

**Guest Speaker, Deputy Mayor, Chairman, Ladies, Gentlemen and Children,**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome Michael Spinney, past chairman of IAPS. His school, which he was head of for many years, The Beacon, is the most beautiful environment, with a lovely atmosphere.

I came away from visiting them having seen a number of good ideas for us to use here.

This year seems to have flown by. I think perhaps that the greatest charge this year is that our “annex” at Broughton Manor now has its first Year 6, its own subject co-ordinators, its own Speech Day, which was last night, and of course, its own Headmaster. Yesterday’s Speech Day was a credit to the whole team.

Mr Urquhart and his team now have a fully fledged stand-alone school, which is thriving.

We have a new Government and we all wait with trepidation to see what new educational initiatives it will introduce.

One of the biggest problems with teaching is the desire of many teachers to label children, to assign them a level and prejudge their achievement.

The last 10 years of government directives, with instructions to target and label children in order to track their progress, have pushed the situation out of control.

One of the most important goals of schools is to provide stimulating environments for all children.

Teachers have been subject to a torrent of directives, telling them to target, label and test children endlessly.

It seems that children no longer learn in order to develop problem-solving skills.

Children need to be taught within a culture that values their ability to think and reason, invites their engagement and encourages them to achieve at high levels.

Rote learning and regurgitating memorized facts are a poor substitute for applying information to different situations.

Children are naturally curious and their inclination is to make sense of things and to understand them.

Encouraging this is essential to an holistic education and encapsulates all that we strive for at MKPS.

It is at times like this that we are so glad of our independence and believe it to be our strength.

**And so, to our**

## **SENIOR SCHOOL RESULTS**

### **Independent Schools Results**

A number of children passed to independent schools, including Bedford Modern School and Bedford Girls School, the Girls School now being combined from Bedford High School and Dame Alice Harpur School.

We look forward to working with Michael Hall, new head of Bedford Modern School and Jo McKenzie, new Head of the Girls' School.

Michael Hall has agreed to be our Guest Speaker next year and there will be an opportunity to meet him before that.

### **Grammar School Results**

- 33 reached the required standard at 11+ for grammar school
- 3 achieved the maximum score

All have been allocated a school, including those living in Milton Keynes.

Congratulations everyone!

## STAFF

**We welcomed several new members of staff this year :**

- Mrs Crompton and Miss Campion to the preparatory department
- Miss Laney to the PE department
- Miss Guy, pre-prep music
- Mrs Dokhan, food technology
- Mrs Goodridge, to the office

**We also welcomed a number of new staff to work with our younger children:**

Here they are, settled in well!

### **Staff Promotions**

We congratulate:

- Mr Urquhart on his appointment as Head of Broughton Manor Preparatory School,
- Mr Canwell who became our second deputy head this term, to join Mrs Cave and
- Mr Bates, Head of Junior Prep, who is now responsible for all pastoral matters

### **Staff News**

- Miss Flanagan moves into the prep department in September as a class 8 form tutor
- Mr McLaughlan, Chef, had a baby daughter, Olivia, last September. She attends our nursery at Walton, where her mother is our Matron.
- Miss Rimmer and Mrs Ziegler moved into the prep department

### **Staff Leavers**

- Miss Compton, Languages, is leaving, to go and work abroad
- Miss Guy, Mrs Szentpeteri and Miss Jarvis leave the pre-preparatory department

I thank you all for your support and wish you continued success in the future.

**This May we welcomed Mrs Urquhart as financial controller**

**In September we welcome:**

- Mr Driver, Head of PE and Games
- Miss Norman, to the prep department and to teach Languages
- Miss Clayton and Miss Ridley, who join the pre-preparatory department
- Mr Preece, to teach pre-prep Music
- Mr Burton-Pye, Sports Coach

And we are very pleased to welcome you here today.

## COURSES

Over 100 staff attended courses this year on Child Protection and 22 did Paediatric First Aid.

- Additionally a further 3 of us qualified as Child Protection Officers and
- 12 of us took our ONC in Dyslexia teaching
- Mr Graham Nunn spent a day here with all staff on Preparing for Inspection and checking Statutory Policies
- Mr Canwell, Mrs Cave and I attended an ISI course

Most Heads of Department attended courses related to their subjects, to include:

- IAPS courses on Hockey and the teaching of PHSE,
- on Reading and Writing through Literature,
- Assessment for Learning in Science,
- A Design and Technology course,
- the use of ICT in Geography,
- the use of ICT in Music,
- the use of ICT in the curriculum,
- the IAPS Heads of Pre-Prep Conference,
- aTalking Partners course, to help children who have English as an Additional Language

## DEVELOPMENTS

We now have 2 large new changing rooms for the prep department pupils, built onto the side of the sports hall. These have greatly improved the changing facilities for the PE department.

We have found the new sports area at the back to be invaluable. We don't know how we did without it, and tennis is now embedded in the curriculum.

**At Broughton Manor** the new phase 4 Junior Prep building, being built by Pauley Construction, is nearly finished and will be ready for new pupils soon. The lovely Orangery will be finished during the year.

Our **Walton** nursery has a brand new **kitchen**.

We are the proud owners of a **new prospectus**. Pauley Creative has done an excellent job and is also going to update our website.

Our **non-fiction library** has been refurbished and sorted appropriately this year, thanks to Mrs Ziegler and a **new fiction library** has been created upstairs adjacent to the English room.

**The MKPS Times** has been totally revamped and will be available electronically on the school's website and on our **Parent Zone** from today.

**The Parent Zone** is our new parent-focused area on the MKPS website, where parents can find current information by department, including a diary section.

We purchased a **further minibus** for the school to add to our fleet.

We have **3 Staff Review Groups** which started last year:

- To review Trips and visitors, led by Mrs Manson,
- Routines and Organisation, led by Mr Cave,
- and Pastoral Care, Mr Bates.

From these groups lunch times, play times and tea times have been improved, the School Council was set up and some new and exciting trips and visitors have been introduced, including the Skipping Workshop, Lego City at The Farm, The Natural History Museum in Oxford and a visit from the Puzzle Company.

And yet to happen – our **Carnival** and **Camping at the Farm**.

Thank you to all staff in those groups, for your ideas.

## **Each year we ask the children to fill in a questionnaire about school.**

Most thought they were making good progress.

Most said, "I find the work I do interesting."

Almost all said "I like being at school."

Most, however, thought there was too much homework.

More wanted pupils' views listened to.

Some wanted a specific person to turn to if they had a personal difficulty.

- So we talked about how we could improve. Firstly we introduced the SEAL programme (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) to talk about our feelings and social interactions.
- Then we appointed Mr Bates as responsible for pastoral and personal matters.
- And at Anna Bruce's suggestion, we set up a School Council, led by Mr Bates.

The **School Council** has regular meetings to discuss the running of the school and it acts as the link between pupils and staff. As a direct result of the council, we have begun our Friday Ice-skating club, which now goes to Planet Ice. We are also going to start a horse-riding club in September.

The council will continue in its work, with projects for break times, in the new school year.

## **A little story for you:**

We had a Code-Breakers week in March.

During the week the children had to find words from codes, with clues.

They had to find a 3 lettered word, with "a" as the second letter. . (The word was man)

Mr Bates said, "Look at me. It's like me."

"Fat," was the reply.

"No, not fat," said Mr Bates, "Try again. Like me."

"Bald."

With that, he told her the answer.

## EVENTS

In January we organized our second Milton Keynes Prom at the theatre, showcasing the wealth of musical talent in our local independent and grammar schools.

Our Chamber Choir took part and sang beautifully.

The evening was presented by Mr Hilary Davan Wetton, former conductor of the Milton Keynes City Orchestra.

Pupils aged 8 to 18 took part in what was a wonderful and special evening of diverse musical performances.

My thanks to Mrs Jane Billing and Mrs Frances Newman for once again organizing this special event.

Next week, on pre-prep Sports Day, we will be welcoming our grandparents into school again, to share a day with their grandchild, as they do every year.

We are always flooded with comments that “It wasn’t like this in my day!”

This term, as part of the Science curriculum, an incubator and 10 chickens’ eggs were delivered and children saw 7 hatch and grow.

There is always huge excitement in school as the chicks hatch. The highlight for many of the children is being able to hold a chick.

Our Community Police Officer continues to visit school regularly and talk to the children.

We have welcomed several of our parents into school this year, to talk to different age groups about their jobs – for example, doctors, nurses, dentists. If any of you would be interested in coming into school, do let us know.

We have many parents from different countries coming into school on the last day of term to run workshops about their country.

There will be a carnival procession after lunch, followed by final assembly at 2pm, where the whole school will be able to see the work prepared by parents and children earlier in the day.

Everyone is welcome.

## **RESIDENTIAL TRIPS**

In the spring term 48 pupils and 5 staff joined Mr Urquhart on the annual ski trip to the Aosta Valley in Italy.

There was a variety of weather conditions from fog to sunshine. All groups made excellent progress and were highly praised by their instructors.

Mr Canwell will be leading next year's trip and the children will be going to France by air instead of the long coach journey of previous years.

At the end of June Mr Canwell is taking a party of 17 under 10 football players to play matches in Malta.

The Isle of Wight trip was the first residential trip of the academic year.

The activities are designed to excite, stimulate and challenge.

But somehow one of the perennial favourites is the Nightline, which mainly involves crawling in mud.

This trip provides another side of the education provided by MKPS. Residential trips teach children many life skills, but the main one, however painful this might be for you parents, is self-reliance, or how to get on without mum and dad.

With this in mind, in September, for the first time, we are having a one-night camping sleep-over at The Farm for our Class 8 children, to give them a taste of a night away before the Isle of Wight Trip.

## And so to SPORT

It has been another very successful year for our sports teams, we have enjoyed particular success in boys' football and girls' netball.

### Football

The **Class 8 boys** had an extremely successful first year. They won football tournaments at Wellingborough and Bedford conceding only 2 goals in the process. They have proved themselves to be the team to beat and have received a great deal of praise from spectators and opponents alike. They are a very strong year group.

Taylor Dart has been selected to play for MK Dons.

**The Class 9 nine boys** have also been extremely successful with all of their sports. They proved to be particularly difficult to beat.

**The Under 10 boys** successfully defended the title for our own 5-a-side tournament in March, beating a strong Berkhamsted team in the final. The A team also performed well in the Berkhamsted tournament finishing third overall.

**The Under 11 A & B** teams played some excellent football again this year and have remained unbeaten in all their fixtures, a fantastic achievement. Our football gets stronger and stronger.

### Hockey

**The U8 & U9 Boys** hockey teams gained some valuable experience this season and have a great deal of potential. They can look forward to successful times ahead.

**Under 10 Boys** hockey team have shown significant improvement.

**Under 11 A Boys** team competed in the IAPS tournament in Haileybury and played well. The snow eventually prevented them from finishing.

### Netball

The class **8 and 9** girls have enjoyed netball this year.

**The U10s** have represented the school extremely well. The A team have had an impeccable season winning all of their fixtures and coming 2<sup>nd</sup> overall at a local tournament.

The U11s have shown immense school spirit and produced moments of outstanding play. Omolara Soluade was awarded best player at the Rugby School netball tournament.

We have high expectations for all of our teams next season!

We now look forward to our school **Sports Day** next Saturday, where our new head of PE and Games, Mr Driver, will be our guest.

## ARTS OUTREACH PROGRAMME AND MUSIC

The Chamber Choir took part in an Independent Schools' Choral Day at Rugby School in the autumn, led by the renowned choral conductor Lin Marsh.

Since then they have also sung regularly in the community at a number of venues.

The Glyndebourne Orchestra trombonists visited in November and ran interactive workshops for class 5 and class 10.

Class 7 went to Milton Keynes Theatre to see Cinderella.

In the spring, we were treated to a performance and workshop from the Juma Steel Band.

Class 10 pupils enjoyed a series of CATS musical theatre workshops run by Richard Reynard, who plays the lead role in Blood Brothers in the West End.

Some students from Tring Park School came to perform a variety of dance styles to classes 6 to 10 and this was followed by a workshop for class 9.

John Harris, story teller, visited the prep and pre-prep departments this week – he was brilliant!

Class 10 visited Bedford Modern School to see their summer show, Bugsy Malone.

The staff saw so many ex pupils who were either in the show, or just to say hello to. It's at times like that that our school shines. Their behaviour when we go out is impeccable and draws many comments from others.

Our new lunchtime recital series has proved very popular. In addition to giving children the valuable experience of performing to a friendly small audience, it has given those preparing for exams an opportunity to perform their prepared pieces.

All prep pupils took part in our Christmas production, Manger Tom and we look forward to our concert next week, when the Chamber and Junior choirs will be joined by a number of our instrumentalists, with some of our Music teachers joining in.

## ART

**Classes 10 and 11** spent an afternoon at the Open University campus on a sculpture walk, celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the OU. This was a special exhibition of 28 sculptures to showcase Milton Keynes artists.

**Both year groups** also took part in a workshop with visiting illustrator Emma Viecelli and they had an insight into how a graphic artist works and how a comic book would be designed and constructed.

**Class 11** visited 78 Derngate in Northampton, the only house in England to be designed by the architect and designer Charles Rennie Mackintosh. The house and garden are newly restored as they were in Victorian times.

They also visited Northampton Museum for a talk on shoe design and went to the National Gallery for an introductory tour of some of the paintings.

**Class 10** went to the Royal Academy to view the Van Gogh exhibition.

**Pupils from classes 9, 10 and 11** exhibited work in the Prep Schools Art Exhibition at Stowe School.

**Classes 7 and 9** took part in a clay workshop, with painter and ceramicist Diana Tonnison, experimenting with textures and surfaces in clay, to create beautiful clay tiles.

## ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

This year has been a busy one at The Farm. It began in earnest with pond dipping, where the children observed and identified the wildlife our pond has to offer.

And they have been busy planting various seeds and planting out crops. The 10s have recently completed learning about organic Farming, where they produced their own plans for crop rotation.

One of the most exciting developments at The Farm has been the construction of a **wildlife garden**. In the Autumn, the 11s each produced a wildlife garden design.

## **HISTORY**

In December class 9 stepped back in time during their visit to the museum in St Albans. They were able to handle different genuine Roman artefacts and some lucky children also got to model the fashion of the day!

Class 9 also visited the hot and humid environment of The Living Rainforest near Newbury. They learned about the rich variety of animal and plant life that lives in the rainforest and the need to protect and nurture these wonderfully diverse ecosystems for future generations.

Next week class 9 will visit Warwick Castle, climb the ramparts and watch a full-sized trebuchet being fired.

Class 10 learned what it was like to be lavishly entertained by Henry V111 when they visited Hampton Court Palace.

## ENGLISH

**Class 11** visited the library to develop an understanding of its excellent research facilities and archive materials.

During the week of **World Book Day** the school hosted a **Book Fair**, which proved very popular with the children, encouraging them to browse and select books from a wide range of titles.

## **YOUNGER CHILDREN'S VISITS**

Class 7 enjoyed a trip to The Natural History Museum in Oxford, among others.

Other age groups went to Stowe Landscape Gardens, Waddesdon Manor and Woburn Safari Park.

Mrs Elcock's daughter, Jamie, visited with 2 trained dogs from the charity Hearing Dogs for the Deaf and the children learnt how these dogs help deaf people in their daily lives.

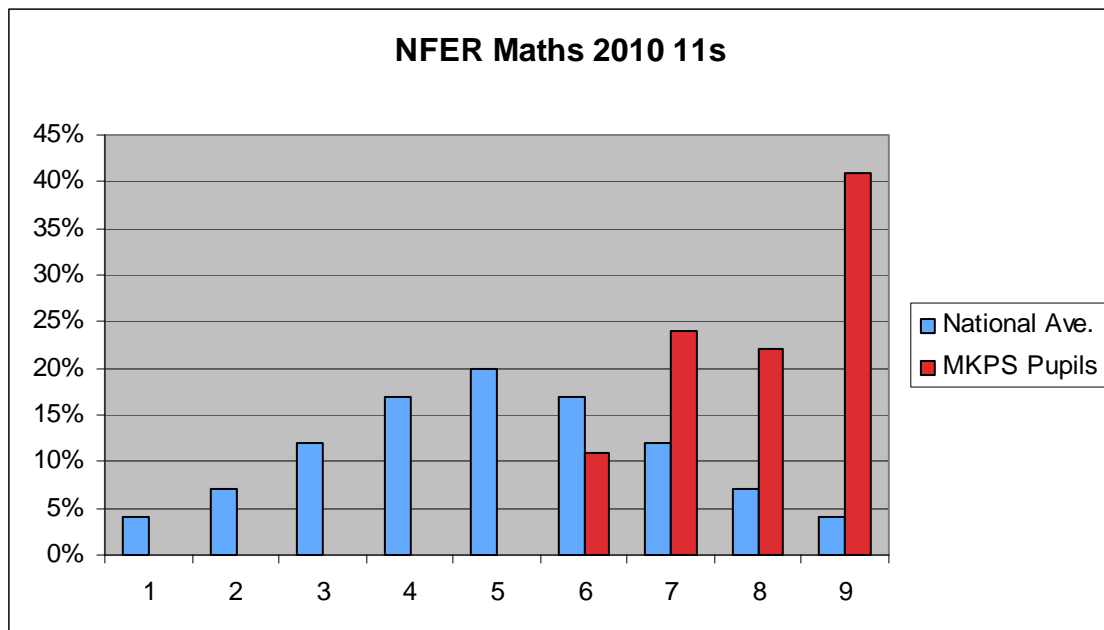
## GL ASSESSMENT IN MATHS

During the year our children take a test which has been standardised to show how well they perform against the national average.

Blue: This is the national graph which shows the national curve with 20% of children achieving 50% and 4% at either end, with 10% and 90% (90% being on the right).

The red blocks show how our children fare in comparison, 41% with 90%, the rest being over 60%. (Well, there is no comparison!).

The standard of maths in this school is outstanding and you will seldom hear a child say that they don't like maths.



## PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

In September many of our parents throughout school attended a meeting to re-form our Parents' Association.

Mrs Joseph leads the group, which meets once a term and meetings are open to all current parents here.

Their first major event was a Spring Fete last term. This was very well supported by all our families. £1800 was raised for our school charity.

Each term the association runs a second hand uniform sale, which proves to be a popular service for parents.

I would like to thank Mrs Joseph and all those of you who have been involved in the association's activities to date.

Each year we send parents of different year groups **questionnaires** about their views of us and how we can improve. Of those who responded,

1. 96% thought that the teaching at the school helps my child make progress.  
97% that the school provides worthwhile attitudes and views.
  2. However, 50% of you thought that there was too much homework.  
And 50% of you thought there was not enough.
  3. The poorest percentage was for: I am satisfied with the information I am given about my child's progress.  
And communication with teachers reduces as you go up the school.
- So we issued you with Curriculum booklets
  - Provided you with a staffroom email address
  - Lengthened the parents consultation times
  - Provided you with suggested reading lists from The National Literacy Trust

## CHARITIES

Our school charity this year is **The Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths**, in memory of a little boy called Harry.

So far we have raised in excess of £2,500 through different school events such as the fete, a non-uniform day, cake sales, collections at end of term concerts and many other activities.

Additionally we have supported Children in Need, The Marie Curie Cancer Appeal and the British Legion Poppy Appeal.

Thank you all very much for your support.

# GOVERNORS

At Christmas **Mr John Napleton** retired from the Board of Governors after 24 years. He was on the inaugural board of governors in 1986.

John made a most valuable contribution to the school as a Governor over the years and although ill health prevents him from being here today, I would like to thank him publicly for all that he has done to support the school.

Next term our Governors will be spending some time in school again, as they often do. We value the time they spend here, increasing their involvement and understanding of the way our three departments work and link.

I thank you all for your unfailing commitment to our school and in particular, thank you Peter, for your guidance and wise judgements.

I value your support enormously.

Mrs Ort types out my Speech Day headings so that I can hand-write my speech in the correct order.  
This heading read:

**Now to my MANAGEMENT TEAM, whose brilliance never fails to astound me**

Quite right! What would I do without them? We are a very close and supportive team. This year we had a team-building day in London in January.

Us versus Broughton Manor and Walton.

Each team of 8 had to find 64 items in an “Apprentice” type contest.

At the appointed time, we gathered with our finds, to see who had won.

Of course, we were the winners!

## **THE FAMILY**

A big event in any family in 3 weeks' time - Phil my youngest son and his fiancée, Caroline, get married in France.

Our family and friends look forward to a few days together in the sunshine.

My husband, Henry, and I are looking forward to it immensely and wish them all happiness for their future together.

**And so to the class of 2010:**

**CLASS 11**

More children than ever have joined this year's group from other schools, in both junior and senior prep.

This always alters the dynamics of the group a bit and makes us all work harder to rebalance the classes and welcome and support the new children as they learn our ways.

The year group will leave us with a great many very talented and confident individuals who have equipped themselves well for their senior schools.

Be proud of your achievements, class 11, and use them well.

It's always difficult to go from being a big fish in a small pond, to a small fish in a much bigger one.

Watch and wait for while, then show what you can do.

Good luck!