**February 2020**

The other evening, members of the community came to school to take part in a Parish Council Meeting. As I sat at the front office, I noticed people stopping to look at children’s work in the building. They were very complimentary about it all. For me, I felt a sense of pride that the children and the staff’s hard work and efforts are being recognised and valued.

The following day, I went on a little tour of my own and took photos of what is happening in our school. There’s too much to put on this newsletter so I have uploaded what I discovered on the school website. Please do have a look at the photo slideshow in the latest news.

Very soon, my YouTube Channel will launch and this will show off what we are achieving in the school in order to reach a wider audience. I also aim to explain the reasons behind some of the changes seen in the school recently. I hope you will agree that it is all for the benefit of the children. My staff and I regularly engage in teaching networks and research. Personally, I have got fed up with ‘fads’ in education and am always reading about evidence-based approaches that have proven to work and help children to achieve more. On my tour, it was so lovely to see so much going on and here’s a few snippets of what I found:

* The Pre-school changing to a play-based curriculum. Research shows that this approach helps children make far more progress. I watched and saw the 2-4 year-olds being so ‘lost in their learning’, it was delightful to see what a curious bunch of future scientists, artists, engineers and mathematicians they are turning out to be!
* Talk for Writing work. Research shows that oral-based language programmes like these really help improve all subjects especially writing. I enjoyed seeing the classes reciting their text map stories and then going on to write their own high-quality, creative works of fiction!
* Deeper learning about Climate Change. The children are engaging in debates and writing speeches around this very topical issue. One class is designing and building new innovative bee hives that could save the wild bee population which is massively under threat from climate change.

I could keep writing about the excellent things going on in our school at the moment but there’s just so much to cover. A change of approach can be unsettling for some but our children are relishing the changes and taking advantage of it. Long may it continue!

Mr Tucker

**NEW VISION**

The governors are revisiting the school’s vision, values and mission statement. We need your help! On Monday 24th February at the Parent’s forum, Mr Tucker will be facilitating a quick session at 2.30pm-3.30pm for parents to offer their thoughts to the process. We will explore things like-

* What would you like to see more of from the school?
* What could we do less of?
* Are there any values we could explore more in school?
* What could we do with focusing on with the children to get them to achieve more?
* What is the purpose of education?

We will do the usual forum as well to talk about current issues but it would be great to see you there getting involved in developing a new vision for the school.

**ATTENDANCE**

Our attendance figures were hit by the winter bug and it seems to have returned. As a school, we are trying to work collectively to improve this. We have deep-cleaned the school to help halt this and we even did a handwashing lesson with children following the NHS guidelines on stopping the spread of germs.

As per the new policy, we are tracking illnesses to see any patterns and to help improve our practices. If your child is off school due to illness, please do tell us what the illness is so that we can track this and make any adjustments as may be needed.

**LATENESS**

At a recent meeting with our Attendance Officer Elaine Detaine, we spotted a pattern which is a possible cause of our higher than average unauthorised absence rate- lateness.

When children come in late after 9.10am, it is counted as an unauthorised absence. If they are late between 9.00am and 9.09am, it is a late but NOT an unauthorised absence. We believe it is this that is skewing the school’s figures and has done for number of years.

We are going to have a renewed focus on punctuality next term. Children are late for all sorts of reasons but if we can work on this together, then we can reverse these figures! If you are struggling to get your child into school on time, then please don’t hesitate to book an appointment with Mr Tucker at the office and we can see what support could be arranged.

**VOLUNTEERS HEARING READERS**

We have had a good response to this so far but we do want to build an army of volunteers especially for September when we launch our new reading scheme across the school. The success of this new scheme will rely on the kindness of volunteers who care about our children’s futures.

Please let us know if you could be one of those volunteers and spare an hour or two to hear readers. Turning children into passionate readers makes children learn better and achieve more. They can only be passionate if they have been taught and practise regularly. We even have a quiet, new library for listening to readers so this is much better than before! Can you help us with our reading quest? Please speak to Miss May if you can volunteer.

**SMART SCHOOL COUNCIL UPDATES**

Emily and Bronte’s Drama club is proving very popular indeed and we have some budding actors in the school now thanks to the efforts of these two Year 6 girls who are so dedicated in giving up their free time to run enrichment for the school. Well done girls!

Junior and Daniel have started their football club. It started off well with some training but was called off eventually due to foul weather. We are hoping this will lead to inter-school competitions against other local schools and with any luck, more silverware coming to the school trophy cabinet!

**PARENTS EVENING**

This is on the first day back Monday 24th February for the longer session 4-6pm and the Tuesday 25th February for the shorter one 3.40pm-5.00pm.

We responded to feedback from working parents and extended the longer one to accommodate parents’ working patterns. Please let us know if this works or doesn’t. You can sign up for an appointment at the front office or by ringing the school directly.

**HEAD LICE**

We have had a few cases of this in most classes recently. It is very frustrating indeed. Please continue to follow procedures in dealing with this if your child has Head Lice.

**PE KITS**

There’s been a significant improvement in bringing in PE Kits recently and we thank parents for this support. One parent is now offering to volunteer and run lunchtime sports competitions. This is obviously great news and gives yet more choice for children to experience enrichment. It might be a good idea to have a kit in all the time so that if a sport comes up that they wish to compete in, then having a kit in school won’t be a barrier to this.

**RSHE FRAMEWORK**

In September, the government’s long-awaited Relationships, Sex and Health Education Framework is implemented by schools. The relationships and health side is compulsory but parents have a right to withdraw their child in Primary (not Secondary) for the Sex Education aspect. We have consulted the QET about this and hopefully, the Church of England has guided us in the right direction with this. They suggest a new policy should be created but created with parents. We intend to run a parent workshop around this in the Summer Term and work together on this as well as giving further information on the Relationship and Health Education side of this. More details will follow about this workshop soon.

**MATHS WITH PARENTS**

On Tuesday Miss Day ran a Maths with Parents workshop to begin the launch of Maths with Parents. You can access Maths with Parents at home and play lots of exciting Maths games with your children.

[www.mathswithparents.com](http://www.mathswithparents.com)

Use your child’s class code to sign in.

**DIARY DATES**

Newsletters will be sent out in the second week of every month. Please see the website for more information.

These are the dates for this term. We try our best not to change them but sometimes circumstances require us to.

Fri 14th Feb INSET DAY

FEBRUARY HALF TERM

Mon 24th Feb First Day of Term

Mon 24th Feb Parents Forum 2.30

Mon 24th Feb Parents Evening 4.00 – 6.00

Tues 25th Feb Parents Evening 3.30 – 5.00

Thurs 12th Mar Heights and Weights (YR & Y6)

Thurs 19th Mar FOSS Mother’s Day Café 3.30

Fri 20th Mar FOSS Mother’s Day Café 3.30

Wed 1st April FOSS Easter Bingo 7.00

Fri 3rd April Last Day of Term