



# News on the Ninth

## Gusford Newsletter – Issue 83 – October 2017

### Hilltop Residential Visit

On Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September some of Gusford's year 6 pupils went on an amazing, challenging trip to Hilltop. We all went to overcome our fears, challenge ourselves and learn to do things on our own. We stayed away from home for 3 nights, whilst during the day we were having a blast enjoying ourselves. Mainly, the aim of the entire trip was to develop lots of different skills, build up confidence and teamwork.



At the start of the trip I felt extremely nervous, but by pushing myself to my limit I gained so much confidence. We were encouraged to face our fears, both up

high (up to 10m) and down low (just above ground level). We were encouraged to jump out of our comfort zones. We became more independent because most things were our choice and we took responsibility.

In my opinion, the Super Swing experience was the most thrilling activity. The Super Swing is a big 3 seater swing which is elevated to a variety of heights – from 5m to a 20m drop. You can choose to ascend to red -

higher than our rooftops - and when you are ready, a volunteer pulls the attached tennis ball to release the the seat from



the stationery position and then you drop a few metres before swinging to a halt. I enjoyed it a lot because up in the air I was waiting for my partner to pull the ball. On the sudden drop, I felt nervous, but I pushed myself to black and a quarter level (approximately 16m high).

Therefore, the adrenaline rush of the Super Swing made it definitely one of my favourite activities! From my point of view, the Airjump was the most intimidating activity. Although I am not scared of heights, I was terrified to jump off a wooden construction into nothingness without the security of a safety harness. Eventually I pushed myself to go up to 7 metres off the ground and..... I jumped! As I jumped I felt really scared,



so on the second time I stepped back into my comfort zone and jumped from 5 metres above ground level, as Hilltop's Motto is:

"Challenge by Choice".

On reflection improvements could be made to the next Hilltop trip. For example, I think Abseiling should have different levels of challenge to descend from, just as the Climbing Wall had different targets to achieve. The problem with the Abseiling is that you either did it or you didn't. Personally, it wasn't too high, but for other children, they may have wanted to start off lower in order to overcome their fears and build confidence. If different levels of challenge were offered, then as a result, it would make other children feel more comfortable.

Without a shadow of a doubt, my favourite activity was the Tree Top Trail – travelling over obstacles at 10m –25m above ground level in the canopies. I enjoyed it the most because I have done things like it before but it was very challenging. In conclusion, I recommend Hilltop to children that don't mind heights and like a challenge. In my opinion, Hilltop was the best school trip ever!



**Lia Blake 6T**

## Charity for Christmas

Dejah Robinson in Meerkat class has decided this year she wants to do something for other children at Christmas. Dejah has taken part in the 'Shoe Box



Appeal' which is organised by the Samaritan's Purse UK. Dejah has filled 10 shoe boxes to send and has rung members within her family to help cover the costs of

sending the shoe boxes. Dejah has said that she will be making 10 children happy at Christmas. Well done Dejah, we are all very proud of you.

## School Council

Congratulations to the new School Council who have been elected this year! The new School Council representatives are:



**Y2:** Scarlett, Harrison, Jayden, Poppy, Nathan, Ellexa

**Y3:** Isla, Logan, Archie, Katie, Leighton, Freya

**Y4:** Luna, Lucas, Daniel, Sophie W, Brogan, Tilly

**Y5:** Shamena, Ramarn, Keira, Jamie, Max G, Bethan

**Y6:** Ellie R, Barney, Emily, Eva, Paige T, Daniel, Gracie

These pupils have done a fantastic job already at representing their classes at our first meeting. We are looking forward to hearing lots of great ideas about how we can improve Gusford, and we are also planning lots of exciting fundraising events for charity – watch this space!

## Summer Reading Challenge 2017

This summer some of our Gusford pupils took part in the annual Summer Reading Challenge, organised by the Reading Agency and local libraries. This initiative is

to encourage children to keep reading over the six week summer holiday. To complete the challenge, the children



had to pay regular visits to their chosen library, to discuss the six books they had read. Congratulations to all the children, who were awarded their

certificate and medal, for completing the challenge, and thank you to all their parents for encouraging them to read over the summer.



## Year 6 Trip to Highwoods Country Park

On Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September, a group of Year 6 pupils visited Highwoods Country Park in Colchester. The children spent the morning pond-dipping, an activity

which was enjoyed by all. The children explored the different depths of the pond, finding a range of creatures. Ramshorn snails, dragonfly nymphs, back swimmers, mayfly nymphs and a newt were found. The children used identification keys and magnifiers to work out what they had caught.



After lunch, the children explored the Country Park, using compasses to navigate their way around the trail. They considered the different trees in the park and the

range of activities it offers to local residents. Before returning to school, the children burnt off their remaining energy on the adventure play area. A great day was had by all.