

Ormesby Village Infant & Junior Schools Federation

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HEADTEACHER'S TERMLY NEWSLETTER – SPRING TERM 2024

Happy New Year!

I hope that you have all had a great Christmas and New Year. Thank you so much to all of the children and families that gave me gifts and cards – they were all very well received. Welcome back and I hope you, like us, are all looking forward to what successes and achievements 2024 can bring. Once again, I hope that the items in this termly newsletter will act as a good source of information for the term to come.

Ofsted Inspections

This term we will be completing further preparations at our Junior school to welcome another Ofsted inspection. Inspections are naturally challenging, but every effort is being made to ensure all are prepared for such an occasion and we are able to use this opportunity to share our many strengths and our plans to improve those areas requiring further development. I look forward to being able to showcase all that is good about the Junior school when the times arrives for an inspection there. We hope our new immersive learning environment will continue to be embedded further and provide evidence of having a truly positive impact on pupils' learning and retention of knowledge. When we get the telephone call, we will, of course, let you know, and stand united in highlighting why we love Ormesby so much.

Safeguarding

If you have any safeguarding issues, please contact the school to speak to a Designated Safeguarding Lead. These are: **Mr. Young, Miss. McMylor, Mrs. Holt (JNR) and Mrs. Vaughan (INF).**

Lines of Communication

Successful communication is an important element for our Federation of Schools in order to help you all stay up-to-date with what exciting events we have planned. We deliberately use several approaches of communication to ensure nothing is missed. This is not to confuse or give parents more things to juggle, but to ensure systems are backed up should one not be effective. To reduce paper and ink costs, we are moving away from printing letters in favour of communicating more directly with parents electronically. This newsletter is to remind you of all the communication lines we have.

Firstly, can we encourage you all to ensure you are checking your text messages and emails (including Junk folders in case emails have diverted to there) thoroughly. To stop emails going into Junk folders, simply add our system's address to a list where it is regarded as a safe sender. Please ensure you open all attachments within sent emails should there be any. Fortunately, our email and text system enables staff to check whether emails have been delivered accurately and moreover it informs us whether these have been read and whether attachments have been opened by their recipients. If contact details have been changed, please ensure you have given the schools your current mobile telephone numbers and email addresses.

Any key letters we email are also placed on our school websites under the Letters Home tab. Our websites are brilliant sources of knowledge about many different areas of the school, please also take some time to peruse through them and see what information is available. Alongside these, we also have a calendar of events, which lists everything that is up-and-coming. Teachers may also send additional reminders or messages via Class Dojo to their class of parents. Furthermore, teachers, including the Headteacher, have a Class Blog found under the Parents' Information tab on our websites as another reminder tool to highlight different things each week.

We feel we have several direct and supportive avenues to share information with you all, so please ensure you are checking them all frequently to avoid missing anything.

Attendance, Punctuality and Illness

The Government has stated children being in school for education is a priority after having so much disruption to their education already. If children are not unwell, they must be in school each day and on time. Being late can sometimes happen from time to time, but staff are seeing an increasing number of pupils arriving late to school on a regular basis. This is very disruptive to the beginning of a child's day as important, early morning tasks are missed; the dynamic of the class is unsettled by late arrivals and the late child themselves are more anxious about starting their day. If your child is late, you must bring them to the school office, please do not send them directly to the classrooms. Our schools' attendance team has increased their responsibilities in addressing pupils with late and low attendance and we have letters that will be sent out reminding families of the importance of good attendance. We are sure this will be sufficient in ensuring attendance figures improve. If your child is ill, please notify the school office giving a specific reason for their absence. If a pupil's absence is due to repeated illness, the school may ask for evidence from a medical professional via the Healthy Child Programme. More information about illnesses and their corresponding quarantine periods can be found on our websites.

Christmas Performance Events

I hope you enjoyed the different Christmas performances that you were invited to before the holidays. It was great to see so many of our families supporting their children, once again. The Key Stage Two Carol Concert and Family Carol Service at the Church really highlighted the musical prowess of our pupils, through their singing and instrument playing. Furthermore, the Infant Performance was equally as entertaining and got better each time I saw it. Again this year, we are aiming to enter into the Norfolk County Music Festival in March. Mrs. White-Joubert will be working hard this term rehearsing songs with the Infant and Junior school pupils. I am sure the pupils will make us all proud at the event for the third year running.

Importance of Reading

Reading is vitally important for all our children and is a priority focus during Ofsted inspections. In our Infant school, our Phonics programme ensures children receive the important early decoding, fluency and comprehension building blocks preparing them for their transition to Junior school. Throughout Key Stage Two, children are developed further with more fluency sessions alongside challenging teaching to improve their comprehension knowledge, which tackles inference, retrieval, summarising, comparing, explaining and predicting. The importance of reading five times a week cannot be encouraged enough because this enables pupils to put into practice what they have been taught and helps them develop that love of reading we want them to possess for life, particularly in this technological age. To further enhance a love for reading with our pupils, a travelling book fair will be at the Infant school during the week beginning 26th February, with it moving to the Junior school the following week on 1.3.24.

We will also be trialling a Family Library initiative at the Junior school, where between 3:30pm-4:15pm each Monday afternoon, children and parents can visit the library as a family, entering through the Pre-Loved Uniform Shop doorway to read and borrow books together, not to mention listen to Mr. Millings reading chapters of selected novels.

Outdoor Learning in our Nature Areas

Just prior to the Christmas break, we sent a letter asking for children to bring in an inexpensive pair of Wellington boots, which can be kept in school, allowing them to be able to use our nature areas in both schools regularly and safely all year round. Our aim has been to utilise our pond and nature areas more effectively for the benefit of all our children undertaking conservation activities.

Curriculum Celebration Events

Last term, we held our Autumn curriculum celebration events and I was so pleased that so many of our families could attend to look through the learning books with their children. We received some very lovely feedback and look forward to inviting you back in towards the end of the Spring Term to see further progress and pupils articulating with confidence about their learning. For Spring Term, we have decided to move these ahead of our parent-teacher meetings to see if this helps parents see how well their children are doing prior to seeing their class teachers. These will be held on 12.3.24 at the Junior school 2:30-3:30pm and at the Infant school on 13.3.24 from 2:15-3:15pm.

Parent and Teacher Meetings

After half-term, we will have another round of parent-teacher meetings. These worked really well last term

alongside our termly report cards and proved to be more convenient for the majority of our families. The schools are dedicating another week to arranging ten-minute meetings with parents either over the telephone or via Google Meet virtually. Where it is more helpful to the pupil, teachers and parents will arrange face-to-face meetings. Again, these meetings will take place at agreed times beginning on Monday 18th March 2024. More information regarding booking appointments will be released nearer the time. Do not fear, you will be able to see your children's books because our Curriculum Celebration Events (see paragraph above) will take place in the previous week.

SATs Boosting

The Junior school will be running an after-school Boosting club for Year 6 pupils in preparation for their SATs that take place in the week beginning 13th May. These will run on Tuesday afternoons from 3:30-4:30pm beginning on 9th January to 7th May 2024. More information will be coming out about this to the relevant year group in due course. We hope everyone will attend to get a little more confidence and reassurance about any areas where more help is needed.

Vision and Values Reminder

At our Ormesby Village Infant and Junior Schools Federation, we have a clear vision for the future which we want all within our family community to absorb and remember. Our Village Schools Federation is a nurturing environment underpinned by strong British values. We are a beacon of inclusiveness; a family community where each child is treated as an individual, and outstanding teaching helps them to discover and develop their unique talents and abilities. At our Infant school, our entire community is always **learning to grow: growing to learn** as it develops how it interacts, learns and plays. At our Junior school, everyone **aspires** to be the best they can be, everyone **acquires** the knowledge and skills to be a valuable future citizen of the world and everyone **achieves** success from the many opportunities they are provided with, no matter what their starting points. Vision Captions: **Learning to Grow: Growing to Learn (INF) & Aspire, Acquire, Achieve (JNR)**

Knowledge Organisers

On our websites under the Curriculum tab, we have some informative Knowledge Organisers covering different areas of our curriculums that we teach to the children. These Knowledge Organisers contain key vocabulary, important dates, significant people and other useful facts that will aid your child's ability to retain their learning. Feel free to take a look!

School Improvement and Development Plans

A parents' version of our new school improvement and development plan was sent to you last term highlighting the key things we will be working on. There is a child-friendly version for our pupils as well. We also have a "We Are Ormesby!" leaflet for you to read, which shows our strengths and all that is good about Ormesby. All documents can be found on our websites under the "School Improvement" tabs or in our school Reception foyers.

Easter Events

I am pleased to say that there will be a return of our fun Easter events nearer the end of this term. There is a separate Spring Term Calendar of Events being sent out to parents. We are looking forward to an Easter bonnet parade at the Infants, a Decorate-an-Egg competition at Junior school not to mention the Easter Egg raffle we will hold in both schools using any chocolate egg donations we receive from our non-uniform day nearer the time.

Extra-Curricular School Clubs

We hope to be able to continue to offer extra-curricular clubs at lunchtimes and after-school. Mr. Young's Years 5 & 6 Boy's Football club will begin next week on Thursday 11th January and will end at 4:30pm. If light is poor, this will finish earlier for safety until parents arrive to collect at the normal time. Premier Sports will continue with their sporting clubs after school. At the Infant school, they will be running a Dodgeball club on Thursdays. At the Junior school, they will be running a Netball club for Years 4, 5 & 6 boys and girls on Tuesdays and they will continue to run girls' Football for Years 4, 5 and 6 on a Friday. Both running from 3:30pm-4:30pm.

Further sporting enrichment sessions as a curriculum treat will take place on Friday 16th February run by Premier Sports in both schools. Please ensure your child is wearing sports' clothing on this day. This term, we will also have the use of Mr. Clover, who is undertaking a Sports Science placement with us. He will be volunteering some of his time to run after-school clubs on a Thursday and Friday. Thursdays will be a mixed Years 3 and 4 football club and Fridays will be a mixed Year 3 and 4 badminton club. Both running from 3:30pm-4:30pm.

Musically, we are fortunate to have Mrs. White-Joubert (Piano, Dance, Singing and Violin) and Mr. Harris (Drums) at the Junior school, who can provide peripatetic music sessions for those budding musicians. If your child is interested in learning a new instrument, please inform the school office.

We apologise for any inconveniences caused, but it may be necessary from time to time due to poor weather or due to unavoidable clashes with other commitments, that clubs run by staff may have to be cancelled. We aim to avoid this as much as possible, but where we cannot we aim to inform parents as early as possible.

After-School Club (Wrap-Around Care)

Our After-School Club continues to offer child-care and is open to pupils from both Infant and Junior schools running on a Monday 3:15pm-5:00pm, on a Tuesday 3:15pm-5:00pm and on a Wednesday 3:30pm-4:30pm. Places are limited to a maximum of 20 for safety reasons. Mondays are at the Infant school and Tuesdays and Wednesdays are at the Junior school. Wednesdays will be Gymnastics courtesy of Premier Sports. A walking bus will be manned by staff to transfer pupils safely from one school to the other. Our after-school club continues to be sport-orientated and is free of charge as a result. We hope this will provide more opportunities to get your children active. If you wish to book your child into our after-school club, an online booking form will be sent to all parents prior to the end of each half-term for completion. It operates on a first-come first served basis, as we have a maximum number for safety. Please remember we have had a little change to the location of our Gymnastics' session on Wednesdays, which is now at the Junior school.

P.T.F.A - Improving Ormesby

The P.T.F.A. or Friends of Ormesby Village Schools Federation is a vital committee to help raise much-needed funds for further school improvement. Our current PTFA have already held discos and a pop-up Christmas Fayre in the Autumn Term, which were genuine successes. Overall, the schools made £1,696.57 from the Christmas Fayre. Thank you for everyone's generosity and efforts. The PTFA will be producing their aim for re-investing the monies raised in due course. If you are interested in helping the PTFA, please contact the Chair, Mrs. Lorraine Low at ormesbyvillageschoolspta@gmail.com

Homework

Across our Federation, we have high expectations for all homework tasks that we have set because we recognise the importance of reading as much as possible, we recognise the consolidation of learning outside of school and we recognise the benefits of preparing children in an age-appropriate manner for secondary education where homework tasks are daily. A letter about our homework expectations went out to Junior parents at the beginning of the holidays. This included a new initiative we are implementing called "Top Table" at lunchtimes to encourage more children to complete their tasks more regularly and earn the opportunity to dine on a more highly decorated and prestigious table. In Upper Key Stage Two (Years 5 and 6) - Five reads, One SPAG.com task, Three TTRS practices and Four Spelling Shed practices. In Lower Key Stage Two (Years 3 and 4) - Five reads, Five TTRS practices, Three Spelling Shed practices and Two SPAG.com tasks per half term (Year 4 only).

Visitor Conduct

As always, we are grateful for your continued support and understanding with how our Federation operates. Nevertheless, we expect all stakeholders to conduct themselves appropriately and politely when interacting with our staff or one another either in person, via the telephone or through email. Any rudeness to staff will not be tolerated. Ultimately, we are all working towards the same goal and that is to provide our children with the best possible school experiences.

Parking, Cycling and Scooting

We know that it gets very busy on the roads outside the schools, but please show consideration towards others. Please do not park on the school car parks or zig-zag lines at any point and please do not block the driveways of houses near the school. Alternatively, you could consider going green and select another method of getting to school other than a car, or simply walk. Please note if you are cycling/scooting to school and wish to leave your bike/scooter in the bike shed, please dismount and push them to the shed to avoid any unnecessary accidents. Please also ensure your child is wearing a safety helmet.

Pets and Smoking

Whilst it is lovely to know our children have family pets, particularly dogs, no dogs are allowed on site (except registered guide dogs), as this poses a serious health and safety risk. Anyone bringing a dog on to the site will be asked to remove it. Please do not tie a dog to our railings or stand right outside the school gate with one, because

some children at our school have genuine phobias of dogs. Similarly, can I remind you that smoking/vaping on site is also not allowed, as it is something we do not wish to be promoted to children.

Educational Visits and Trips

We strive very hard to arrange a variety of educational and sporting trips to enhance the learning of our curriculums and provide outlets for personal and collective achievements of our pupils. Last term, was full of different opportunities across the Federation, which we were happy to organise and offer, however the school cannot continue to subsidise these trips and we encourage parents to contribute towards the costs of them. We fully appreciate the cost of living crisis, but without sufficient funds the range of trips we have been offering will need to be reduced.

Governors

We had a very successful Governor Challenge Day last term, where some of our Governors visited to speak to staff and pupils about our curriculum learning in both schools, notably with a focus on reading. We are looking forward to inviting them in again this term to look at another area of school improvement. If they can be of any help to you, as parents, please inform the office, who will advise you on how best to contact the Chair of Governors, Mr. Clive Sillitoe.

Final Thoughts

Our Federation always endeavours to do its very best, but sometimes we will not always get it right. Please contact the school if you realise an error or oversight has occurred or you are simply unhappy about something. We will always aim to resolve issues as quickly and as supportively as possible. However, we cannot do this if we do not know about it. In the first instance, please contact your class teacher, but if you feel the issue is more serious it may require a more senior leader or myself to resolve the issue.

I hope you all have a great term. Bradley Young - ***Headteacher***