



Crich Junior School
our happy, caring, community school



School Lane
Crich
Matlock
Derbyshire
DE4 5DF
01773 852384

info@crich-jun.derbyshire.sch.uk
Headteacher: Mrs C. Julian

The Willow Pattern Plate

Many of you may have a piece of crockery depicting the popular Willow Pattern design in your collection. Do you know the history of the design? It is not a Chinese fable but an English invention by ceramic artists inspired by the hand-painted blue and white wares imported from China at the end of the 18th century.

The pattern tells the story in images of the rich Mandarin's daughter Koong-Se who fell in love with Chang – a poor young man who worked in the court. The pair ran away together, were chased by the Mandarin's guards, over the bridge across the river..... Eventually the pair died in a fire and rose from the ashes as two doves. The story has made a great addition to our topic on China this term and has seen us producing drawings, textiles, poetry and a play.



In a Garden in China – The Willow Pattern Play

We have performed a play which tells the love story of the Willow Pattern Plate. We have sung songs about Selfish Old Mandarins, being thrown in jail, beautiful Chinese gardens and smoochy love songs.

As part of the creative process of producing the play we have tie-dyed our own t-shirts, in beautiful shades of blue, as costumes. 1970's fashions are back in vogue.

Our technical team have also been developing their stagecraft skills thanks to our PTFA who have funded a great lighting gantry and sound equipment. To enhance the play we have used sound files and software to make sound effects. We have used programmed sequences on the computer for lighting effects as well as using Green screen images for our programme.



Some Creative Writing

*There on the river bank sands
A magical building there does stand
Sheltered from the shining sun
Our story has only just begun.*



*A high wooden fence with patterns so neat
Is there to stop our lovers meet.
But their love is too strong as we will see,
They love each other, that he and she.*

*The twisting, turning willow tree
Is whistling, whining in the wind.
The leaves are curling as if they are burning,
The roots are swirling through the ground.*

*A duke on an open boat looking out to sea,
With a box of jewels for his wife to be.
They will marry when the leaves fall,
Even though their love is small*

*The doves are singing as they fly,
They dart and dive across the sky.
The giant colossal tree, must be 100 years old,
It stands tall above the Chinese temple –
The temple made of gold.*

*Then on her wedding day
With her true love she ran away
Over the bridge, they got chased
And I saw the distressed look on their face.*

*The tall sharp fence is a snake on the floor
As I scan up and down, I can see no door.
The spikes on top are as sharp as a claw,
The beautiful woven willow that has no floor.
By Josh (Y5)*

*On a boat away they go
To a place where foreign trees grow
Until the Duke who wanted revenge
Got turned by a God...now they are friends.
Jasmine (Y5)*



Taiko Drumming

Derbyshire Music Partnership have been running a drumming project in school as part of our Asia topic. It's been great fun and totally addictive! We are using the brains of everyone involved in our school to come up with creative ways of using the drums for musical and physical activity.

You may have seen us out and about with the drums. Some of our senior citizens have had a go on the drums at the Luncheon Club Easter Coffee Morning. Parents stamped at a Good Work Assembly to have a go. And, we've also been 'on tour' with the drums. 30 of our children performed at the Derbyshire Headteacher Leadership Conference showcasing the importance of the creative arts in education. It went down a storm.

We're hoping to buy our own set of drums for our community work so please come and have a go. Great fun and a brilliant stress reliever!



Mindfulness

Developing good mental health strategies for our children is a national priority in education currently. For some years we have been using mindfulness techniques in school with our pupils. This year we were invited by the County's Educational Psychology Service to take part in a research project on the subject.

Our pupils have had timetabled curriculum time on learning how to take time to focus attention on breathing, sounds, tastes and feelings. The children have found out that their mind is much more than an inner voice. They have learnt how the mind works on auto pilot without us knowing, how it can be tricked and also how the mind can be in conflict with itself.

The children's feedback showed great results – many feeling calmer, using mindfulness to control emotions (i.e.: nerves before a sporting event) as well as generally being more aware of their thoughts, feelings and body.

The researchers were impressed with the detail and variety of the children's responses:

'Mindfulness helps me when my head is rushing with ideas at night'.

'Mindfulness helps me to control my feelings and makes me a happier person. It helps me to focus on things I like and not worry so much'.

'I use mindfulness to calm me down when I am stressed and upset. I think mindfulness is amazing and I think mindfulness is to stop and think!'.

There is so much interest in this subject in schools at the moment that a group of our children delivered a training session to the Matlock cluster of schools Teaching Assistants. They planned their activities and delivered the session like professionals with great confidence – even fielding the odd tricky question!

Time for Celebration

We have again this year received a letter from Nick Gibb MP – the Minister of State for School Standards. The letter congratulates us on being in the top 1% of primary schools in England for attainment in reading and mathematics.