



ST HILARY'S PREP SCHOOL

ST HILARY'S AWARDS CEREMONY 2023-2024

**TUESDAY 2 JULY 2024
THE HALL, CHARTERHOUSE**

Reflections of a School Year

2023 - 2024

Mrs Mitchell, Deputy Head

“My final message to you is whatever your personal battle be brave and face it. In a world full of adversity, we must still dare to dream.”

– Rob Burrow

As we reflect on the 2023-2024 academic year, we are reminded of the boundless potential within each of our children. This year has been one of growth, discovery, and perseverance, guided by the unwavering commitment of our parents, staff, and governors. The energy, buzz and passion are evident daily and at the heart of it lies a strong, visionary leader whose determination, resilience and commitment has enabled each of our boy's and girl's learning journeys to be vibrant, aspirational, creative and carefree. Mrs Whittingham continues to ensure that at St Hilary's, we place the welfare and wellbeing of the children at the heart of everything we do, whilst driving intellectual success.

“The will to win, the desire to succeed, the urge to reach your full potential... these are the keys that will unlock the door to personal excellence.”

- Confucius

This year, St Hilary's received outstanding recognition from the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) inspection reaching the expected standards for all five focus areas assessed. This achievement stands as a testament to the dedication of our staff, the resolute support of our parents, and the remarkable achievements of our children. Together, we have fostered a setting where every child can thrive and have strong values instilled in them, resulting in exemplary young citizens.

“Values are like fingerprints. Nobody's are the same, but you leave them all over everything you do.” - Elvis Presley

The inspection report highlighted our commitment to academic excellence, community well-being, cultural enrichment, health, and physical education, among other areas. Our ethos left a lasting impression; the report noted that ‘the school provides a warm, safe, and caring environment that enables pupils to thrive’. Moreover, the inspectors were impressed by our commitment to the physical, mental health, and emotional wellbeing of our children. Commenting that we have cultivated an environment where ‘pupils develop confidence and self-respect’ and ‘a culture of understanding and openness about wellbeing and mental health’. Our pupil voice initiatives were particularly praised, with the children ‘feeling well prepared for the next stage of their education and future lives in society’. This recognition reaffirms our dedication to providing the best possible education and support for every child at St Hilary's.

Unashamedly proud that we are both academically and pastorally strong, our Year 6 pupils have received a total of 27 offers, with 12 scholarships and awards and will be moving on to nine different Senior Schools. The staff continue to create a positive culture of learning, where all children can experience success. Flourishing through collaboration, reflective practice, dedication and the support of personalised learning journeys, our children have an outstanding team behind them. Specialist teaching, fantastic resources such as our Wellbeing Room, 'The Nest,' our newly renovated specialist Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) room, the Forest, Pond and Adventure Play area and the Lego Innovation Centre 'The Hive,' as well as a bursting curriculum including; Judo, Chess, Philosophy and Digital Learning support our boys and girls to triumph. Fitness Friday and the 'boom, boom,' sound of music has ensured we have all felt uplifted and ready to buzz even during the colder months. A full extracurricular programme has provided our children with further opportunities to try new activities. Congratulations to the St Hilary's boys and girls who have recently passed a grading in Taekwondo and Judo, and to Mrs Whittingham, Mr Aristidov and the intrepid boys and girls in our popular Gardening Club who have created what looks to become a stunning kitchen garden. Mindfulness, Magic and Skateboarding Clubs continue to be ever popular.

"Technology is just a tool. In terms of getting the kids working together and motivating them, the teacher is most important." – Bill Gates

In January we rolled out our 1:1 iPad scheme for Years 4 to 6. The children have engaged with educational content in innovative ways, fostering digital literacy skills and personalised learning experiences. The devices have been integrated into various aspects of the curriculum and have provided a dynamic and enriching educational journey. The Lego studio, The Hive, continues to teem with brightly coloured creations. All pupils have a Lego session to help enhance other areas of the curriculum, for instance in geography hotels were designed and built out of Lego to withstand an earthquake, with the Richter scale also replicated.

"If you're kind and polite the world will be right." - Paddington Bear

At St Hilary's, the smiles say it all as you step through the front door; everyone feels valued and empowered, aligned with our school motto, *Not just for Ourselves but for All*.

Our Anti-bullying and Wellbeing Ambassadors have led initiatives earning us the Diana Award for Wellbeing and the Inclusion Badge. Kindness, one of our core values has been promoted through our 'You are Awesome Day,' our Greeters at the gate on 'World Smile Day' and our 'Teddies, Tea and Talk' buddies' event. Other enterprises have led to creating a 'Diversi-Tea' display and an anti-bullying pupil guide. We have also celebrated Black History Month and fostered inclusivity through our House and Buddy Systems.

To support Mental Health Awareness Week, we started our day with a special assembly, the Wakey Shakey song, and ran with buddies around the track on the field every day - a real boost to our children's mental wellbeing!

In March, we recognised Dyslexia Awareness Month and through different activities and assemblies the children learnt what dyslexia is, the 'super powers' it can give those affected, and we learned clever ways to spell tricky words!

“We do not need magic to change the world, we carry all the power we need inside ourselves already: We have the power to imagine better.”

- J. K. Rowling

We have celebrated various cultural events, and our Enrichment Programme has broadened our childrens' horizons and deepened their understanding of the world around them. The children in Pre-Prep have had opportunities to use Scratch Coding to program their own interactive stories and games, learn Spanish, play logic puzzles, team building games, explore outdoor learning and investigate art from around the world. Whilst Prep have developed their knowledge of coding and design, experienced a variety of breathing techniques and understand their purpose for, health, well-being and mental health during Mindfulness, created Monarch Movies, and through creative innovation reinforced their knowledge of pottery, as well as designing symbols for our school values. The children have also enjoyed the woods in Outdoor learning, engaged in Hockey Master classes and became adventurers as they journeyed back to lost lands from thousands of years ago in 'Classical Civilisation' sessions. Mrs Whittingham also taught every Prep class how to knit!

“I owe the Olympic Gold to knitting- mistakes can teach you lessons.”

- Tom Daley

We have had fascinating author visits from Lucy Reynolds, Simon Fox and Barbara Mitchelhill, and talks delivered to our children by parents and grandparents on topics ranging from renewable energy to financial education, from learning how to become a surgeon to an explorer, from the study of rocks and soils to astronomy, to dentistry and identifying how brands tell stories.

“Helping others is the way we help ourselves.” - Dr Michael Mosley

Our school community has actively participated in charitable events. Highlights include; fundraising for Children in Need through our Pyjama Day, World Heart Day, and a special project supporting local care homes. In November, we were delighted to offer local schools the opportunity for Year 2 pupils to take part in our Full Steam Ahead! specialist STEAM sessions. The theme for World Book Day this year was 'Time,' and as part of our activities, each pupil in school was asked to bring in a small item to contribute to their class bag, to go into a time capsule!

Many of our boys and girls spoke so eloquently about the significance of the item they had chosen, and why it might be of interest to people in the future. At the Time Capsule Ceremony in the Quiet Garden, our Head Pupil, Chloe and Deputy Head Pupil, Cora read a poem about time to the whole school as we watched the capsule be buried, not to be seen for 100 years. Throughout the year our focus has been on enriching the lives of our school community every day.

“Success is not just about winning trophies, but about making a positive impact on and off the field.” – Sir Bobby Charlton

Our sports programmes have thrived, with our boys and girls participating in numerous competitions and excelling in a variety of sports. The old saying, “A healthy body breeds a healthy mind,” has driven our commitment to promoting physical fitness and wellbeing. There are numerous highlights but a few to mention include; the St Hilary's biathlon team who competed at the GB Schools Biathlon Finals, which took place at Bath University. The Year 3 boys team placed 4th and the girls team placed 8th overall; The St Hilary's triathletes did very well at the IAPS triathlon gaining a huge amount of experience; the U11A swim team competed in the regional round of the ESSA Competition and the U10A swim team competed in the IAPS National Finals at the London Aquatics Centre where they demonstrated all their hard work by securing a second personal best in both relays. In athletics, two of our Year 5s, Flora and Luna respectively, came 2nd in the ball throw and placed 1st in the 100m final and 2nd in the Year 5 long jump at the West Surrey Athletics Competition. The U8 and U10 girls athletics team took gold at the Barfield Athletics meet. The U10A netball team has shone this year, participating in various tournaments across the season. The U10A boys had a very impressive football season with standout performances at Oakwood, where they won the A team event.

A special mention to Matilda who scored all six goals for the U10B football team in a 6-0 victory against Barrow Hills in the Autumn Term. The U10 boys also shone in Rugby, with both the A and B teams playing contact and pushing themselves physically and tactically. Galas, Sports Days, Mini Olympics, Cross Country Events and of course, the Parent Tennis Tournament; the Sports Department has been relentless in their pursuit for ‘Sports for All’. Not only have pupils delivered an outstanding Sports year, they have shown impeccable sportsmanship along the way.

“In the end, it's extra effort that separates a winner from second place. But winning takes a lot more than that, too. It starts with complete command of the fundamentals. Then it takes desire, determination, discipline, and self-sacrifice. And finally, it takes a great deal of love, fairness and respect for your fellow man. Put all these together, and even if you don't win, how can you lose?”

– Jesse Owens

Not to be outdone, our Sports Staff have also excelled with Miss Higgins, our Head of Swimming being awarded the London Classics medal. In order to do this, she completed the London Marathon, the RideLondon 100, and a two-mile event at Swim Serpentine, whilst Mrs Mattingly was selected for the Women's 55 World Cup Final Hockey Squad representing South Africa! We always celebrate our amazing St Hilary's pupils' achievements outside of school too and must congratulate Lexi in Year 5 who played in the regionals for Guildford Hockey club at Christ's Hospital and Matilda in Year 5 who has successfully trialled for a place in Reading Football Club's Emerging Talent Centre. Billy, in Year 5, has also played for Sussex County Cricket. Raffy and Otis in Year 3 played with their Academy Team, Kickstart U8s, against Southampton Youth FC and Otis also received an offer at Chelsea FC Academy. With just a few weeks to go until the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, we were thrilled to hear the British Olympic Association announce the six children that were selected to be Team GB's first ever Mini Mascots including Dora in Year 4. She has also been selected for Arsenal's Youth Football Development programme.

“Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and life to everything.” - Plato

The creative arts have continued to flourish at St Hilary's. Our Drama and Music departments have delivered outstanding performances, including; 'Angel Express' from EYFS and 'Lights, Camel, Action!' presented by Pre-Prep. Year 3 and 4s "Mind the Gap" and "Into the Woods" by Years 5 and 6, not to mention a memorable Grandparents Tea Party and Christmas Carol Service. Plato's words, resonate deeply, as our boys and girls have explored and expressed their creativity. Tuesday morning singing assemblies are affectionately referred to as the happiest half hour of the week, with many eagerly waiting to be nominated to sit on the 'Bench of Brilliance' for their enthusiasm and participation. Smiles can be found whether singing in the hall, remixing in the Music room, or Samba drumming on the field. Other highlights from the Music Department include the Year 6 pupils attending the Chamber Music Competition at the University of Surrey and the St Hilary's Orchestra winning the Rose Bowl for ensembles at the Godalming Performing Arts Festival.

This year we were also treated to performances from our most accomplished musicians in our Young Musician of the Year Final. Dr Marie Ward (Deputy Head of Music at Cranleigh Prep), our guest adjudicator, commented that it, 'was a superb evening of such high-quality performances it had been incredibly difficult to come to a decision on the winner.' Cordelia became our Young Musician of the Year winner 2024 with Isabella our runner-up. Rosy was awarded stand-out performance.

In the Spring Term, St Hilary's hosted the Surrey Drama Festival for IAPS Schools. Pupils also competed and performed in the Speech and Drama section of the Godalming Performing Arts Festival. LAMDA and Musical Peripatetic lessons continue to be popular and we are looking forward to receiving results from the recent exams. Nearly 70% of our pupils take part in these lessons from across the school.

“Art is as natural as sunshine and as vital as nourishment.”

– MaryAnn F. Kohl

The Art Department has been busy this year. Year 5 visited Pallant House Gallery where the children took part in a collage workshop looking at the work of Peter Blake. Year 4 pupils visited Watts Gallery and explored new monoprinting techniques. In the Spring, the annual Art Exhibition showed off the beautiful 'Transform' work by Year 6 and the much-loved Pets competition in aid of Mane Chance. We will all remember the huge hanging fish made out of recycled material by Grace, Year 4.

“It seems to me that the natural world is the greatest source of excitement; the greatest source of visual beauty; the greatest source of intellectual interest. It is the greatest source of so much in life that makes life worth living.”

– David Attenborough

Our commitment to environmental and social responsibility continues to be inspired by David Attenborough's advocacy. This year, the children have participated in projects focused on sustainability and climate change, including the construction of wind turbines and involvement in the First Lego League. Our Art Department's collaboration with local communities and environmental projects has also fostered a sense of responsibility among our boys and girls.

Our School Council were key to inviting everyone in the school community to 'Name the Minibus,' create a 'Food and Play' suggestion box and recognised that their 'Voice Matters' delivering a superb assembly based around the UN's Convention of Human Rights for Children. The school invites all pupils to actively share their ideas and help turn them into reality. Special mentions to Cassandra A, in Year 3 who made bracelets and sold these to raise money for the RSPCA, Isabelle in Year 6 who has created her own 'Swiftie' Podcast and Grace J, Sophia R, Chloe B and Aurelia, Year 3, who organised the 'St Hilary's Got Talent' competition.

“The greatest gifts you can give your children are the roots of responsibility and wings of independence” - Denis Waitley

The residential and day trips to; Sayers Croft, Hindleap Warren, Crowden, Windsor Castle, Worthing Beach, Winchester Science Museum, Butser Ancient Farm, Hampton Court Palace, Painshill Park, Roald Dahl's Museum and Château de Grande Romaine in France, encouraged our boys and girls to step out of their comfort zone and embrace the world around them without their parents.

Gaining confidence and building self-esteem, the children have participated in unique activities, and forged lasting friendships with their peers; creating happy, life-long memories that they will treasure forever.

“Nothing is as it seems. Seeing is not believing. Sometimes... you have to feel, touch, experience... and use your intelligence.” - Benjamin Zephaniah

As we bid farewell to our Year 6 students, we are filled with pride and optimism. They are ready to embark on their next adventure, embodying the St Hilary's School values of aspiration, kindness, and responsibility. This academic year we have navigated challenges, celebrated successes, and grown as a community. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to making this year extraordinary. Together, we have achieved remarkable success and we look forward to the future with hope and determination, ready to embrace the opportunities that lie ahead.

“Promise me you'll remember - you're braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think.” - A.A. Milne

