

Headteacher's Newsletter No.13

Football

On 25th February, Eastcote played Upton Primary in the first round of the Stuart Turpin Cup. The team, Lewis Johnson, Dayne Haughton, Ben Martin, Ethan Bushell, James Antoniou, Billy Smith, Celal Ozkirac and Cameron Lock, fought hard in a game which was far more competitive than the final 6 - 2 score line suggests.

A lack of concentration led to conceding two first half goals, although we pulled one back to make the first half score 2 - 1. The second half was close but again, we conceded two goals in quick succession before pulling back to 4 - 2 and threatening another. However our need to attack and score left us vulnerable in defence, hence Upton's two late goals.

The team played well through most of the game. Thank you to all parents who provided transport and supported so well.

Our next game is in the semi-final of the mini cup on Thursday 13th March, away to Royal Park.

Basketball Tournament



On Wednesday 12th March, Ben, Sadaf, Dayne, Billy Brewis, Eleanor and Sam from Years 5 and 6 took part in a basketball competition at Erith School. We enjoyed it very much and to top the fun, we came second place out of five in our group. Everyone played some fantastic basketball and deserved to win.

Report by Ben Martin Year 6 and Billy Brewis Year 5

Outdoor Areas

I wanted to keep you in touch with some of the ideas we are considering for the development of our outdoor areas.

I have been talking with staff, governors and children about some ideas focused on the area of the school field on the western side adjoining the woods from the playground, past the football pitch and up to the old air-raid shelter. There already exists a pathway of sorts (not properly made, just a track) which goes from the side of the playground around the pitch, past the pond and the outdoor classroom, to the drive by the air raid shelter.

Possible developments are:

- Converting the track to a woodchip pathway to link up new developments with existing areas (pond and outdoor classroom);
- Erecting a hexagonal pergola (roofed outdoor area with seating around the inside for a class);
- Installing outdoor musical instruments (permanently sited, not portable);
- Replacing an area of grass with artificial grass (about 200m² to the west side of the playground);
- Creating quiet “reflective” areas or a walk.



These developments will expand and enhance play space and opportunities, especially in winter, and create new learning areas. As far as funding is concerned, we are looking at the possibility of a grant for some of these developments and I have spoken to Mrs Topliffe from PACE so I know they are keen to be involved.

Other future developments could include:

- More artificially grassed areas (perhaps around the larger playground behind the school building);
- Redevelopment of the air-raid shelter (as in knock it down and put something useful in its place - pricey but highly desirable).

If you have any thoughts about this or if you have any knowledge of other funding streams we might tap in to please let me know (or if you would like to make a multi-million pound donation to the school).

Maths

If you ever follow education news you may have seen that in international tests, the children of Shanghai, China, come out top in reading, writing and maths. In the last set of tests, whereas Shanghai came top in maths, the UK came 24th and the powers that be in government have said that we must improve - quite rightly so. You may have seen then that there is a plan to bring over to the UK 60 Chinese maths to help boost maths education here.



I was interested to see what they do so differently in Shanghai and I discovered:

- There are specialist maths teachers in primary schools who have maths degrees and who love their subject.
- Maths is taught at the start of the day.
- The amount of time spent on maths is double the amount of time spent on it in the UK.
- Teachers formally teach only up to 40% of the time, hence they can teach in the morning, mark and assess work and have it back to students before the end of the day.
- If their performance that day is insufficient then students stay behind for catch up classes *that day!* Parents are texted and told their child needs to stay behind to catch up - and this is accepted by parents without question.
- Teachers have the time to plan together and support one another in their teaching far more than in the UK.
- No student is allowed to fall behind.

Clearly there are things we can't copy - maths teachers in China have 60% of their time for preparation, planning, assessing and marking, teachers in UK have 10%. UK teachers do all the rest in their own time which is why it is not unusual for primary school teachers to work 60 hours per week and more (the equivalent of 50 x 48 hour weeks a year).

But I am sure there are things we can learn from China to improve maths teaching and children's progress. The new maths curriculum which begins next year for children in all years apart from years 2 and 6 (who will be the last year groups to sit the KS1 and KS2 SATs based on the old curriculum), is more rigorous and demanding. We will be working hard to ensure that children at Eastcote receive the best possible maths education we can give them.

Values, Virtues, Vision

We are publishing via our website our “Values, Virtues, Vision” document. This spells out our three core values and what they mean for us, the virtues we believe we should be developing in children and the vision we have for our school.

Organisations often have vision statements that are usually fine sounding and aspirational. My belief is that vision should be much more specific and give detail of what we would want our school to look like by a certain future time - three years in this case. Because of this, although values and virtues remain broadly the same, vision needs to be updated in the light of our developments.

Please have a look at the document and feel free to give us any feedback.

Bexley Civic Society Art Exhibition at The Stables Gallery, Hall Place

Congratulations to the following pupils, whose work is displayed at the current exhibition at Hall Place and has received special commendation:

Honey Burge - Nursery - Prize

Lily-Rose Pease - Nursery - Certificate of Merit

Amber Bhogal - Year 2 - Certificate of Merit

Jayden Palmer - Year 3 - Highly Commended Certificate of Merit

Don't forget you can see all 17 of pieces from Eastcote pupils until March 19th.