



SPARKENHOE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER - OCTOBER 2018

'Together we can..'



It is nearly half term already! The weeks seem to be flying by. All the children have had a brilliant start to the new school year. The new starters in F1 and F2 have settled in really well as have the new children we have welcomed into other year groups.

Academy Proposals

During parents' evening on Thursday 18th October, members of the senior leadership team will be available in the Saxby Hall if any parents have any questions or would like further information about the proposal to convert to an academy as part of the Attenborough Learning Trust.

If you are finding it tricky to book a parents evening appointment online, please talk to your child's teacher and they will book a suitable appointment for you.

Events

We have had a busy start to the new term. Year 2 have visited New Walk museum as an introduction to their Still Life topic. They also saw the Star Wars exhibition which was an added bonus. This is running until October 28th and is a great opportunity to see many rarely seen Star Wars treasures. The children have also been involved in many reading activities. Year 5 are taking part in the 'My Best Book' project and have had a visit from Paul Goby from the library services. They will be reading lots of books and voting for their favourites. Some Year 6 children took part in an author visit at Leicester Racecourse. They saw Adam Baron who talked about being an author and read extracts from his books. The Year 5 and 6 book club visited Highfields Library recently. They have all signed up for library cards and have borrowed books. Year 5 and 6 will now all be visiting Highfields Library once a month and will be borrowing books regularly. Year 6 were lucky enough to visit the African Caribbean Centre to hear Floella Benjamin speak about Black History Month, the Windrush generation and making a difference in society. It was an inspiring visit.

Residential Visits

This year, there will be three residential visits: The PGL Caythorpe Court residential in February, France in March and camping in May.

Year 3 are getting excited about the overnight camp in school in November and there will be an overnight school camp for Year 2 in the summer term.

Curriculum

Thank you to everyone who attended the meetings for parents at the beginning of term. We hope these were useful and informative. For any parents who could not attend, the teachers shared information about the topics each year group will be covering throughout the year and details about what children will be learning in each subject this half term. This information is available on the school website but if you would like a copy, please speak to your child's teacher.

Year 2 are currently holding handwriting workshops for parents every Tuesday so parents can see how handwriting is taught in school. F2 held a successful reading workshop earlier in the term. Look out for information about further workshops from your children's teachers.

Charity

Thank you to all our families for your incredibly generous contributions for our harvest collection. All the donations will be given to Open Hands where they will be distributed to families in need. Our next fundraising event will be Children In Need on Friday November 16th.

School Meals

School dinners are changing

From Monday 29th October our school dinners will be provided by Leicestershire Traded Services instead of City Catering. Many Leicester schools have chosen to move to this provider. They offer a varied menu and are an award winning service who serve quality, nutritious food. Another benefit is that children can choose their meal each day and notice to change to or from dinners will no longer have to be given in advance. However, for our school system to be kept updated, please inform the office of any changes.

The new menu is on our website: www.sparkenhoe.leicester.sch.uk/school-meals

All children in Years 1 and 2 and Foundation Stage will continue to have a free dinner in school as part of the government scheme.

Parent Pay

We will be using a new online payment system for the meals and for payments for trips, uniform and kidszone. Further details will be sent out this week. The current online system for all payments will close down on Tuesday 16th October. Please make sure all payments are up to date and do not make payments for dinners beyond Tuesday 16th October on the old system.

Milk

Milk costs 20p a day but now needs to be paid for termly and ordered for the term in advance unless children are entitled to free school meals. Orders for the Autumn term have now closed. We will be sending out a letter and form later in the Autumn term to order milk for the Spring term. Milk is free for children under 5.

School Values

You may have heard your child talking about our school values. These are displayed around school and are on the school website. Once again this year we are encouraging the children to really understand what these mean through assemblies and class activities. We will continue sending values postcards home this year for children who behave in a way that demonstrates one of our values. We will also be giving all children a 'sticker' album and stickers to keep a record of their collection.

Safety reminders

Please remember not to send any food into school that contains nuts. It is really important that no nuts or food containing nuts are part of packed lunches or other food sent into school as there are children who have severe allergies. It is also really important that any sweets or chocolates that are sent in for birthdays do not contain nuts. We know it is important for children to celebrate their birthday with their friends but would like to encourage parents to only send in small treats for the children. Other nice ideas are small stationary items.

Please remember not to park illegally in the morning and after school. It is dangerous to other road users and children on the pavement.

We are making changes to access through the car park after half term - look out for a separate letter.

Sport

All the clubs have been underway for a while and we are hoping for another successful year with our teams. The year 2 football league will start after half term and Years 5 and 6 have already played their first fixtures. It has been a tricky start for them but I'm sure they will persevere and work hard in training to improve. This year, we have joined a basketball league, playing against other local schools. The children are looking forward to their first match next week. Some Year 2 and Year 5 children have attended sports events and sports leader training at Crown Hills and Moat. There will be many more opportunities during the year for other children to take part in additional activities.

This year, we have a coach from the LCFC community trust working with us. Year 3 girls are currently enjoying the lunchtime club and Year 3 and 4 children are taking part in the after school multi sports club. All the children in KS2 have the opportunity to take part in additional lunchtime activities during the week.

Music

As well as music lessons in the classroom, we also have guitar and keyboard skills clubs this term. Year 4 have started their brass lessons and I am sure many of the children will soon be bringing home a trumpet, trombone or baritone to practice their new skills!

This year our school choir are going to be performing at The Royal Albert Hall in London as part of the Music for Youth proms. It is very exciting and an opportunity that we won't have every year.

Special Assemblies

This year we are trying something new with our special year group assemblies. In order to enhance the teaching of our different topics, each year group is going to perform an assembly linked to their topic theme. After half term, Year 4 will be performing a play called 'It's all Greek to Me' - a mythological adventure comedy.

All children will still study an RE topic in depth during the year and all children will take part in key festival days linked to different religions. We are planning to hold special days for parents to attend during each RE topic.

Parents Views

In the summer term, we sent out a questionnaire to gather parents' views. Thank you to everyone who returned the survey. The key findings show that the majority of parents are satisfied with all areas of the school, with 98% agreeing or strongly agreeing that their child is happy at school and 99% happy their child is safe at school. Some parents are concerned that children do not get enough homework. We do try to offer a balance so that children are not under pressure to complete a lot of work at home. This year we will continue to develop the half termly homework projects and encourage all children to read regularly at home. There are also online maths and English homework platforms available for those parents who wish to use them.

Many parents commented about how much they enjoyed the topic days, wow days and workshops. We will definitely be holding more of these this year. Some parents would like more assessment information and more feedback from accelerated reader for the children in KS2. We hope we will be better at this this year. There were some concerns over competitive football for younger children and some queries over the different reward systems, particularly for reading. We are working hard as a school to develop a love of reading for enjoyment and would welcome any ideas parents have to promote this. As always, we welcome feedback and suggestions.

<u>Dates for the diary</u>		
Dates	Activity	Extra information
Monday 15 th October	Flu immunisations	
Tuesday 16 th October	Whole School Performance - 9.00 am	All welcome
Tuesday 16 th October	5 Bradgate Virtual Orchestra trip	In school time
Thursday 18 th October	5 Bosworth Virtual Orchestra trip	3.45 pm return
Thursday 18 th October	Parents' Evening 1	
Friday 19 th October	School closes for half term	
Monday 29 th October	School starts	
Monday 29 th October	Internet safety workshop for parents - 8.45 am - Saxby Hall	All welcome
Tuesday 30 th October	Parents' Evening 2	
Thursday 1 st November	Year 2 Topic 'Wow' Day	Parents will be invited
Friday 2 nd November	Year 3 Sleepover at school	
Week beginning 5 th November	Diwali festival day activities in school	
Week beginning 5 th November	Year 4 Assembly - It's all Greek to me	Parents will be invited
Monday 5 th November	Jane Clarke (author) working with Years 4, 5, 6	In school
Tuesday 6 th November	School choir performing at the Albert Hall	
Friday 9 th November	Paul Goby working with Year 5 - my best book	
Tuesday 13 th November	Year 5 visiting Leicester Tigers stadium	In school time
Wednesday 14 th November	Book start library staff in F2	
Friday 16 th November	Children in need	
Monday 19 th November	Jane Clarke (author) working with Years 1, 2, 3	In school
Wednesday 21 st November	Orchestra Unwrapped workshop for Year 5	The Ark
Monday 26 th November	Leicester Tigers healthy living activities in school	
Wednesday 5 th December	Year 3 and 4 at De Montfort Hall for Orchestra Unwrapped	In school time
Week beginning Monday 10 th December	F2 Nativity assembly	Parents will be invited
Wednesday 12 th December	Year 6 trip to the Warning Zone	
Friday 21 st December	School carol concerts	Parents will be invited
Friday 21 st December	Last day of term	
Tuesday 8 th January 2018	School opens for the Spring term.	

All dates and times for festival assemblies will be sent out nearer the time.

We welcome your views and thoughts and are always around if you need to talk to us. If you would like to raise an issue or ask a question to a member of our Governing Body, please email govs@sparkenhoe.leicester.sch.uk or the Chair of Governors, Lee Jowett, via the school office. As always, you can make an appointment if you need to speak to a member of staff in private.

Enjoy the half term break. We look forward to seeing everyone on Monday 29th October.
Rhian Jones Headteacher