



JOHN MILTON ACADEMY TRUST

Summer Term Newsletter



Bacton
Primary School



Cedars Park
Primary School



Mendlesham
Primary School



Stowupland
High School



The John Milton
Sixth Form



MENDLESHAM



STOWUPLAND

A message from the Trust

Welcome to the John Milton Academy Trust's summer term newsletter. The summer term has made for a brilliant end to the year at all our schools featuring day trips, residential, various visitors and many reasons to celebrate.

Thank you to all pupils, staff, parents and carers for the support we have received throughout the whole academic year.

We would like to wish everyone a very happy summer holiday and we look forward to seeing you for another brilliant year in September. To those of you leaving for the next stage of your education, we wish you all the successes in the future.

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01 A visit from a STEM ambassador

Pupils at Bacton Primary School have reached new heights – learning all about rockets and creating their own to fire into the sky.

Dave Green, STEM ambassador and science teacher, visited this term to teach students about space, rockets and how they work.

Year 5 and 6 pupils learned about NASA's upcoming Artemis programme, and its quest to reach the moon, before learning how gas pressure can provide thrust for a rocket. They then set about making their own rockets out of card and sticky tape before seeing how far they would fly on the school's playing field.

Mr Green said: "Rockets are great because you can do all kinds of experiments to study how to make them go further and higher.

"We have been looking at how the angle the rocket is launched affects the distance it goes.

"Rockets are an exciting way to get children interested about physics, as well as developing their interest in experimentation.

"It has been a really fun and exciting day and I hope the children have learned some interesting science along the way."

Sarah King, Head of School, said: "We would like to say a big thank you to Mr Green for coming in and teaching the children about rockets.

"It is such a fascinating subject and the children really enjoyed making their own.

"They especially enjoyed launching the rockets on the school field and were very excited to see whose flew the furthest – they were over the moon.

"The children learned a lot about what makes a rocket work, how aerodynamics can affect its flight and how gas pressure works.

"It's really important to show the children the practical application of what they learn in the classroom, showing that using physics and maths, you can reach the stars."



02 Pupils meet Curly the Tarantula, Severus the Scorpion and Doris the Lesser Bamboo Rat

Children at Mendlesham and Bacton primary schools have come face-to-face with a host of fascinating animals after being treated to a visit from mobile petting zoo Our Animal World.

The children got to meet a host of creepy crawlies including Curly the Tarantula, Helen the Green Bean Stick Insect, Severus the Scorpion and Matilda the Centipede – as well as getting to cuddle Doris the Lesser Bamboo Rat.

Executive Headteacher Tessa Sait said: “The children had a fantastic time and absolutely loved all the animals.

“It’s wonderful to give the children the chance to see these creatures close up, inspiring a lifelong love of the environment and the animal kingdom.

“The children absolutely loved it.”

Pupils learned about the different adaptations each species had developed to overcome their environment – from stick insects’ clever camouflage to a cockroach’s ability to survive months without food.

They also learned about life cycles and how butterflies and moths develop from a pupa to an adult.

Laura Jackson, owner of Our Animal World, said: “We had a lovely day at Mendlesham Primary School, the children really engaged with our visit and loved meeting the animals.

“We find the hands-on learning really sticks with the children, they have that great experience and remember what they’ve been taught.

“The more understanding you have of animals and the environment, the more you want to protect them.

“Our goal is to encourage children to develop a love of the natural world and the environment that they keep through their lives.

“Meeting these animals can also help children with any phobias they may have, meeting an animal in a safe and controlled environment can help them overcome any fears they may have.”



03 A visit from an author and poet

Debra Bertulis, known for her poetry books 'Where do Wishes go?' and the 'The Moon's Gorgonzola', hosted an A.I.M Higher writing workshop at Cedars Park Primary School this term.

Joined by pupils from Old Newton, Abbots Hall, Stonham Aspell and Ringshall primary schools, Debra tasked the children with describing their favourite colours and shades, using words to create images in the reader's mind.

"Children always make the best poets," she said. "We had a fantastic workshop talking about what colours mean to us and how they make us feel. We often know we like a colour but don't ask why that is – it may make us happy but we may not understand quite why.

"The essence of the day is about potential, ideas and playing with words – putting out thoughts on paper. It's about showing pupils what they are capable of, raising self-esteem and self-confidence. Everyone has a toolbox to create imagery with words, and that's what poetry is all about. We were not focussing on the technical side – spelling and grammar – it's more about unlocking their imagination."

After splitting groups and composing their poems, those who wanted to read their work aloud were invited to present it to the class.

Headteacher Aisha Suhail said: "We would like to say a huge thank you to Debra for coming in and speaking to the children. The workshop she held was brilliant and really inspired the children with their own writing. I have read some of the poems the children wrote and they are amazing, full of imagination and creative ideas. It was also lovely to have pupils from surrounding schools join us for the day, I'm sure plenty of new friendships were made."



04 Students study impact of regeneration on Suffolk town

Around 70 Year 10 GCSE geography students from Stowupland High travelled to Felixstowe to survey the effect of regeneration on the coastal town.

Pupils worked in small teams, collecting data at two seafront locations – around the pier and Beach Street, carrying out experiments, sampling foot traffic flow and used environmental quality assessments on a scale of 1-6 to evaluate their surroundings.

Head of Humanities Chris Clarke said: “This was a fantastic opportunity for our students to take what they have learned in lessons and use it in a practical way.

“This was a hands-on experience for them, conducting real experiments and recording real-life data.

“Students were also tasked with speaking with members of the public about their view on the town’s regeneration.

“It’s not easy approaching people to ask them questions, so I was very impressed with how positively they approached the day.”

In the morning sessions, at low tide, students focused on the physical geography of the coastline, assessing the impact of the tide and the effect different coastal strategies have in managing it.

Using a fully biodegradable orange, students studied the long shore drift and its impact on the beach, measuring the depth of sediment and pebble size and logging their results.

Mr Clarke added: “You couldn’t have asked for a better week to do it – we were blessed with two beautiful days of sunshine.

“The students had a brilliant day seeing for themselves ‘in the field’ the issues they have studied in the classroom.

“It was great for our students to get out there and speak to people in the community and find out the issues affecting their lives.

“They were a real credit to the school and young people in general.”



05 Suffolk Speak Out Challenge

Thirty Year 10 students from Stowupland High School were selected to participate in the prestigious Speaker's Trust - Suffolk Speak Out Challenge.

The remarkable event focused on developing young people's communication skills, building their confidence, and empowering them to speak out and be heard.

Throughout the day, students worked closely with an experienced oracy trainer. It was incredibly rewarding to see their confidence grow as the day progressed with the trainer commenting on how Elliot Stanley, Hayden Southern and Andi Wright overcame their initial shyness to talk with confidence at the end of the day.

The trainer was exceptionally pleased with everyone's dedication and improvement, ultimately selecting five semi-finalists: Alfie Davis, Elena Kendall, Jed Millin, Reef Mead, and Saffron Hurrell.

These students then delivered their speeches to an audience of Year 7 students. Their courage was commendable, making it a tough decision for the judges to choose only two finalists.

After much deliberation, Jed Millin and Saffron Hurrell were selected to represent our school at the grand final in Ipswich.

Jed and Saffron attended the final at Dance East, competing against 12 other talented students from various Suffolk schools. Their participation in the event was a testament to their hard work, courage, and exceptional speaking abilities.

The dedication and growth of all students who took part in the challenge were truly inspiring. Congratulations to Alfie, Elena, Jed, Reef, and Saffron for reaching the semi-finals, and a special commendation to Jed and Saffron for making it to the finals.



06 Wellbeing Week activities

Stowupland High School hosted a Wellbeing Week to support during the exam period.

A host of games and activities were arranged throughout lunchtimes during the week, joined by staff from The Mix youth project in Stowmarket as well as partners from the NHS Mental Health Support Team.

Principal Lee Walker said: “This time of year can be very challenging for students, with exam season in full swing and the added pressures that can bring.

“We wanted to give students the opportunity to unwind at lunchtime and, if they would like to, to speak to someone about their mental health and wellbeing.”

A recent survey from the Children’s Society – the Good Childhood Report – revealed one in 10 children aged 10-17 said they had low wellbeing, with almost a third unhappy with at least one specific area of their lives.

The activities at Stowupland put on during World Wellbeing Week looked to combat this, giving students the opportunity to think about their wellbeing and how they can look after themselves.

Mr Walker added: “Young people have been through a lot over the last few years, particularly in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic.

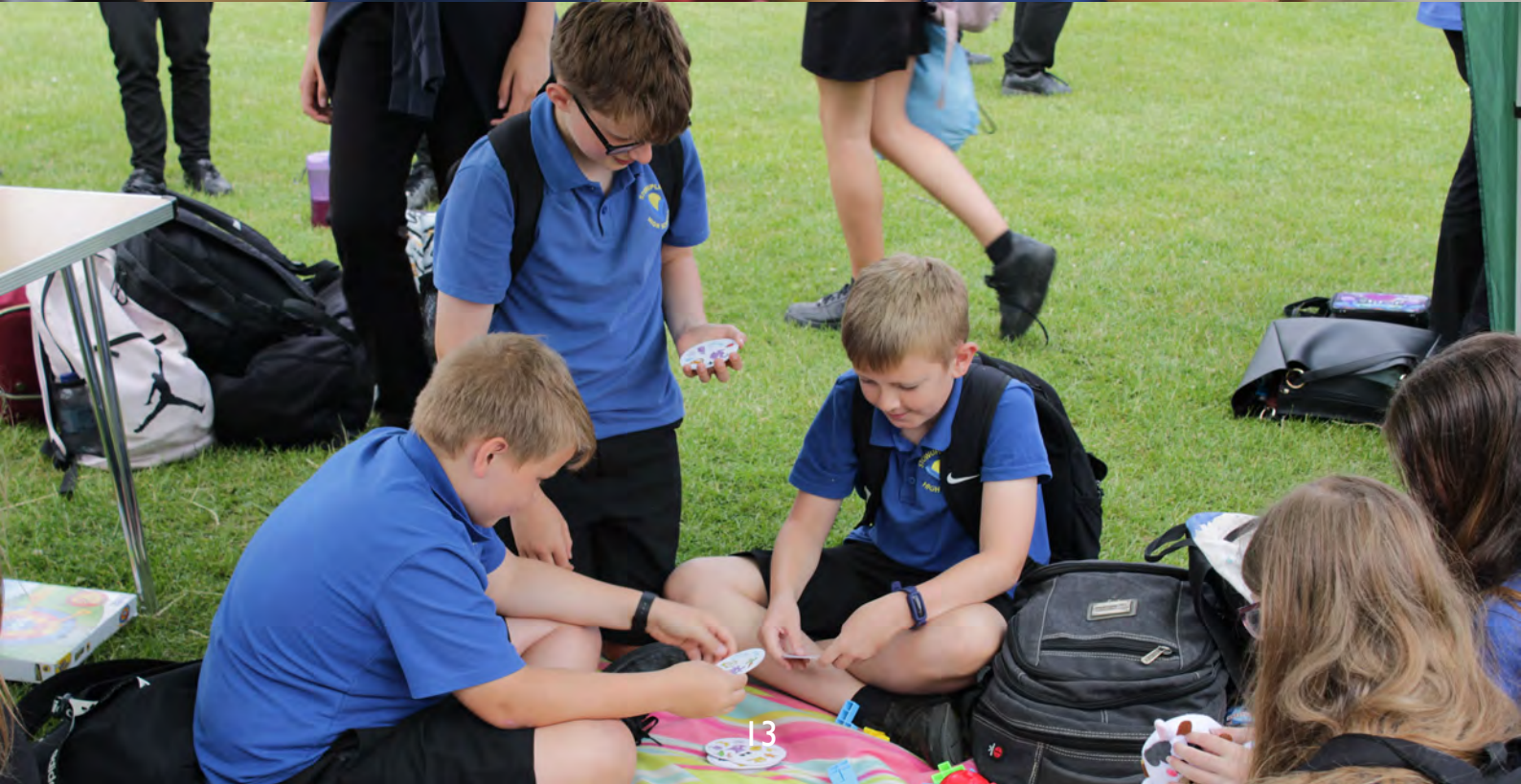
“The results of the Good Childhood Report show many young people are struggling at the moment, and it is important we do all we can as a school to support their wellbeing.

“The students absolutely loved the week’s games and activities – we have had some excellent feedback.

“We would like to say a big thank you to our guests from The Mix youth project, the NHS Mental Health Support Team and the school’s trained Emotional Literacy Support Assistants who joined us for the week’s activities.”

A huge thank you also goes to all staff members who supported our pupils by running additional revision sessions throughout the half term holidays.

Good luck to those students collecting results in August!



07 Contact details

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Safeguarding remains of paramount importance, even during holiday periods. If you are worried that a child or young person is at immediate risk of abuse, harm or neglect - call Customer First on 0808 800 4005 (24-hour service free from landlines and most mobiles).

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