



Ashmead
Primary School



<http://ashmeadprimary.wordpress.com/>

29th January 2016

Dates for the diary

8th Feb: E-safety workshop for parents - 6pm

9th Feb: Reception trip to Discover Centre

10th Feb: Reception Parents' workshop

12th Feb: Thor visiting Y6!

15th - 19th Feb (inc): Half term break

23rd Feb: Parent-Teacher meetings 3.50 - 7.30pm

24th - 26th Feb: Y4 School Journey

25th Feb: Parent-Teacher meetings 3.50 - 6.00pm (except Y4)

26th Feb: Y6 on Black History walk

29th Feb - 4th March: Book Week

3rd March: Y2 trip to Maritime Museum

4th March: Book character dressing up day!

18th March: Y6 cake sale - 3.30pm

24th March: Y1 trip to Discovery Recycling Centre

**25th March - 8th April (inc)
Easter break**

18th - 22nd April: Science Week

20th April: Family Science workshop - 6pm

**5th May: INSET Day
(school being used as a polling station)**

OPAL - Outdoor Play and Learning

You will have read in the last newsletter about our new 'OPAL' playground project. We will be starting to accept donations from Monday for our OPAL trial day in the last week of this half term. To start off our collections, we are asking for soft toys, bags and large cardboard boxes. We will also be developing collections of stones, bark chip pings and other 'loose parts' that the children can experiment and play with. Please help us make this project successful by donating any unwanted items to school. There will be boxes outside school all next week.

Thanks for all your support.



Attendance and Punctuality

As you know, our attendance target for this year is 97%

In the last fortnight, the first two weeks of this term, our overall attendance was 95.3%, which is down on last fortnight's 96.2%.

Each classes attendance figures are as follows:

Year 5J: 97.6%%
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Reception : 97.5%
Year 3U: 97.3%
Year 6: 97.2%
Year 2: 95.5%
Year 3V: 95%
Year 1: 93.5%
Year 4: 89.1%



Screens and Books

We are working hard on encouraging children to read for pleasure at school and support at home is crucial for this. I was delighted when talking to some Y5 parents this week to find that they are still reading to their children - this is so important all the way up to Y6 and beyond. It really helps to encourage independent reading too. However, the various screens (TVs, phones, tablets etc.) that most families have at home can make it harder (for both children and adults...) to concentrate on reading. For example, a lot of challenging reading material takes a bit of time to settle into whereas most screen activities are instantly engaging. If you haven't done so already we would ask you to set some firm boundaries at home regarding the amount of screen time your children have, e.g. no screens for an hour or so before bedtime as well as time limits before this. Please don't let your child charge their iPad or phone in their bedroom at night - this is far too tempting!

News from EYFS

Reception have been following an interest in TV and film this week with this culminating in a highly anticipated cinema event on Friday! They have been working on data handling and spent time surveying their year 6 buddies on their favourite films - recording the results in tally form. They have also been busy creating amazing film posters and writing gripping tag lines to entice viewers!

A new addition this week has been a time for children to present 'Reception News' to recap and retell things that have occurred throughout the day. Nursery enjoyed their visit to the Painted Hall this week and have been totally inspired by the storytelling session we took part in. We have been busy using a range of props and objects to create our own stories and the Nursery adults have been busy scribing some of these imaginative stories. This week they are thinking about storytelling language and story openers, using ideas from some of their favourite stories!

News from Key Stage 1

The children in Key Stage 1 are very excited about our new times tables focus! Children in Y1 have been impressing us with their maths knowledge and the children are keen to show us their 'grown up' skills.

We are also focusing our circle time sessions around our value of 'Empathy'. We loved watching the Sesame Street clip about Empathy - check it out if you haven't seen it! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_1Rt1R4xbM

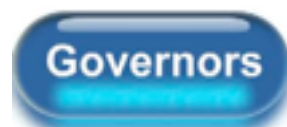
We have been thinking how empathy can change different situations in our family, at school and in the wider community.

News from Key Stage 2

Key Stage 2 have had an extremely busy fortnight. Each class have selected new reading and writing targets and we are using this to help us make progress within our learning. We have also created and selected brand new maths targets. These range from learning all of our times tables to dividing fractions!

Another exciting event was that Year 4 experienced what life was like between the Stone Age and the Iron Age last week, when they visited Butser Ancient Farm. Our school value is now focused upon empathy and each class has been considering how showing empathy towards each other will create an even better school environment.

Sharon Shrubsall, Parent governor, C&A Committee Chair & Carolyn Mumby co-opted governor, CFC committee member



On Monday 18th January 2016, both of us spent some time looking at books from Year 1 to Year 6. Our focus for the book look came from the SIP (School Improvement Plan) as within the curriculum section it states the school is working towards developing areas of expertise, e.g. subject quality marks for areas like Science plus a focus on RE, Geography and other subjects. We used this opportunity to look at the coverage of foundation subjects within books.

The books were well presented and there was evidence of a variety of foundation subjects taught. During the previous Curriculum and Achievement meeting Sean had discussed a strong focus on handwriting, spelling and grammar within teachers' marking which was evident within the books.

There was clear differentiation between abilities. In marking teachers posed some comments as questions to get children thinking e.g. "tell me why I'm so impressed with the highlighted sentence". Photographs were also used to evidence practical work. Some children had their writing scribed to show their input within the lesson and as a result this maintained continuity within books.

Positive personalised praise was regularly used within marking to encourage pupils with their work. We could see the development in the improvement of handwriting. It was wonderful to see that some children in KS2 were reflecting on their own work before it was marked, showing reflexivity.

TIME FOR TABLES

Times tables home learning focus

Dear parents and carers,

We have been thinking about the best ways to improve children's mental maths skills. The new national curriculum has a huge emphasis on children knowing their times tables. Although these skills are part of the maths passport targets **we would like to focus solely on the times table skills for a while** until they are more securely established.

This focus on times tables will hopefully make home learning quicker and easier to support for you and will also enable pupils to use these skills across multiple areas of numeracy. Quick recall of these facts really supports children's maths development effectively.

We will shortly send home year group expectations regarding times tables with your child, giving clear guidance on what needs to be learnt. **The children should be secure on all times tables to 12x12 by the end of year 4.** Children who already know these will be given targets where they will need to apply their timetables knowledge in different ways – as well as ongoing practice in recalling the times tables more and more speedily.

We will also be sending home some tips and tricks for practising the times tables at home.

This home learning will be monitored by the children completing timetables tests and activities during the school day.

Please keep the Maths passports at home as this gives you a clear picture of your child's year group expectations. You may want to keep practising the skills in the passports but we will not be assessing the passports before the end of the academic year. At that point we will review how the times tables focus has gone.

MyMaths homework will continue to be given on a weekly basis.

Kind regards,

Jess Berry
(Maths Leader)

