



April 8th 2022

End of the Spring Term

As we come to the end of another term, it is natural to reflect on the term's achievements as well as focusing on areas to improve as we move into the Summer Term. For all schools, Covid continues to present problems and we have had a revolving door of children and staff through the Spring Term. Hopefully, with the warmer weather in the Summer, we can all look forward to better health.

In terms of the curriculum, we continue to work hard to improve children's reading and love of books. The children in each class read a great number of high quality texts throughout the year. All children benefit from sharing stories at home, being heard reading and where applicable, using additional resources such as flashcards and Lexia – please keep this up over Easter! Moving forward into summer, we are trialling a new reading computer program to aid fluency with children in Year 5 that, if successful, we can look to extend elsewhere in Key Stage 2.

It has been lovely to be involved with the community again and the Holi Festival brought a great deal of colour and joy to the town on a sunny and warm weekend in March. A number of staff from other schools and organisations have mentioned the fabulous artwork and singing from our children. The Year 6 children took a lot from the Castle Players play on Dementia as we continue to develop children's understanding on real-life topics. Mrs Leonard and I have been working with the Bowes Museum on an exciting exhibition for next year and I have been working with local schools on a project that all children can enjoy from September, if things progress well.

I have also been pleased to see the return of sporting festivals and look forward to many more over the Summer Term. Increasing physical activity in children is so important and this is something we look to build on in the coming weeks, aiding general health and wellbeing. The Wellbeing Award for Schools was a nice accolade for a lot of good work that goes on in school and I am pleased that staff have been keen to develop professionally in this area. It is lovely to see the children volunteering to be Wellbeing Champions in each class. The installation of the roundhouse this term has added to our outdoor spaces and working with Gardening Club on the areas around school has given me a great deal of pleasure.

Conversations with children gives us a lot of information to reflect upon and the school council elections have been held this week. Mrs Smith intends to meet with School Council on a weekly basis. Subject Leaders have also been around school talking to children too, about how the curriculum adds to their knowledge and looking at areas to improve upon.

Finally, having Parents' Evening in school brought another piece of normality back to school life and we look forward to other occasions where parents/families can be in school, such as the Platinum Jubilee Event in May.

Well done Miss Bean!

This week Miss Bean received confirmation that she has been awarded the NASENCO qualification which is a great achievement. This is an eighteen-month course covering a host of modules with the ultimate aim of supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities and their families. Miss Bean has also received a Post Graduate Certificate in Vulnerable Learners and Inclusion. These are huge undertakings alongside her teaching commitments and SENCO role. Miss Bean ensures inclusion is at the heart of our practice throughout the school and despite the challenges of staffing a school during Covid, children with SEND are making good progress from their own starting points.

Dr Wes Visit

Today the Year 5 children were visited by Dr. Wes as part of his PHSE work, who showed the class various first aid techniques. Thank you, Dr. Wes!

Holiday Gymnastic Camps

Michael Connelly, who has been coaching gymnastics at the school for a number of years and who many of you may know from Teesdale Sports Centre, is running a Gymnastics Camp for a couple of days in the holiday, in the school hall. Please contact Michael on 07707320473 to book a place.

Bowes Museum Jubilee Project

This week I was contacted about an exhibition the Bowes Museum will be running this summer. Please see below:-

‘Calling all relatives,

Over the Easter holidays, we are asking pupils to write down any stories and memories that family members may have about past royal celebrations and events. The pupils should bring them in on Monday 25th April for their teacher to read. This could involve pupils asking questions such as...

- How have you celebrated past Royal events?
- Have you ever attended a street party?
- Have you ever met a member of the Royal Family or attended a Royal visit?

A small selection of children will be invited to recite the stories and memories that they have recorded from relatives, to be audio recorded and feature in The Bowes Museum’s exhibition, A Platinum Jubilee Celebration opening Sunday 8th May.’

If you have any memorabilia that you would be happy to loan to the museum, or if your child is able to collect stories from relatives, please let me know.

Sunflowers for Ukraine

Gardening club have been sowing sunflower seeds to sell to raise funds for Ukraine. They are in different stages of growth as they have been sown over a number of weeks. I hope you managed to buy a pot – this morning alone we raised £40! Thank you.

Covid 19 Additional Symptoms

As you may be aware, the symptoms of Covid 19 for children have been updated:-

- a high temperature or shivering (chills) – a high temperature means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste
- shortness of breath
- feeling tired or exhausted
- an aching body
- a headache
- a sore throat
- a blocked or runny nose
- loss of appetite
- diarrhoea
- feeling sick or being sick

Pupils with respiratory infection:

Children who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people. They can go back to school, college or childcare when they no longer have a high temperature, and they are well enough to attend.

Pupils who test positive for Covid-19:

Children and young people aged 18 and under with a positive COVID-19 test result should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days.

Easter at St Mary's

Reverend Harding has asked us to mention the Lent and Easter activities on Sunday 10th April at 4pm at St Mary's Church. More information can be found [here](#).

Platinum Jubilee Celebration

Friends of Montalbo School (FOMS), Mrs Bowron, Miss Richardson and I have been sharing ideas to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Children will be involved in lots of activities throughout the day and parents/carers/families are invited to attend school during the afternoon. There will be games, refreshments, hopefully a band and much more. I will keep you updated as the plans develop.

FOMS are also planning a Summer Raffle. If you would like to donate a raffle prize, please bring it to the School Office after the Easter break. Thank you.

After School clubs

After school clubs for the next half term have been added to Weduc. Please complete the consent in the Forms section and pay via Parent Pay. There are limited places in Gardening Club and those who were on the waiting list have been offered a place. The Chess club is open to any pupils who can already play chess only, not those who do not have any experience.

FOMS

Thank you to FOMS for providing each child with an Easter Egg or alternative where applicable. I am sure the children really appreciate this kind gesture.

Happy Easter everyone

Dates for the Diary

April 11 th – 22 nd	Easter Holidays
April 25 th	Start of Summer Term
May 9 th -13 th	SATs for Year 6 children
May 26 th	Jubilee Event at School 1.15pm-3.30pm
May 30 th -June 3 rd	Whit Holidays including Barnard Castle Meet

Mr. C Minikin
Head Teacher