



SPARKENHOE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2017

'Together we can...'



It's beginning to feel like Spring is on the way. We have another busy term ahead of us with assemblies, outings and events. Important dates are listed at the end of the newsletter.

Additional closure day

The term dates published by Leicester City Council include 3 flexible Inset days where the school is closed to children. These are decided by the school. Two of these were taken on the 25th and 26th August so that we could start the term after the August Bank holiday.

The final closure day for children will be on Friday 7th April. This means school will close for Easter at the end of the day on **Thursday 6th April**.

Residential Visits

The children had a fantastic time at Kingswood even though it was very cold. All the outdoor activities helped keep them warm! They enjoyed archery, fencing, climbing, quad biking, zip wire and laser zone as well as taking part in team challenges, campfires and a disco. The countdown to Paris has begun. The children and staff are getting very excited and can't wait until Friday when they leave. They are also looking forward to getting to know the children from Shenton who are joining us on this trip. The camping residential has been booked for May and details will be sent out nearer the time.

Curriculum Enhancements

We have managed to fit quite a few visits and events in so far this term. Year 4 had a fantastic afternoon at New Walk museum learning about the Ancient Egyptians. Year 6 went to the Richard III museum and Leicester Cathedral as part of their topic. The author Jane Clarke came to school this week to work with all children from Years 1 to 6. She delivered inspiring poetry workshops to all the children who then wrote their own poems which were celebrated in special assemblies. The children loved it.

Another highlight of the term was the once in a lifetime opportunity to see the Premier league Trophy with Leicester City ribbons. Despite recent events at the club, the fantastic achievement is something for our city to be proud of.

Sport at Sparkenhoe

It has been another active term. The Year 5 and 6 football team are winning some of their matches in the league and the new Year 2 team have had a fantastic start in their league with three wins out of three. Unfortunately the cross country event was cancelled due to bad weather but the children who took part in the swimming gala had some success in their races. They had a great time and learned the importance of good sportsmanship. Year 5 took part in a football tournament at Moat and competed in the Leicester City annual tournament where they were unlucky not to reach the semi-finals.

Next term there will be further activities at Moat Community College and other sporting events, including a hockey tournament.

Eco Schools

We have recently joined the Eco-Schools programme and are aiming to achieve the Bronze Award by the end of the school year. One child from each class has volunteered to represent their class. They have worked with Mrs Adam and Mr Jowett (our Chair of Governors) to write an action plan. They have decided to work on how we can save energy and reduce waste at school.

Assemblies and Performances

The Year 2 Creation assembly was wonderful. The children were so confident performing in front of a large audience. The costumes, acting and singing were amazing and the children also included a very important message about looking after our planet. Well done Year 2. Year 3 will be performing their Easter Assembly in the last week of term.

Visitors

This term we have welcomed international students from Egypt and Panama to our school. They thoroughly enjoyed the experience and were very impressed with the behavior of the children and the standard of lessons that they saw.

We also had a visit from Councillor Lynn Moore who came to see how we teach reading to our younger children. This was an extremely positive visit and Councillor Moore was impressed with the quality of teaching.

Payments

The online payment system is working very well and making life easier for parents. To use it you need to register. If you have not had details to explain how to do this, please contact the school office.

Having the facility for online payments does create some additional work in the office. In order to make sure this system is updated regularly, we are going to trial limiting the days when we take cash payments in the office. After Easter, we will accept **cash** payments on **Mondays and Tuesdays only between 8.30 am and 3.30 pm**. Of course, payments can be made online for dinner, milk, uniform, trips and kidszone and we will accept debit card payments on any day of the week.

The cost for milk this term (from January 3rd until Friday 7th April) is £10.71 and for the Summer Term is £9.18.

School dinner costs £1.75 a day - £8.75 a week. School dinner must be paid in advance.

If you want to change your child from packed lunches to school dinner, the office needs 2 weeks' notice. We have forms available for this in the Saxby office or you can request this change by emailing the school office.

If you think you may be entitled to free school meals, please collect a form from the office where the staff will be able to advise you.

Parents Views

Thank you to everyone who returned the parent survey. The key findings show that 98% of parents are satisfied with the school, 95% of parents agree that the school provides a safe environment and 98% of parents agree that their child is happy at school. Identified areas for the school to work on are our approaches to relationships education where policies are not known by parents and providing a healthy dinner menu. We do work quite closely with City Catering who provide our school meals but unfortunately we do not have a definitive say in the menus. However, we are happy to pass on comments from parents to City catering. There is information about school dinners on the Leicester City council website and City Catering can be contacted directly through this.

The full results of the survey will be sent out in the next few weeks. We would encourage parents to come and talk to us about any concerns and also with suggestions for improving any aspects of the school.

Attendance and Punctuality

Whole school attendance is currently 95.7% which is below our target and national average. Unauthorised extended absences from school are having the most impact on attendance. Requests to take children out of school for an extended period of time should only be made in the event of exceptional circumstances. Parents who need to request absences must make an appointment to see Mrs Cooper before any arrangements are made.

Keeping Safe

The e-safety assembly earlier this year was very well attended by parents and we hope it was useful to help you keep your child safe online. The children also enjoyed the assemblies and increased their understanding of how to keep themselves safe. As the use of the internet and social media becomes more and more 'common', educating children about the dangers and how to be responsible becomes even more important. After Easter we will be introducing a new curriculum about e-safety which will ensure the children have regular, appropriate lessons.

There are still some parents and children crossing Sparkenhoe Street without using the pelican crossing. Not only is this extremely dangerous but it gives the wrong message to children about road safety. Sparkenhoe Street is a very busy road and cars do not always drive as slowly as they should near the school. Please talk to your children about the importance of using the crossing and waiting for the green man before crossing and please make sure, as adults, the right example is set.

There are still cars parked illegally on Sparkenhoe Street at the end of the school day. We would like to remind parents that it is not appropriate to park on yellow lines or half on the pavement. It causes an obstruction to other road users and pedestrians and you could be given a fixed penalty notice. Thank you for your support in these matters.

Hunstanton

We have had a lot of replies indicating interest in the whole school trip to Hunstanton on Friday 30th June. As it is proving to be popular, we will definitely go ahead with this trip. Letters with further details will be sent out after Easter.

Headlice

We have had some reports of headlice in school. This is quite a common problem and headlice can easily be passed from child to child. If you do notice headlice in your child's hair, please treat using an over the counter product or by combing through with a special comb and conditioner. Treatments need to be repeated after 7 days to ensure the lice have been cleared completely. It is also important to treat the whole family.

Governors

We are still hoping to recruit more associate members. If any parents would like to find out more about what this involves, please email our Chair, Lee Jowett, at govs@sparkenhoe.leicester.sch.uk or pop into the school office for a chat.

Staff News

Congratulations to Mr Cheetham on the birth of his new baby boy on Monday 27th February. He is now on paternity leave but will be back at school on Monday 13th March.

Dates for the diary		
Spring Term		
Friday 3 rd March	France residential	Return Monday 6 th March
Friday 10 th March	Author visit at the King Power stadium	Year 4 children
Tuesday 14 th March	Maths workshop for Years 5 and 6 parents	
Wednesday 22 nd March	Maths workshop for Year 2 parents	
Thursday 23 rd March	Parents Evening	
Monday 27 th March	My Best Book activities	Year 5
Tuesday 28 th March	Maths workshop for Years 3 and 4 parents	
Tuesday 28 th March	Parents Evening	
Wednesday 29 th March	Hockey Tournament	Years 5 and 6
Week beginning 3 rd April	Year 3 Easter assemblies	Parents will be invited
Wednesday 5 th April	Easter activities in class	
THURSDAY 7 th APRIL	School closes for the Easter holiday	
Summer Term		
Monday 24 th April	School opens	
Wednesday 26 th April	Vaisakhi activities in class	
Week beginning 1 st May	Year 1 Vaisakhi assemblies	Parents will be invited
Wednesday 3 rd May	Holocaust remembrance activities	
Monday 8 th May	Year 6 SATs start	
Tuesday 16 th May	Girls' cricket tournament	Years 5 and 6
Friday 19 th May	Boys' cricket tournament	Years 5 and 6
Week beginning 22 nd May	Year 5 Islamic assemblies	Parents will be invited
Wednesday 24 th May	Camping residential	Return Friday 26 th May
Friday 26 th May	School closes for half term	
Monday 5 th June	School opens	
Tuesday 6 th June	Athletics event at Saffron Lane	Years 4, 5 and 6
Wednesday 28 th June	Eid activities in class	
Friday 30 th June	Hunstanton whole school trip	
Week beginning 3 rd July	Healthy living Week; sports days	
Tuesday July 4 th	Year 6 transition day	
Thursday 13 th July	Year 6 Shakespeare performance	
Friday 14 th July	School closes for the summer holiday	

All dates and times for festival assemblies will be sent out nearer the time.

We welcome your views and thoughts and are always around if you need to talk to us. If you would like to raise an issue or ask a question to a member of our Governing Body, please email govs@sparkenhoe.leicester.sch.uk. As always, you can make an appointment if you need to speak to a member of staff in private.

Rhian Jones *Headteacher*