



ESCRICK CE PRIMARY SCHOOL SPRING TERM NEWSLETTER

9th April 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to the summer term and I hope you have all had a wonderful Easter break with family and friends. As we move into the final term of the school year, I want to update you regarding arrangements for our Year 5 children.

As you are aware, Mrs Pape finishes with us on Friday 26th April and we have been fortunate to secure a long-term supply teacher. We would like to welcome Ms Jenna Copperthwaite who will teach the class until the end of the academic year. You are welcome to come along to meet Ms Copperthwaite this Friday at 3pm, an opportunity to say hello and put a name to a face.

Over the next three weeks, Mrs Pape and Ms Copperthwaite will team teach and work closely together to ensure a smooth transition and handover. I know this may be a little difficult for the children but to support their successful year we want to provide this time so that the children soon feel comfortable with Ms Copperthwaite and she is also able to continue with the same high expectations from our Year 5 children. Prior to her leaving, Mrs Pape will undertake some end of Year 5 tests with the children which will further inform her assessments that will be shared with you in their end of year report. The children's reports will be sent home by Monday 29th April.

Mr Broxup and I will also mentor and support Ms Copperthwaite to promote our school values and vision so that all stakeholders have a beneficial end of the school year. Should you have any questions or queries then please contact me.

Since September we have seen a steady improvement in our school attendance and absence figures. We all know the importance of children having regular attendance at school and also the impact this can have on their future life if they miss a lot of school. With this knowledge please can we ask you to, where possible, arrange doctor and dentist appointments outside of the school day. I appreciate that medical emergencies can and do arise, at which point you may need to attend an appointment as soon as possible during the school day but for routine examinations or check-ups please can you consider booking them after school or in the holidays.

A polite reminder that if you are considering taking your child out of school during term then there is an official procedure to follow. This starts with the application of exceptional leave which needs to be completed and returned to school as soon as possible. There are strict rules

and systems that we must adhere to so please arrange to meet with me if you require further support or discussion.

Writing – As a staff team we have been focusing on the teaching and learning of writing across our school. We have evaluated Little Wandle phonics, which is having a very positive impact on the children’s phonic knowledge and standards in early writing. Staff have also followed revised planning documents alongside more formal timetabling of writing assessments for all children. Last term we also had a peer review led by Steve Lewis (CEO of SYMAT) and Caroline Hancy (SYMAT Primary School Improvement Adviser). The focus was on writing and along with a small team of SYMAT colleagues they evaluated our long term planning documents, progression of knowledge documents in all areas of the writing curriculum, spoke with children, went into lessons and looked at children’s work. The staff team and children are all working really hard to improve standards of writing as well as celebrating and encouraging children to enjoy writing tasks. Below are some of the comments that we would like to share with you as we are proud of the work already undertaken and it is nice to hear what other professionals say about our school and the children here:

- It was a pleasure to spend the day in your school.
- Staff members were warm and welcoming.
- The children were polite and friendly at all times, engaging in conversations, showing us directions and answering questions.
- The school environment shows a pride in the children’s work, with quality displays in both classrooms and corridors.
- Leaders have clear intent for the writing curriculum. There are a series of plans and end points. Motivating texts are often used to ‘hook’ the children into a particular genre.
- The recently appointed subject leader is determined, ambitious and is using research-informed practice to guide actions.
- Time is provided for the subject leader to fulfil monitoring and evaluation activities.
- A whole-school approach to the teaching of phonics through Little Wandle is having a positive impact. Phonics is strong. The scheme’s interventions are used to address any gaps in Year 2 and beyond and also to provide support for pupils with SEND.
- During our visit, children spoke positively about their writing experience in school, feeling well-supported in their lessons and enjoying the range of genres and links to topics in other curriculum areas. Pupils in year six were particularly motivated by the challenge and clarity of expectation in their writing lessons.
- A range of adaptations were made and resources provided within classes to support the inclusion of pupils with additional needs. E.g. phonic/word mats, task planners, paired talk, physical sensory support (scarf pulling), reduction of demand/overload through short tasks/instructions.
- TAs worked effectively, supporting children in their learning. Support staff are knowledgeable and confident in their roles. They speak positively about the impact of Little Wandle and their roles in school generally.
- The books showed a range of writing opportunities and were well-presented.
- Pupils were able to articulate what good writing would look like and how to improve their writing in terms of quantity, handwriting, punctuation, spelling and word choices but less so about composition and language features. Staff highlighted handwriting, spelling and resilience as relative areas of weakness.
- Teaching is responsive to class needs and picks up on gaps in prior knowledge, inconsistent application of previously taught skills and identified misconceptions.

Recommendations:

- Refine the curriculum long term plan for writing to include progression within each genre. Draw out the key features and component knowledge, within each genre, to be secured within each year group/phase. Ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of the steps of progression and lessons are planned to take account of and build on prerequisite knowledge.
- Establish a consistent approach to teaching writing (exposure to relevant and challenging high-quality texts, vocabulary development, modelling of the writing process including how to use planning, drafting, sharing, evaluating, revising, editing and publishing).

Year 6 Writing Examples

Recently, Year 6 children were challenged to write a flashback story based on the Second World War. They watched an animation video of an army veteran who had found his grandchildren looking at his diaries and then they had to respond with a short story. Here are some snippets from their work:

Lily B

“Grandpa, did you win that medal at sports day?” my grandson asked curiously as he held up the battered and rusty medal in the attic light.

Isaac W

Copper bullets were piercing the glacial wind; grenades were gliding across the blood-stained sand, which was once yellow.

Zachary J

We dropped down into the shallow, yet rapid icy water. Before it was too late, the waves hit us and the chilling mist wrapped itself around our bodies, like a ghost’s hand grasping at us sucking all of our remaining confidence.

Abi I

“Marty Goldwell?” breaking the silence I felt my granddaughter’s breath on my cheek as she leant over my shoulder. “Who’s that?” she snatched it suddenly. Although, little did she know about the story behind it.

“Grandpa, I asked if one day I could meet Marty!” she asked impatiently as she shone torch in my face.

“Maybe... maybe one day” I replied. It was then I realised that memories never leave you, they just hide in shoeboxes....

Year 6 Second World War Day

Just before the Easter break, Year 6 children took part in a Second World War themed day to celebrate and review their learning. During this topic, children have had an in-depth insight into the long term causes of the Second World War, learnt about the role technology played in the war and explored both physical and digital maps from the 1940's of York and the surrounding areas. On their Second World War day children came to school dressed in 1940's style clothing such as evacuees and land girls. They explored ration recipes by making carrot biscuits (a huge thank you to Mrs Fenton!), made gas masks, did the Lambeth walk, made Anderson Shelters and even watched Dad's Army! Thank you to all parents for helping support this day, it was a huge success and an excellent end to the term for the children.



At **Parent Forum** there was some discussion regarding dates for Celebration Assemblies and other events. Due to PE, Dance and Forest sessions we are unable to move the days this academic year but we will consider and consult ahead of the next school year.

Calendar and Diary Dates

Monday 15th April – Whole school fencing workshops (sessions for each class over the course of the day).

Monday 22nd April – Year 2/3 Parents welcome to attend Celebration Assembly at 9am

Week beginning 22nd April – Parent Forum meeting but date to be finalised

Monday 29th April – Year 1 and Reception Parents welcome to attend Celebration Assembly at 9am

Tuesday 30th April – Whole school cricket day (Sessions for each class over the course of the day).

PE Events – update to follow.

Please see an email from the Chair of the Playing Fields Association, Mr Britton:

Thank you to all of you who came and helped with the Escrick Playing field Big Clean on Sunday 7th April. Everyone got stuck in and we did an excellent job of tidying the paths, cleaning the equipment and litter picking. A particular thanks to all the children who did such a sterling job! The playing field is a community run facility, we rely on volunteers to make sure we keep this lovely place for our village. So, please do look out for future events and I look forward to seeing you there.

Thanks everyone,

Escrick Playing Fields Association playing.fields@escrick.org

With very best wishes for the term ahead,

Miss Emma E Miller

'Every person is an individual and also part of a community'

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Safeguarding children – if you have any concerns for the welfare of a child please contact Miss Miller or Mr Broxup (if in school hours) or alternatively the NYCC safeguarding team can be contacted via this link <https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/about-us/worried-about-a-child/>

Respecting staff – our staff are dedicated professionals. We will not accept any abuse towards our staff.