



March 1st 2019 Issue 22

Attendance Certificates

This week I handed out attendance certificates for last half term and I was delighted to be able to write 55 certificates. I know that last half term was not our best in terms of absence largely down to flu like symptoms- it was a particularly virulent strain! Hopefully, this half term we can be much healthier to maximise our learning opportunities. The links between good attendance and children's attainment are well documented.

Ground force Help Needed

After the development over the last couple of years of our fabulous Railway Heritage Garden, I am keen to develop other parts of the school grounds. Some parts may be to help with maintenance, such as edging the bark areas, and others will be to encourage active play or play choices. I would really appreciate some help with the remaining logs that are near to the playground. To make them safe and allow children to walk, scramble or play on them needs quite a bit of digging and arranging. I need some parent power to help with this and anyone who would like to help dig, lift and roll the logs into position with me would be greatly appreciated! I have some tools but you may want to bring your own plus a pair of gardening gloves. I would like us to do this work on Sunday morning 3rd March and if anyone could spare an hour or two please let me know or just turn up. I will be here early but don't expect you to be! Thank you.

New Classrooms

Nursery and Reception children and staff were excited to start teaching and learning in their new classrooms this week. Early years have such a lot of physical resources to move and organise to enhance their provision. Having spent some time in both rooms this week, I can see the opportunities these new spaces provide and look forward to seeing the outside space developing too. Thank you to Mrs Bartoli, Mrs Patterson, Mrs Miller, Mrs Spence, Mrs Daniels, Mrs Kicks and Miss Earl for giving up some of their half term to get their rooms ready.

The new Breakfast Club/ Chill Out Club room is now a really useful space which we hope will offer us opportunities for crafts, music, cookery and more. We would like to develop part of it into a library. We have a great range of books in classrooms and lots of sets for group reading but stocking a library is a big and expensive task. If you have any children's books that you no longer require and that are in a reasonable condition we would be grateful to receive them to help us get started with this project. We are hoping that FOMS will help to contribute and are looking for Match Funding Opportunities.

The final new room is an ICT suite and we began to set this up. Over the year, we will add to our existing stock and now have a number of Ipads, laptops or PCs in each of our classes as well as this designate suite. Thank you to Miss Richardson and Mrs Hauxwell for their help setting this up.

World Book Day

Thursday March 7th is World Book Day. I know the children look forward to dressing up as their favourite book character and we will do that again this year. Miss Richardson and I thought that the children might like to be creative too and are challenging them to make a book character out of a wooden spoon and craft materials. The winners will receive a prize! We would also like to invite parent/carer or a family member in to school on the March 7th between 2-3.25pm to read with their child and have some refreshments in a relaxed environment. I hope that you are able to join us.

Online Safety

This week we had some information passed to us from the Local Authority about an app that is proving popular with school children. 'TikTok' is in effect the replacement for Musical.ly and this app seems to have developed a big following in the last few weeks. It is not "more dangerous" than some other apps, but to help keep our children safe it would be wise to draw parent's attention to current advice. Parents are advised – as with other apps - to help their child review their privacy settings and

to be aware that: Even with a private account, profile information – including profile photo, username, and bio – will be visible to all users. Counsel your child not to reveal personal information such as age, address, or phone number in his/her profile.'

<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/esafety-news/tik-tok-app-safety-what-parents-need-to-know/>

Some children were concerned and mentioned to me this week about a sinister cartoon character that pops up in YouTube videos and elsewhere when watching videos at home. Like all online situations that children are uncomfortable with, we advised them to talk with parents and show them the type of material that has cropped up. Having a good overview of what your child is doing on their tablet, mobile phone or other device helps you make informed choices, set controls and measures to put in place to keep your child safe at home.

Talking to the children, most of them from Year 2 upwards know about the both of the above and this shows how popular it is, how aware the children are of technological developments and how vigilant we must be. Fortunately, schools have excellent filtering systems and online safety is something we talk about regularly. However, it is important that we work together to keep our children safe at home, at grandparents and wherever they may be.

Fitbit

Before half term, a Fitbit was handed into the School Office. If you think that it is yours, please call into the School Office to check.

Year 6 Ford Castle Residential

Thank you to the parents/carers who have paid the deposit for the Year 6 residential. You can pay the remaining balance in instalments or in one go. We would appreciate the full amount paying by 24th May 2019. Thank you

Miss Blackburn's Class Assembly

Our next Class Assembly is for Year 2 children on Friday 15th March at 9am. Parents/families of these children are welcome to attend.

Attendance for w.b. 11.2.19

Class	Present
Reception	97.9%
Year 1	98.9%
Year 2	100%
Year 3	99.3%
Year 4	98.5%
Year 5	100%
Year 6	100%

School overall attendance 99.3%

Please ensure that your child arrives at school no later than 8.55a.m. in order to make a prompt start for lessons. 40 minutes of learning was lost to lateness this week.

Dates for the diary

March 6 th	Gymnastics event at Bishop Barrington (selected children)
March 7 th	World Book Day
March 15 th	Miss Blackburn's Class Assembly
March 18 th	Chess Tournament
March 26 th	Pedestrian Training Year 3
March 26 th and 27 th	Parents' Evenings
March 27 th	Year 1 Football Competition
March 28 th	Year 5 Multiskills festival
March 29 th	Band Workshop at Teesdale School 1-2.30pm
April 2 nd	Year 3 and 4 Spring Performance 1.45pm

Mr Minikin

Head Teacher