

Weekly Newsletter



Friday, 31st March, 2017

Volume 26; Issue 10

Feedback from Parent Questionnaires - I would like to take this opportunity to feedback to you actions taken by the school in response to feedback from you recently in your questionnaires.

Thank you all for taking the time to make your positive comments. We do take your suggestions seriously too on how we might improve and the following actions have been taken or planned in response to your feedback:

- Homework – we had as many parents feeling that there was too much homework as those who felt there was insufficient. (87% were satisfied). There is clear evidence from research that homework for primary children adds nothing to their learning BUT practising skills and spending time with your family does. In light of this, we are re-writing our homework policy ready for the new school year and will, in the future, focus on suggesting family learning activities, practising multiplication tables, number bonds and reading and taking part in producing objects for practical learning in school (such as the recent Y4 Viking ships).
- Feedback on learning - 7% of those who replied felt that they did not always get feedback on their children's learning. The parent teacher consultations that take place in October and February are feedback given verbally and in July you receive a written report. In addition, please do ask the teachers about your children's progress after school at any time (preferably not on a Thursday as the teachers have staff meetings). If you cannot make it after school, then liaise over a mutually convenient time. From September there will also be termly opportunities to come into school (one morning per year group) to see your child's work with your child present. We can only accommodate this effectively at 9:00am and so will advertise the dates in June so that you can arrange to be there if you wish to do so. Of course, we have our Open Afternoon on 13th July this year too – details to follow.
- Responding to concerns - 4% of those who responded (3 parents) felt that the school could respond to concerns better. If you are ever dissatisfied with the response you get to a concern raise, from any member of staff, please do let Mrs Masters or Mr Hocking know so that we can address your concern if it is within our remit, or help you to understand the response you have received. If your dissatisfaction is with Mrs Masters' response or that of Mr Hocking, please see the other one of us for assistance. If you really feel dissatisfied still, after seeing a member of senior staff, our Complaints Procedure is available on request from the school office.
- INSET days – people prefer these to be on a Monday or Friday which is why the one scheduled for 11th October has been moved to 8th December. We cannot help the polling day closure as we are instructed to be used as a polling station when required. We are also required to take 5 INSET days (in addition to that for polling day) within school so cannot take them within the holiday as was suggested by a parent.
- Other matters – some parents seemed unaware of some school practice and made suggestions that we do things that are already in place so in answer to some of those points, children do school plays in Y1, Y4 and Y6, not just Y1; we pride ourselves in the development of children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural skills and understanding. This is embedded into the curriculum and so parents might not see it mentioned separately on our plans in many cases; our more able children are set additional challenges in class and often offered opportunities to go to events for sport, maths, computing, science and writing with other schools – as a school the percentage of our children in all year groups working above the expected standard for their age is well above the national average; lastly please note, older children do get a larger meal than their younger peers at lunchtime and often get the chance to get seconds if they are available. I hope this answers many of your questions and thank you again – all of you told us that you would recommend this school to others, which makes us very proud.

Termly Owl points – Congratulations to the Barn Owls team for winning this term. The non-uniform day will be on the first Friday back, 21st April.

Staff news – We are very pleased to report that Mrs Masters' arm operation seems to have been successful, if rather painful. I am sure you will join us in wishing her a speedy recovery.

Fundraisers' Easter Egg competition – Well done to Lola Russell in Maple Class who was the only person to guess the exact number of eggs in the jar, which was 138. However, many children were very close and there was a winner for each year group. £102.50 was raised, so thank you children for your support.

SATs information – The government has released information for parents regarding KS1 and KS2 SATs in the form of a leaflet and two short videos. To access these, log on to gov.uk/sta and search for parent information.

Debts – As we approach the end of the financial year, please settle all outstanding debts as a matter of urgency. Please remember that Breakfast Club and dinners should be paid for in advance through SIMS Agora.

International Drama Academy – New classes in acting, singing, dancing, film and TV will be held on Saturday mornings from 10:00am and 1:00pm at Anglo European School, Ingatestone. The launch day (free) will be 22nd April from 10:00am to 12:00pm if you are interested.

French Club – There will be no French Club the first Tuesday back after the spring break and will restart on Tuesday, 25th April.

Menu – Week 1 of the menu. Please follow this link: <http://hollytreesprimaryschool.co.uk/school-lunches/>

Attendance – 97% target – Congratulations to Beech, Elder, Holly, Hornbeam, Laurel, Maple, Mulberry and Spruce for having over 97% attendance for last week.

Letters home

27th Mar – Summer term swimming 2017

30th Mar – Y2 visit to Colchester Zoo

Forthcoming dates

17th Apr – Bank Holiday

18th Apr – children return to school

26th Apr – Y4 visit to Hampton Court Palace

27th Apr – EYFS trip to Barleylands

2nd May – Group photos

3rd May – Y2 visit to Colchester Zoo

4th May – school closed for Polling Day

8th May – start of SATS week

18th May – summer disco

19th May – Y6 visit to Globe Theatre

24th May – Bags for School collection

Congratulations

Bronze Certificates went to Cadee Watson, Benjamin Tomlinson-Marks, Ethan Wright, Sebastian Osborn, Dylan Hann, Afzal Hussain, Ryan Brown, Keeley O'Sullivan, Mina Reeves and Lucas Sharma.

Silver Certificates went to William D'Silva and Sonny Marshall.

Gold Certificates went to Charlie Westwood, Sofia Bourote, Toby Matthews, Tharun Vijay, Douglas Muncey, Varshini Ramkumar, Milo Waters, Archie McFarlane, Millie Preston, Lacey Kershaw, Lily Sunnucks, Charley Fletcher, Sarah Phillips and Emma Blake.

Eco Poster Competition – 1st prize (Gold Certificate) went to Matilda Gamblin (Y5). Runners up (Silver Certificate) went to Poppy Logan (Y5), Kimberley Chen (Y2), Charlie Rose (Y2) and Marcus Chen (EYFS).