

Dear All,

The month of October began with my trip to Sweden. This was a fascinating experience looking at the KED (Kunskapsskolan) approach to education. This model is based on personalized learning where students, with the guidance of their coach, identify, set and work towards their own personal goals. Many of you will have heard in the media that Scandinavian countries have an impressive record when it comes to education. This is borne out in their academic results and particularly in the standards achieved by boys at the end of secondary school. Ansford Academy has adopted many of the features of this approach and I was fortunate to go with two members of staff from Ansford.

While I was away the school received a visit from Gloria Lawrence. Gloria ran some exciting workshops for the three oldest classes, raising cultural awareness through music, movement, calling, chanting, drumming and singing. All the staff reported it was a great success.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> October I attended a conference titled Supporting Boys as a Vulnerable Group. The highlight for me was the speaker Gary Wilson, the author of the book 'Help Your Boys Succeed'. The book identifies the major barriers to boys' achievement and shows parents and teachers how to make a difference. I would highly recommend this book.

The month of October has also seen lots of new parents visiting the school, most of them have children entering Reception next September. I am always incredibly proud to show parents around the school. Many of them talk of the very calm atmosphere in the school, as well as the excellent behaviour of the children.

Over the course of the month we have run three parent meetings. We have been delighted by the response we have received to the changes we have introduced this year. Lots of children have been busy learning their number bonds and their times tables to ensure they beat their daily scores. The Cherry parents meeting is Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November at 3.15pm.

Our staff received training on guided reading on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October. This was a very useful time and helped us to evaluate our own practice and look at how we can continue to improve the way we teach reading.

I was delighted by the response to our menu homework. Children had clearly worked hard and produced an amazing variety of offerings. I was particularly impressed by the different models of Stonehenge.

Finally, thank you again to those of you who supported our Harvest Festival. It was a special service and excellent to see some of youngest children bravely performing in front of a packed church of children, parents, grandparents and friends.

Have a good November,

Richard