Team Friars are National Netball Champions!

On Saturday 26th April Miss Turnbull, Mrs Ijewsky, Mrs Rutter and 10 pupils travelled to Leicester for the Great Britain Special Olympics Netball Competition. There were mixed emotions on the journey to Soar Valley Netball Centre with lots of excitement, anticipation and nerves.

Before the matches began every team was involved in the opening ceremony. Friars were representing East Midlands and were the host region therefore we led all of the other teams into the venue. Once all the teams were lined up we had an opening speech, coaches oath, an officials oath and an athlete oath read by Charlotte Evans from Friars. The ceremony then continued with a torch relay around the venue with our very own Rachel Durman running the final part and having the honour of lighting the flame. To end the opening ceremony four competitors, including Tina Smith from Friars, marched in with the Special Olympics flag.

After a warm up from our team captain Tina Smith, pupils were eager to begin competing in their two matches against the Southern Region and Scotland West.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Score | Match | Score |
| 3 | Southern v East Midlands | 6 |
| 1 | Scotland West v East Midlands | 11 |

Throughout both matches the pupils were outstanding. They worked as a team, communicated and supported each other and above all showed great talent and game understanding. Our substitutes were great at cheering on their teammates throughout the matches and at the end of every match pupils shook hands and congratulated the other team.

In the closing ceremony pupils nervously waited to hear their finishing position and were ecstatic when East Midlands were called out in first place! Tina Smith was also chosen as the Umpires Player of the Team and was awarded a trophy. All of the staff that attended the trip are incredibly proud of the pupils and everyone involved had a fantastic day becoming National Special Olympics Netball Champions!

“I really enjoyed myself and loved winning!” (Tina Smith)

“I liked us all working together as a team” (Chloe Sturgess)

“It was really fun being part of a team and meeting new people” (Aimie Pearson)

“I really enjoyed the competition and love it when we won because I felt like I was on cloud 9” (Jade Moses)

“I enjoyed being asked to read the athlete oath in the opening ceremony” (Charlotte Evans)