



Learning for Life Education Trust

Stronger together



"The most basic of all human needs is the need to understand and be understood. The best way to understand people is to listen to them"

Ralph G. Nichols



Our aim is for all of our children to develop strong communication skills to support their learning and confidence. Our focus on thinking and speaking skills allows children to express their thoughts and opinions about what they're learning. It also develops wellbeing and confidence. We want our children to have a voice and to be heard. In lessons we teach our children how to improve their talk and how to learn through talk. We expect children to speak in full clear sentences and maintain eye contact with the listener, where possible.

Our newsletter this term showcases what this looks like in our schools every day. If you would like to follow the same approach at home when talking to your child please [find out more here.](#)

Have a safe and happy Christmas and New Year. We look forward to working together again in 2024.



Wishing you a Merry Christmas!





Irthlingborough Nursery and Infant School



Community Christmas Cheer

We were excited to be involved in a community project organised by the Women's Institute in Irthlingborough, who set about knitting covers for every bollard along the High Street to make the town look festive.

So we could contribute to the project with our own covers, our Year 2 children spoke to their teachers, sharing their ideas of what they would like to create. They produced wonderful pictures of themselves with flowers and Christmas trees, getting us in to the festive spirit! The children then chose where the covers were going to be displayed on the High Street and placed them there, ensuring they were securely fastened.

The children who represented the creative Year 2, also got to meet the Town Mayor, Ethan Hopkinson, who is himself an ex-pupil of INIS. The children were able to speak to the Mayor confidently and in full sentences. We believe oracy is a vital skill to ensure children can confidently share their learning and talk to all! Please come and have a look at all the creative work on the High Street.



Big Draw Day

Drawing is such a key skill to develop fine motor control, creativity, and a way of expressing yourself. Children across the school explored different ways of using their senses to draw as we took part in the 'Big Draw Day' in the Autumn term. They made patterns whilst listening to music, created observation drawing and drew from their imagination using the sense of touch. The children had lots of sensory experiences. We invited parents and carers to join us for some of the drawing activities too, and it was lovely to see such a great turn out.

We will remember them

Our amazing choir were invited to sing at the Irthlingborough town Festival of Remembrance on 11th November.

The children were determined that they knew all the words and actions off by heart for their two songs and put in a lot of practice.

On the day, the children had the pleasure of listening to the Thrapston Town Brass Band before their own performance. They demonstrated great listening skills.

Led by Mrs Mason and Mrs Parker, the children sang 'Wear a Poppy Today' and 'We Will Remember Them'. The second song was sung 'a capella', which the audience found very moving.





Open for debate!

Mrs Birkett and a team of eight Year 5 and 6 pupils from our Debating Club attended the 'Noisy Classroom' debate training held at the University of Northampton.

The children were introduced to the rules and structure of a debate as well as being taught a range of techniques to make themselves more persuasive when they speak. Some of the challenges that they set included being convincing when 'speaking dog', to convince the room why Harry Potter shouldn't be thrown out of a hot air balloon as well argue why dogs are better than cats. We finished the day with an official debate in preparation for our competition in January.

This was great opportunity for our Debate Club to express their thoughts and opinions and to interact with others thoughtfully and productively.

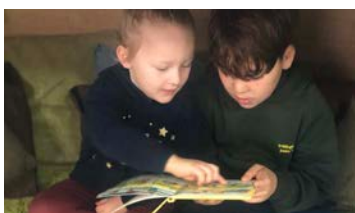
Reading role models

As part of our Community and Charity week, a group of Year 5 children visited Monkey Puzzle Nursery.

We arrived with a range of books and biscuits and spent the morning reading and enjoying stories with the nursery children.

We could not be prouder of how well our children conducted themselves. They were lovely role models for the younger children and spoke and presented themselves to the nursery staff wonderfully.

The nursery has already asked if we could make the visit a regular activity because it was so beneficial for all of the children involved.



Q and A Session

As part of our Community and Charity week, children had the opportunity to talk to our MP, Tom Pusglove and a parliamentary candidate, Gen Kitchen, for the next general election.

Using their 'great listening' skills to consider the information that was being presented to them by both guests, the children posed relevant and investigative questions.

It was impressive to see how well children adapted their own questions based on the visitors' responses and questions put forward by other children.



Finedon Infant School and Finedon Mulso CE Junior School

Awe and wonder

At the infant school we are lucky enough to have an allotment which each class visits throughout the year. It is a highlight for both staff and children who all enjoy engaging with Bud and Sue Abbott, who look after the allotment for us.

Children listen carefully and confidently ask them questions to further their understanding of plant life cycles. They also use their observational skills and articulate their findings to each other.

Stimulating children to think and talk about what they see and notice around them is a key aspect of oracy and these visits create opportunities for awe and wonder of the natural world.



Pictured above; children listening carefully to Bud, explaining the importance of leaving spaces between the onion bulbs to allow for growth. Children then put this knowledge into practice when planting their bulb.

Pictured left; children using a magnifying glass to carefully observe the veins and patterns on leaves. This supported their classroom learning about autumn.

Faith Tour

Earlier this term, Year 6 visited Bedford to participate in a faith tour as part of their Religious Education learning. During the visit, they listened to talks in the gurdwara, mosque and church.

The children demonstrated excellent respectful behaviour and asked relevant questions to deepen their knowledge and understanding of different faiths and beliefs. They were able to use the knowledge gained in the question and answer sessions to make comparisons between the faiths, noting the similarities and differences. It was a fantastic opportunity to explore difference, mutual respect and tolerance.



Learning through talk

The children in Years 3 and 4 have been following the oracy principles of learning to talk and learning through talk, during their science lessons on animals including humans

The tasks they have been set in lessons require the children to think in different ways and then articulate their thinking to other members of the class. They have been identifying, categorising and comparing vertebrates and invertebrates then explaining their decisions within a group.

