



ASHBROOKE HOUSE SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL FOR BOYS AND GIRLS AGED 3 TO 11

Ashbrooke House School

End of Year Report 2015

This report was presented at the annual prize giving at Batch Country Hotel on Thursday 9th July 2015. Mr. Henry Price Headteacher of Wellington School presented the prizes.

Ladies and gentleman, boys and girls welcome to our annual Prize Giving. It is lovely to see you all here to celebrate the end of another successful year of Ashbrooke. The Staff and I are delighted that you are with us and hope you have a very enjoyable evening. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our special guest, Mr. Henry Price, Headteacher of Wellington School, who has kindly agreed to present the children with their prizes later in the evening.

We pride ourselves at Ashbrooke House on being a very close knit community – where every child is individually known and appreciated. In our small classes we develop a caring ethos which is vital in creating enthusiasm for learning, encouraging creative talents and developing self-esteem.

It was the 21st anniversary of our nursery in the summer term and Mr. and Mrs. Teasdale have agreed to increase our facilities and have been granted planning permission for a two classroom portable unit to be installed. We are looking forward to using this new facility during the next academic year. A flourishing, healthy nursery is the foundation of the school as it encourages self-esteem, confidence and independence at an early age. It also provides opportunities for active outdoor play and discovery. We hope you will spread the good news of this exciting development.

At Ashbrooke we are determined that we create opportunities for our pupils to achieve their best and that we tailor our curriculum for each child. We believe that every child really does matter and that we can provide a stimulating and enriching environment for them to flourish. Young people have a desire to do well and move through school successfully – it is our role to help them in that cause.

The staff of a school are its most valuable resource and I wish to thank each one of my staff for their dedicated efforts and loyal support, providing your children with a varied, lively and diverse curriculum that they can thrive upon. We were very pleased to welcome four new members of staff this year. In September Miss. James joined us as the new teacher of Class 5 and Mrs. Downes took over as secretary of the school. In November Mrs. Davies took over as Leader of the After School Club and at Easter Miss. Freeman was appointed as Head

of the Nursery. Mrs. Blackwell, our Nursery Assistant, has now returned from maternity leave and we wish them all well in their new posts. We would also like to congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Blackwell on the birth of their son Samuel on the 12th November.

The new academic year certainly started with a bang! When the P.T.A organised a welcome back to school BBQ in the school garden. This was an opportunity for new parents to socialize with other parents and members of staff.

In September a Gardening Club, funded by the P.T.A, was set up by Mrs. Porter the Chairperson and Mrs. Ball. It has proved very successful with many children from Reception up to Year 6 coming along every Tuesday after school, come rain or shine, to enthusiastically sow, plant, weed and water a variety of different flowers, fruits and vegetables. At the end of November they decorated a Christmas tree which was displayed in the Mercury office window as part of Weston's Christmas decorations. Many people commented on how lovely it looked.

October started with Year 6 organizing a MacMillan coffee afternoon in the school hall with the help of Mrs. Ducker they raised an amazing £172.

The annual Harvest festival was held on 16th October when a staggering 300kg of food was donated to Weston Foodbank. The whole school took part in a production entitled 'Harvest Around the World' which was written by our music teacher Mrs. Buckingham.

Nursery to Class 3 went on a woodland walk at the site of an Iron Age Fort, looking for signs of Autumn, creating art work from materials found and identifying leaves and seeds. They travelled there on a public bus.

During November the school held a Scholastic Book Fair which raised £306 to spend on books.

On 14th November Ashbrooke joined the rest of the country in raising money for "Children In Need." The children paid £1 to come dressed as 'Superheroes' and had fun taking part in many activities throughout the day. They raised money by buying cakes at break time and completing a line of coins from the back door along the path to the playground! On the day we raised a commendable £251.

December is always an exciting but busy month for the whole school. On the 1st December our school choir took part in the carol singing competition on the Grand Pier and were very successful coming 1st in the small choir section and winning £100 to spend on musical instruments. We received a very complimentary letter from Simon Angear, group editor of the Mercury, to congratulate the children on their success, as he was one of the judges. He also thanked the children in the Gardening Club for the decorated Christmas tree. He finished his letter by saying "It always impresses me to see young people playing such an active part in our community and my recent experiences show me the pupils of Ashbrooke House are a credit to Weston." Praise indeed!!!

It was with great excitement and enthusiasm that the whole school went to Clarence Park Baptist Church to perform in their Christmas plays. The children of Lower School put on a performance of 'It's a Boy' on the afternoon of the 3rd December amazing us with their

ability to learn all their parts. On the following evening the children in Upper School entertained us with a wonderful production of 'Christmas Around the World.' A special thank you must go to those parents and staff who volunteered their time and hard work in preparing costumes, scenery and all the 'behind the scenes' activities that sometimes go unnoticed. I would also like to thank those who attended and so generously donated £350 to our chosen charity Jiwan Jyoti in Nepal.

The P.T.A held a very enjoyable Carols by Candlelight in the school garden on 10th December. The Harmony Plus Brass Band entertained us whilst mince pies, mulled wine and hot chocolate were enjoyed by all. The children took part in a silly hat competition and the evening raised £334.

Father Christmas suddenly turned up unexpectedly the day before term finished and brought everyone a present. All the children enjoyed the morning playing party games then we all joined together for a special Christmas lunch. In the afternoon we all watched a film and ate popcorn!

On the last day of term the children wore Christmas jumpers and raised £60 for Save The Children.

We all experienced a new venture when, for the first time the P.T.A. held a Race Night here at The Batch at the beginning of the spring term. It was a huge success and thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. Your enthusiastic participation and generosity raised a grand total of £2817 for the P.T.A fund. They also held a sponsored Pancake Flip in February when the children and some of the teachers were sponsored to see how many times they could flip their pancake in one minute. Great fun was had by all and a total of £378 was raised.

World book day is always a very popular event at school and this year we at Ashbrooke celebrated by having a week of English activities. This focused on reading and writing instructions, culminating on Friday 6th March with the children participating in different instruction activities, for example baking cakes, origami, completing art work and teambuilding in the garden. A fun and educational week was had by all.

On Friday 13th March the children had another opportunity to dress up, this time for Red Nose Day. They raised £175 by buying cakes and biscuits at break time. In the afternoon the children from the nursery, reception and Class 1 put on a performance of songs and poems for the parents.

Children in classes 3 and 4 spent two days away from the classroom. On Thursday 12th March they travelled to Folly Farm near Chew Magna where they learnt about life during the Iron Age. They tried weaving and felting and enjoyed a story and singing around the camp fire. They returned to Weston and spent a fun evening at Jump N Jackz, followed by tea at Pizza Hut. 21 excited children accompanied by some rather tired teachers then spent the night in school sleeping in various classrooms. The next morning they went to Tickenham to spend the day at Bristol Survival School where they had an opportunity to discover the natural world. The children learnt how to light a fire using a firesteel, cook their lunch and build a shelter. All good teambuilding and survival skills!

Our school choir was invited to take part in a concert held at Wellington School on the Friday before Easter. The choir joined 21 other schools in a choral extravaganza. They spent the afternoon rehearsing and rounded off the day with a concert in front of an audience of over 800 people. The sound was quite amazing and a wonderful opportunity for our children to experience being part of a big event.

'Ashbrooke's Got Talent' started the summer term. This is a most enjoyable and entertaining occasion with a wide variety of talent on show. Congratulations must go to all the performers, who received so many compliments from the audience. £250 was collected for Jiwan Jyoti, grateful thanks for your kind donations. This was very opportune as it helped tremendously towards the cost of repairing the damage to the Orphanage caused by the tragic earthquake in Nepal. I would also like to thank you for the £122 collected for the National Nepal Earthquake Fund.

The annual year 5/6 residential week to Hill House is an event which is eagerly anticipated. Even the children lower down the school talk excitedly of the time when they will be able to go and experience the thrills of kayaking, rock climbing, caving, archery and a high ropes course. Every year the children surprise themselves and the staff with what they achieve through determination and often great effort. Once again one of the highlights of the week was falling or jumping into the lake after kayaking.

Ashbrooke's gardening Club entered a competition organised by the Royal Horticultural Society to design and plant a show garden on the theme of Wonderland. On Thursday 21st May a minibus filled with plants and equipment plus 6 children from Upper School accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Porter and Mrs. Ball travelled to the RHS Garden at Rosemoor in North Devon. The children spent the day planting their design and exploring the beautiful gardens. I am very pleased and proud to say that the children were awarded 'Best In Show'.

Once again the P.T.A organised our biggest event of the year our annual Summer Fete on June 13th. Despite the cool weather conditions it was very well supported. There were a number of new stalls and attractions along with some established favourites such as 'Soak the teacher'. We raised a record amount of £2,400, so many thanks must go to the P.T.A and all the parents, teachers and sponsors who helped make the day such a huge success. A big thank you to the many parents who kindly attended and supported this event.

Nursery, Reception and Class 1 held their sports afternoon on the back lawn on Tuesday 23rd June. The children took part in different relay races along with the class races. Fortunately the weather was kind to us and the children had fun competing. The good weather continued the following day for classes 2-6 sports day at Drove Road playing field. As usual there was great competition between the houses. The winning house was Corinthians and special congratulations to Shelley Tancock for winning the Victrix Ludorum and Risuna Mabasa for winning the Victor Ludorum.

The much anticipated school P.T.A disco was held here at the Batch on July 1st. I would like to thank Mr. and Mrs. Brown for once again allowing us the use of their lovely hotel for the P.T.A Race Night, the disco and our Prize Giving tonight.

Education at Ashbrooke, as in all schools, also means visits to places of interest and school trips are a valuable learning experience. Throughout the school year all the children have

had numerous occasions to participate in many outside activities. These have involved visits to the Library, Weston Woods, the quarry, the Seaquarium, Sandbay, the Playhouse, the Sand Sculptures on the beach, a walk to Anchor Head, the Science Museum @ Bristol, Lifeskills and further afield to National Trust properties – Montacute House, Tyntesfield and Chedworth Roman Villa.

An important part of our ethos at Ashbrooke House is to encourage the children to think of others less fortunate than themselves. I am immensely proud of all the children for their efforts to raise money for the various charities we support and over the year they have raised the impressive amount of £1,512. Congratulations must go to them for their enthusiasm and to you as parents for your encouragement and generous donations. I must not end my report without again thanking our very dedicated, hardworking and supportive P.T.A who work tirelessly to raise money to provide extras for the school which will enhance the Ashbrooke House experience for all pupils. This year they have broken all records and raised an amazing £7,061. This money will be used towards the purchase of 15 new computers for the IT suite, 15 tablets for use in the classroom and 2 new interactive whiteboards. This new equipment I'm sure will be of great benefit to each child and on behalf of you all I would like to thank them for this generous contribution.

This is the end of my third year as Headteacher of Ashbrooke House School. I would like to take this opportunity to say without the help and support of my dedicated and loyal staff, our school would not flourish and be the success it is. Sadly we are saying goodbye to Mrs. Buckingham our talented music teacher. Mrs. Buckingham has taught at Ashbrooke House for three years and kept up our strong tradition of musical excellence. We are grateful for her hard work and for the entertaining plays that she has written for the children at Harvest and other occasions. We wish her well and look forward to many happy visits to her field to help her feed her lambs and enjoy sing songs around the camp fire.

As I close my report on our school year's activities I would like to say to you all how immensely proud I am of our school and extremely proud of your children. To all our leavers please remember our strong tradition of good manners, politeness and high standards as you prepare to take the next stage of your academic journey. It has been a pleasure having you with us, getting to know you, teaching you and seeing you develop during your time here and we wish you every success in the future.

To those of you who will return to us in September I wish you a happy and fun filled summer and look forward to seeing you all next term. Thank you all very much and I hope you enjoy a good break!