

Science



The first prospectus for Vinehall School in 1938 states that the curriculum will include 'all normal school subjects,' and a timetable from those early years suggests that both science and 'nature study' were on the curriculum. Indeed in 1943 the Board of Education inspected the school and noted the quality of the courses in 'General Science'. Whilst there are a good few old textbooks and reference books in the de Beer labs and stores, unfortunately there is nothing stretching back far enough to reveal what exactly a science curriculum would have encompassed in those days.

We are certainly pleased with the breadth of activities the children undertake in their science lessons with us in the present day. Much of the teaching takes place in our labs as well as outside in the grounds and we have Tom Gilbert to thank for building the first science lab in the Melon Garden back in those early days. This year brought very good CE results with over 70% achieving an A or B grade. Special congratulations to Annie Caffyn on winning the Benenden science prize. The school science prize this year went to Andrew Everall, who achieved A grades in his science scholarship papers to Hurstpierpoint.

The major science trip for the year took place back in October when the Year 7 children went to Little Canada on the Isle of Wight, from which the pupils derive a lot of pleasure as well as undertaking a variety of field work. We took a team of Year 6 pupils to Lancing College for a science challenge and Year 3 visited the Natural History Museum. On the annual lambing trip to Udimore, Year 3 saw a lamb being born. 8L learnt all about bees at Netherfield Place.

A new venture this year was the hatching of two batches of chicks. This created a lot of interest amongst the children and some of the staff! It also gave some of the boarders a new responsibility for the summer term. A look back in the Vinehall School archives reveals that in the early days not only were chickens kept in the grounds for eggs, but also cows which were milked in a parlour in the stable yard. A future project perhaps!

D J

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