

Headteacher's Newsletter No.17

15/5/14

SATs

This week is SATs (Standard Assessment Tests) week and our year 6 children have been taking tests in reading, spelling, punctuation and grammar (known as the SPAG test) and maths. These tests have to be sent away for marking, but the children are also assessed on writing which is internally marked and moderated.

Year 2 children are also involved in their Key Stage 1 SATs tests whilst other classes have internally marked "optional" SATs.

Why do we have to do all this testing? In year 2 and 6, it is, of course, a legal requirement for the testing to take place, but we use them, together with optional SATs, to help us measure some aspects of children's progress.

However, we know that school, education, learning are about far more than what tests can measure. We are not just concerned with children's academic progress in English and maths but the whole curriculum including science, arts and physical education. And then beyond this, children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is crucial. Much of this cannot really be measured by tests and put into tables of data, but as a staff we are highly committed to the all-round development of every individual we have the privilege of caring for.

Reaching Their Full Potential

This is an expression that often crops up in school vision statements and in discussions about education, hence we may read or hear, "We want every child to realise his/her full potential. I try not to use this. What I don't like about it is that it implies each child has a set limit, like a jug that has to be filled up. It almost implies that intelligence is fixed and that each child is only ever going to go as far as that intelligence limit allows.

However, we know more now about the brain and how it works. Far from being limited, we know that we can help children develop and learn beyond what we may have thought was their limit. Intelligence can increase - and intelligence isn't just academic; we can be intelligent in many different ways. I often talk to children about this and encourage them to believe that if they work at things they initially find difficult, they are developing their brain in a similar way to which exercise develops muscles.

So I do not want each child in this school to "realise their full potential". I want them to go far beyond any limits they or anyone else might have thought possible and excel in all manner of ways.

Staffing

Having told you in the last newsletter that Mrs Coston would be returning after the holiday, I am sorry to tell you that she will, in fact, be leaving us. This is because a new job opportunity suddenly became available for her much closer to home and although she could have started in September, her new school asked if we would release her earlier. Fortunately, Miss Jones is able to stay with us for the rest of the school year and so this was possible for us.

We will be sorry to see Mrs Coston go, but she will be in school to say goodbye to the children this Friday, May 16th.

Free School Meals

You will be aware from the press that from September, all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes will be able to receive a school meal at no cost to parents or carers. We have had a letter from London Borough of Bexley to send out to those who will be eligible for this. This letter, which needs to be completed and returned to the school, will be sent home in hard copy form to the current Reception and Year 1 classes. Pupils currently in our Nursery class, who will part of our new intake for Reception in September, will also receive this. Please return these **as soon as possible**, in order that appropriate measures can be put place to meet the catering requirements in September. If we have not had a reply by **Friday 13th June**, we will assume that you do not wish your child to have a free school meal.

Additionally, can parents and carers of all our children, please remember to let the school know if you are eligible to claim free school meals, even if your child does not currently have one. From September, those parents who fulfil the criteria giving entitlement to free meals, will receive a £50.00 payment from the school, to be used towards books, uniform and supporting your child's learning.

To qualify you must be in receipt of one of the following support payments:

- Income Support; or
- Income based Employment and Support Allowance; or
- Income based Job Seekers allowance; or
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not entitled to Working Tax credit and have an annual income not exceeding £16,190; or
- Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit

Football

Having qualified for the finals of the Girls' Summer Sevens (see previous newsletter), the team joined seven other qualifying teams from across the borough on Friday 2nd of May.

The format involved playing in a round-robin against three other teams with the winners going into the final and the second place teams going into a third/fourth place play-off.

The girls played excellently, winning their first game 1 - 0 and drawing the second 0 - 0. Our opponents in the last game, Hurst, won both of their group games and so only needed a draw to get through to the final whereas we had to win. Despite battling hard, the final score was 0 - 0 which meant Hurst qualified and we were through to the third place play-off.

This was an exciting game. We scored first and then had to hold on as our opponents threw everything at us. But such was the determination and positive attitude of our girls that they held out to the end, meaning that they finished the tournament in third place. Hurst won over-all.

Our record in girls football this summer then, has been excellent, especially considering that we only started practising in the spring. The girls played 6 games in qualifying and the finals, won three, drew three, lost none, and conceded 0 goals! Well done to everyone involved: Lois (captain), Sadaf (Goalkeeper), Maddie, Sadie, Holly, Connie B., Eleanor and Connie C. Thanks also due to parents for their great support of the team.

A team of year 5 boys represented Eastcote at the Bexley Under 10s Summer Seven-a-Sides last Saturday. The highlight came in the quarter finals of the "Plate" competition against Longlands Primary School.

The team were 2 - 0 down with only one or two minutes to play when they produced a stunning fight-back, scoring twice to draw the game. This led to a penalty shoot-out. After taking three penalties each, the score was 2 - 2 and so they had to continue to take penalties on a sudden death basis. It took seven rounds to produce a winner. Our seventh penalty had to be taken by Lennon, the goalkeeper - and

he scored. Then he had to face the next penalty from Longlands, taken by their goalkeeper - and he saved it! Eastcote progressed to the semi-final.

Despite a close first half, and having spent so much energy on the previous round, the team couldn't quite pull it off and losing the game, were eliminated from the competition. However, well done to them for showing such spirit. The team consisted of Billy Smith (Captain), Lennon Barry (Goalkeeper), Jack Borrett, Samuel Crowley, Sam Truscott-Smith, Daniel Peters, Celal Ozkircac and Billy Brewis.

School Council Fun Day

Overall a great success which raised £177.10! These are just two examples of the hard work we saw from the children who took part - there were some great costumes and lovely pictures. We will display these outside the Nursery class. The members will

now start to look at items for wildlife around the school.



Half Term Activities

We have been sent information from both Bird College and Woodlands Farm for activities taking place during the half term break. Please look in the school foyer for further details if you are interested in booking these.

Living With A Labrador

I am pleased to report that Thor has now completely stopped chewing to destruction cushions, armchairs, the carpet, the wallpaper, the dining room chairs and me. However, he still sees gloves as fair game and I have lost four pairs of insulated, water-proof ones this year - fortunately the weather has changed and I won't need new ones until the winter. He also loves sticks, the bigger the better, and any walk is incomplete without a really good chew.



Thor and friends enjoy a stick together.