



March 8th 2024

World Book Day

There has been quite a buzz around school as the children found more information about Antarctica as part of our World Book Day celebrations. They started the topic by reading the whole school text, *Let's save Antarctica – Why we must protect our planet*, by Catherine Barr. It has some powerful messages about the damage humans are causing to one of the most remote areas of the planet. The children's written work and art work were lovely to see and the pride that the children have shown in their art and written work was clear to see. I thank all of our staff for their extra work, preparing the gallery in the hall which many families visited on Thursday. We received so many lovely comments – thank you!

A special thank you to Miss Richardson for organising Don Kent's visit which inspired our text and work, Mrs Bowron for the creative ideas and direction. Thank you also to the children who brought in their Antarctic arts and crafts from home – I will sort out a little treat for you for next week's assembly. Well done Team Monty!

Mother's Day

The ice berg melted away to leave space for our very important visitors on Friday. It was nice to see so many families enjoying refreshments and activities together and I think that it worked much better in terms of numbers in the hall at one time.

Comic Relief

Next Friday is Comic Relief and children are invited to come to school in wacky costumes, dress up clothes or bright colours but please do not buy anything special for this. We will have a collection in school to support this worthwhile charity and will share our donation total with you the following week.

Shakespeare Rocks

We are looking forward to welcoming families of children in Years 3 and 4 to school for their performances of *Shakespeare Rocks*, which will take place on March 13th and 14th at 6pm. Please could all children in these classes arrive at 5.30pm on both nights. Thank you.

Key Stage 2 Tree Planting

On Monday children in Key Stage 2 will be planting trees in the school grounds with OASES (Outdoor and Sustainable Education Service). Please bring some old boots or wellies to change into. Thank you.

Public Health Messages

I attended a Headteacher briefing this week and one of the speakers was a representative from Public Health. As well as encouraging Headteacher's to share information about flu and MMR vaccinations, she shared statistics around the percentage of overweight children in County Durham, which was higher than the national average. As well as trying to increase exercise in and outside of school, we were asked to share information on nutrition and to encourage healthy snacks and packed lunches. More information can be found [here](#). Please consider the healthy snacks you send in too as a number of children are bringing in crisps for their snack for their breaktimes. We know from our DT topics this year that our children really enjoy different fruits and veg!

Pharmacy First Service

Mrs Collin shared some information about the Pharmacy First scheme which has been introduced and allows you to visit your local pharmacy for certain conditions and receive prescription medication without the need to visit your GP. Further information can be found on Weduc of the types of illnesses covered.

Eco Council Visit

Eco Councillors from Key Stage 2 have been invited to go to Cow Green to look at plants native to Teesdale on May 7th. They will report back to the wider school after their visit. Only a small number can attend as the site where the plants are is quite vulnerable.

Attendance

Over the past week, you may have noticed in the news further information from the government on school attendance and some worrying statistics, particularly around the number of children nationally who are classed as persistent absentees (where attendance is less than 90%). As a result, they have decreased the number of unauthorised absences allowed to 10 sessions (5 days) and periods of unauthorised absences such as these could result in a larger fixed penalty notice. This means that 5 school days holidays would fall into this bracket now so please consider this when arranging holidays for the next academic year.

Please find below this week's attendance.

Class	Attendance (%)
Reception	94.5
Year 1	98.5
Year 2	99.0
Year 3	97.0
Year 4	97.3
Year 5	92.3
Year 6	98.6
Whole School %	96.8

Dates for the Diary

March 13 th and 14 th	Year 3 and 4 School Play 6pm start
March 15 th	Comic Relief
March 20 th	Year 5 Multiskills at Staindrop
March 21 st	2 teams from Y2 Football at Newton Aycliffe
March 22 nd	Selected Y5/6 Girls Football
March 27 th	Y3/4 Orienteering
April 1 st – April 12 th	Easter Holidays
April 15 th	Children return to school for the Summer Term
May 6 th	May Day Bank Holiday
May 7 th	Children return to school
May 7 th	Eco Council Visit to Cow Green
May 13 th – May 16 th	Year 6 SATs
May 17 th	Teacher Training Day
May 20 th	Teacher Training Day
May 21 st	School reopens – Nursery, Reception, Y1 and 2 in new classrooms
May 27 th – May 31 st	Whit Half Term Holidays
June 3 rd	Children return to school
June 10 th - June 14 th	Phonics Screening Check begins for Y1
June 3 rd – June 14 th	Multiplication Test for Y4

Mr. C Minikin
Head Teacher

Please see the QR code for the School Lottery. The more players we have, the more we raise for the school and the bigger the prize fund.

