Visit from Dr David Jones – Natural History Museum

Visits such as this help pupils understand that learning does not stop at the classroom door - it connects them to the wider world and inspires future ambition.

On Monday, we were delighted to welcome Dr David Jones, a research scientist from the Natural History Museum in London, who delivered an inspiring and engaging talk to pupils across the whole school. This enrichment opportunity made a strong contribution to pupils' curriculum learning, personal development and cultural capital.

From the outset, pupils were completely captivated by Dr Jones' accounts of the travels, discoveries and real-world applications of his work as a scientist. His visit helped demystify scientific research and showed pupils how learning in school connects directly to the wider world.

Bringing Curriculum Learning to Life

Dr Jones brought with him a range of fascinating and authentic artefacts, allowing pupils to observe, question and discuss real examples from the world of scientific research. The highlight for many pupils was the elephant bird egg, which sparked awe, excitement and high-quality discussion across all age groups.

Handling and observing real objects supported pupils to:

- Make meaningful links to prior learning in science and geography
- Strengthen understanding of animals, habitats, evolution and extinction
- Develop observational and reasoning skills
- Use subject-specific vocabulary confidently

This hands-on experience deepened pupils' understanding far beyond what could be achieved through textbooks alone.

Oracy, Curiosity and Enquiry

A key strength of the visit was the extent to which pupils demonstrated curiosity and confident questioning. The children asked a wide range of thoughtful, imaginative and increasingly complex questions - so many that we genuinely lost count.
Dr Jones' patient and enthusiastic responses modelled:

- How scientists think, investigate and problem-solve
- The importance of evidence, enquiry and critical thinking
- Respectful discussion and attentive listening

This strongly supported pupils' oracy development, encouraging them to articulate ideas clearly and engage in meaningful academic dialogue.

STEM and Careers Inspiration

Meeting a real research scientist had a powerful impact on pupils' understanding of STEM careers. Dr Jones' talk helped pupils recognise that:

- Science is a dynamic and creative subject
- Scientific careers can involve travel, discovery and collaboration
- Learning in science can lead to a wide range of future opportunities

This experience contributed to pupils' aspirations and cultural capital, helping them to see themselves as future scientists, researchers or explorers.

Impact on Pupils

The impact of Dr Jones' visit was clear in pupils':

- High levels of engagement and enthusiasm
- Increased curiosity about the natural world
- Confidence when asking and answering questions
- Ability to make links between classroom learning and real-world science

Pupils continued to refer to the visit in subsequent lessons, demonstrating that the learning was memorable, meaningful and lasting.

This enrichment opportunity provides strong evidence for:

- Curriculum Intent and Impact – pupils apply and deepen subject knowledge through real-life experiences
- Personal Development – curiosity, aspiration and cultural capital
- STEM Enrichment – raising awareness of scientific careers and pathways
- Behaviour and Attitudes – excellent engagement, focus and respect during learning
- SMSC Development – sense of wonder, curiosity and appreciation of the natural world