and many others.

As well as this, we have added the Cinderella theme into our sensory story and Attention Autism sessions to help the learners become introduced to and understand more about the characters they will be watching. We have dressed up as the titular character, as well as been given a wonderful puppet show version of Cinderella by one of our learners.

There has also been a weekly cinema club on Friday afternoons to learn about theatre etiquette (sitting in rows of seats, clapping after a performance etc). The class had a vote and chose Shrek the Musical to watch for 20 mins each week. They have all done a brilliant job listening and engaging, with lots of laughing.



Vega class -An interview with Angela Hewitt

By Haydan and Arika



What are your best memories at Strathmore School?

I have lots of memories from my wonderful journey. I have enjoyed every aspect of my job here. It's been brilliant working such talented students.

Are you still going to be on the buses?

No, I am going to retire from both jobs, I have a new chapter and a new beginning which I am going to look forward to.

How long have you worked at Strathmore School?

I started working for the school on the 2nd of September 1975. Before you were all born, over 40 years.

Over the years can you tell us how Strathmore School has changed?

There have been many changes over the years within the school, but they have been mainly good changes, especially a brand-new school.

What are your plans for the future?

I have enrolled into an art course, which I am starting in January, which I'm looking forward to. I would like to travel more, as I like going on holiday. I like walking, going to the theatre, reading, and going down to the coast.

Did you enjoy your role at Strathmore School?

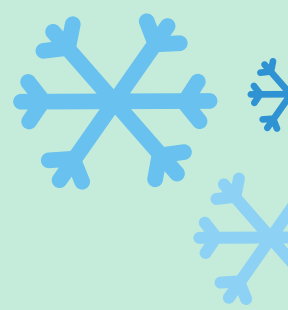
Yes, I enjoyed every aspect of the job. Gaining experience from working in different classes over the years. Even though the job can be challenging at times, I still loved my job.

Are you going to miss us?

Yes, I am going to miss you all so much. Working here has been a big part of my life.

What will you miss the most about working at Strathmore School?

The brilliant students and my colleagues.



Aquila class

Since the beginning of this academic year, our pupils have experienced and learned about different types of festivities and getting ready to attend events in line with the theme: 'The Greatest Show'.

In Autumn 1, our sensory story was focused on getting ready for a night out to celebrate a birthday and seeing a band playing in a nightclub.

In Autumn 2, our sensory story focused on preparing for and celebrating Diwali. James made requests using his PECS book for the torch, giving light in this story.

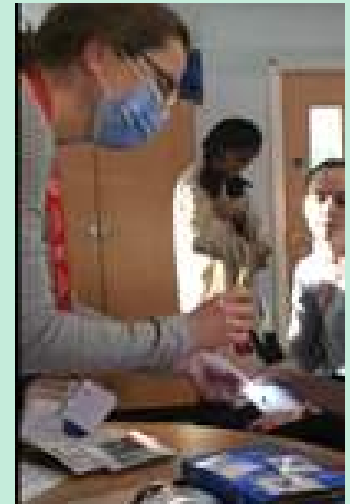
Several students, namely Ella, Faayaz, James and Joey, enjoyed eating garlic and coriander naan and asked for more using their various communication aids!

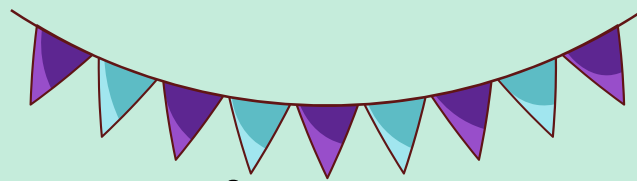
Hana has been working on identifying actions such as eating and sleeping.

Paulo engaged with washing with sandalwood soap and has since requested this as a reward following completion of classwork.

Zunaira enjoyed the clothes in the stories, the main character choosing his favourite t-shirt in 'Andre's Night Out' and the new clothes in 'Happy Diwali' and liked the smell of the body spray.

Students chose different instruments to play to music in the stories. Next term our sensory stories will have the theme 'Roar and Explore'!





Mira class

Café Vanilla



As part of Mira class's work experience, we have been practising and preparing, shopping, and baking for the re-opening of Café Vanilla. This week we saw Café Vanilla's doors open once more to serve our delicious chocolate brownies and famous lemon drizzle cake. We've tested it and it is yum!

Opening did not come without its hurdles though! We had to problem-solve a trolley overload which caused a slight delay, but we overcame it and it was business as usual. Café Vanilla would like to give a special thank you to Anusha's mum for her support. We would also like to thank Adriana for being our first official Café Vanilla customer.

We were happy to welcome members of the public, parents, and staff to join us. We are also looking forward to seeing more customers visit Café Vanilla.

Hinata, barista, said: "I am happy, and I want to do it again next week."

Harvey, customer service, said: "I liked taking the orders and I had to tell Hinata what to make for the customer."

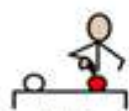
Members of the public who visited our café gave excellent feedback on our coffee selections and stated: "It's delicious."





Pegasus class

Music sessions



This



term



Pegasus



have



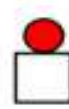
enjoyed



their

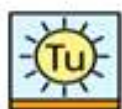


music sessions



on

a



Tuesday



morning.



They



have been



working hard



practising



the

greatest



show



body



percussion

+

and



Jambo



Bwana



ready

for



their



winter



concert!





School Council

By Renata Stachnik



At the beginning of the Autumn term learners across the school voted for members of the School Council for this academic year. The councillors were very keen to have an on-line meeting with members of the School Council from other campuses.

All councillors really enjoy the meetings, during which they have great opportunities to practise their communication and social skills, make choices, work as a part of team, as well as learn about British values like, democracy, tolerance and respect.

This term, the School Council made a decision on which charities our school is going to support on the Charity Days in the Spring and Summer terms.

The councillors from SRR and Grey Court campuses were very excited to elect the winner of the Jack Petchey Student Award and decide how to spend money from this grant.

As we approached the end of the term, the School Council members from all three campuses were busy with Christmas activities, shopping and decorating Christmas trees and tables for the Christmas lunch. They also made cards and Christmas decorations to show their appreciation to all Strathmore staff for their hard work this term.

On behalf of the councillors and the School Council leaders we want to wish you all a wonderful Winter holiday.





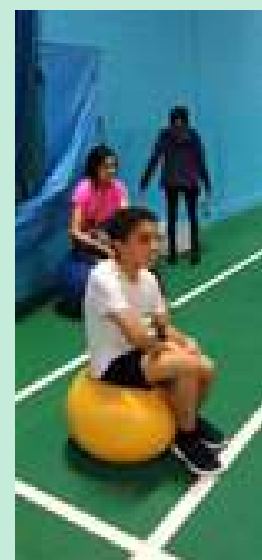
The secondary learners Upper PE groups have been attending St Mary's for PE this term.

It has been a fantastic opportunity for generalising PE skills but also for developing independent skills.

A group of learners from SRR Campus have been cycling to the venue led by experienced cyclist and class teacher Penel and a group of learners from Grey Court campus have been travelling by public bus to the venue.

The sessions are planned and delivered by the St Mary's students, and they have worked hard to create fun activities which increase our learners' heart rates as well as providing challenging activities where the learners must use attacking and defending skills.

We will be using St Mary's facilities later in the year to further develop our relationship with them and St Mary's students will continue to work with Strathmore by coming into school and volunteering with us.





Fulham VS Derby Football Match

By Louise Ross

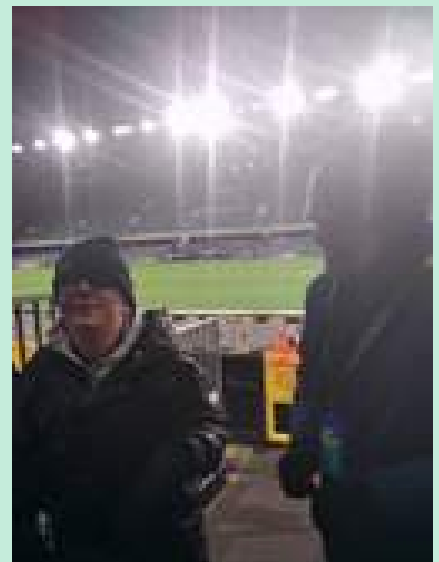
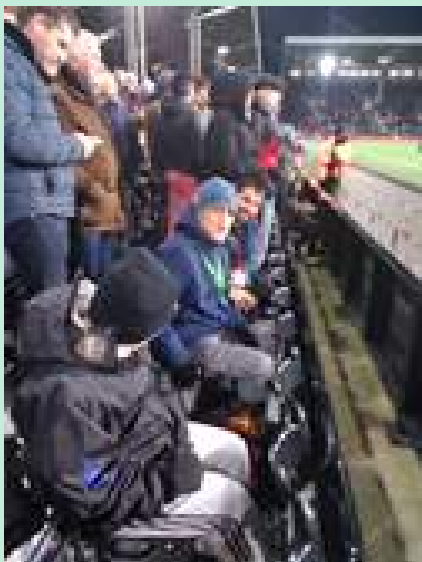
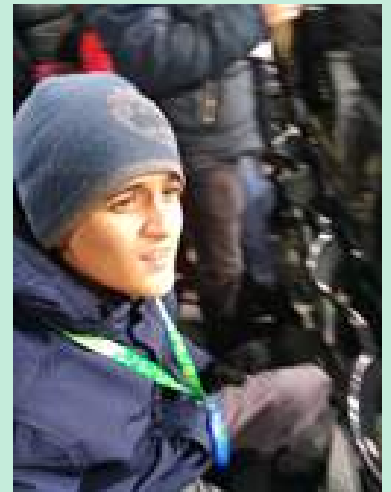


On Wednesday 24th November, four secondary learners went to the Fulham vs Derby match at Craven Cottage. The score was 0-0 but the boys had a great time cheering and chanting with the crowd and enjoyed looking at the trophy cabinet.

A massive thank you to Laura Dyer and team who arranged the trip and took the learners to the match. It was a freezing evening but well worth it for the smiles on the boys' faces. A big high five to Zane's dad Simon, who came to enjoy the game too!



We're looking forward to doing more activities like this in the future.





Marble Hill Play Centre



This year every class is going to have time at Marble Hill Play Centre.

The venue provides fantastic opportunities for the classes to apply their gross motor skills in an open environment with larger equipment. MHPC have recently employed a new SENCO to support their SEN provision and Katy has provided a wonderful experience for Nova and Delphini classes to engage in every Tuesday morning from 10-11.30am. Katy has been using our developmental framework to create meaningful learning opportunities for the learners. It has been fantastic to see the classes make progress whilst generalising their skills in a new environment.

It has been a great opportunity for parents to join in too.

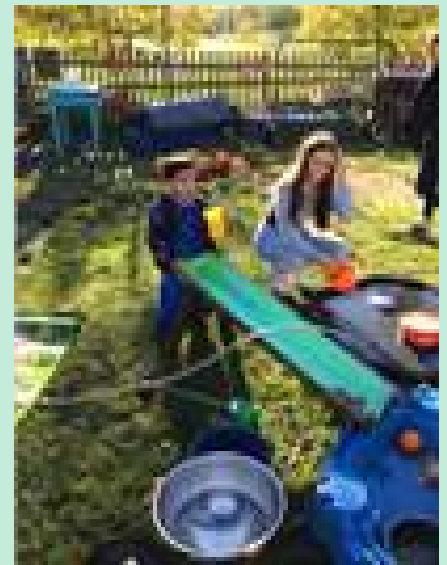
Next half term Phoenix, Perseus and Luna classes will be attending for 5 weeks so please come down and enjoy the fun.



Exploring



Scooping



Pouring



Taking risks



Parents joining in the fun



Reaching

Swimming at the Hydro Pool

This term lots of classes have been attending swimming lessons at our hydro pool on the Grey court campus. We have enjoyed exploring our senses in the water, looking at sensory lights and listening to relaxing music. For those parents who have been able to use Earwig you should be able to see the progress your child has made this year. Lots of pupils are working on kicking their legs and blowing bubbles in the water, all working towards being safe and independent in the pool. We are proud of all our learners for all the hard work they have done in the pool this year.

A special mention goes to Paulo who managed to transition to the pool for the first time in many years and enjoyed being in the pool with his friends. Other special mentions go to Aniyah and Jackson who have been very brave facing their fears of getting their hair wet and being in the water, Elm who has been able to let go of the adult and move himself around the pool by himself, and Diljeet who has been swimming for the first time.



Swimming at Teddington

By Annabelle Warrior, Swimming Teacher

This term Leo class have been able to attend swimming lessons at Teddington pool fitness centre. The pupils have been asking the receptionist to go swimming, using changing rooms and showers as independently as possible and doing amazing work in the pool. Although the pool is a bit colder than the hydro pool we are used to, all the pupils have been doing lots of very fast swimming to keep warm.

Special mentions go to Aimee who was able to swim 2 metres with no floats and we are sure she will be doing longer and longer distances in the future.

Tristan who was nervous of going to the pool has had great fun and been able to do star floats on his back for 10 seconds all by himself!

Aleena has been laughing and having great fun chasing and splashing adults using a noodle to help her swim.

Michael who can already swim has been showing us his skills underwater.

Amelie, Ethan, Adonai, Zaki and Pascal have all been moving in the water independently and are working towards reducing the amount of flotation aids they need in the water.

All pupils from Leo class should be very proud of their progress this year and I am looking forward to seeing them progressing more and more each year.



Family Support and Wellbeing

By Natalie Arciero

Dear Strathmore Families,

This Autumn term has flown by, and I really can't believe we are now counting down to Christmas.

It has been lovely to see our families face to face for our coffee mornings, which have been held at our St Richard Reynolds campus on site and for the families across the river, at the Fox and Duck opposite our Russell School campus. Our puberty workshop for families of female students going through puberty was also well attended. Stories were shared and tips and strategies were learned, thank you to the parents who came along.

It was great to see Sue Robson for our post-16 family information session this term. Sue is a former Strathmore parent and now currently runs Bright Futures (post-16) at RUILS charity. She has a wealth of knowledge in this specific area and we will be running this information session on an annual basis for Strathmore parents. You can contact Sue direct regarding any post-16 issue. Her details are found on the Bright Futures | RUILS Charity website.

Our final coffee morning of the term, held with Fiona from Skylarks charity and Mo our school nurse, brought families together from all campuses, Thanks to all who came, we even had a few mince pies too!

I am really looking forward to the Spring and Summer terms, when I will be holding some workshops with our therapies teams; Physio/SALT/OT (see attached flyer below) which will be a good opportunity to meet the wider team and use some strategies at home.

As always, remember to keep an eye on your borough's local offer page for updates on clubs and events this Christmas.

AfC Info website - Kingston and Richmond :: SEND Local Offer
Synergy (hounslow.gov.uk)

Wandsworth's SEND Local Offer | THRIVE Wandsworth

Take care of yourselves and each other.
Have a wonderful Christmas and a great New Year!

See you in 2022 😊

Best wishes from Natalie,
Strathmore Family Worker



Parent /Carer Information sessions



Individual inclusive independent

These are some of the exiting workshops we are planning for the Spring and Summer Terms.
Further information and instructions for booking will be sent out early in 2022.



020 8948 0047 / 07809 201284



Strathmore Family Worker narciero@strathmore.org.uk

"making the most of moments"



Ideas to support engagement & interaction

"what does O & T stand for in OT"



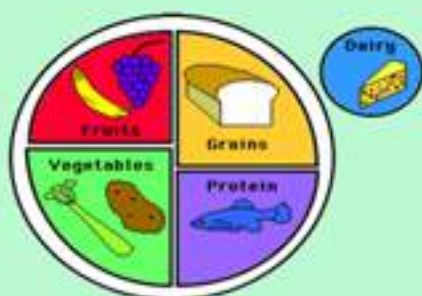
Sensory strategies for your child

"skip to the loo"



Supporting my child to be continent

"what's on your plate"



Supporting a fussy eater

"counting sheep"



Supporting sleep for your child zzz