



Stogursey C of E Primary & Pre-School

Tower Hill, Stogursey, Somerset TA5 1PR

Tel: 01278 732389

www.stogurseyprimaryschool.co.uk

Head Teacher – Mr G Tucker, BA (Hons) NPQH



Weekly Newsletter No 51

05.01.2024

Welcome back to Spring Term. It certainly doesn't feel like Spring with the weather what it is! I hope your festive season was filled with joy and relaxation. This week has been a very short week but already, I have toured classrooms and have spoken with children and parents reflecting on the past term and the amazing learning. Here are some quotes that have given me such joy to hear this week.

From children:

"I love learning about new things."

"The knowledge organisers in my book help me learn and so do the working walls."

"I enjoy speaking in French and how my teacher helps with my pronunciation."

From parents:

"My child is so excited to be doing Maths in his year group in a small group this term."

"He is so inspired by the book they are reading in class at the moment, I think I am going to have to get him a copy of it. He never usually talks about books like this."

This morning I was chatting to parents about the way children bound into school, excited to be coming in and one parent said their children couldn't wait to return after the Christmas break. We must be getting something right! As we step into a new term, let's carry forward that positive spirit. Together, we'll support our children's journey, celebrating every success and learning from each challenge. Here's to a term of growth and community! I hope to have further successes from last term to share with you next week.

Parent Survey Results

Apologies for the delay but we will shortly be announcing the key headlines from this and many thanks to those parents/ carers who took part.

Blueprint for School Improvement

As promised, following our OfSTED inspection, we said we would publish a termly updated blueprint and this will land with you imminently.

Exciting New Enrichment Activities

Our fantastic wraparound offer will continue going into this term but now I am pleased to announce that we have some new clubs starting up for lunchtimes and depending on demand, maybe after school. These include:

- A brand-new Homework Club
- Debating Society
- Board Games Club
- Child-led clubs provided by the Smart School Council
- Tutoring

This is really exciting news and the children are very excited about these new additions. Gradually, we are also having an upgrade to our playground including having a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) for sports such as football, basketball and go-cart racing. FOSS have achieved their fund-raising target and so we are getting contractors in now to start designing a new climbing frame that will be longer and having new lines painted on as well as the installation

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of other play items. The giant pencils that do nothing there will also be removed as well as old wooden furniture. Such exciting times for our school!



Attendance Matters

This week, in light of some queries made by parents about our approach to attendance, I thought I would answer some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on this.

Q. Why do we announce percentages for the whole school in assemblies and mention attendance a lot?

A. Since the pandemic, attendance at school across the country has worsened. We buck the trend in our school but we don't rest on our laurels. We work hard to raise the profile of attendance and have worked with experts on this. As a result, in our verbal feedback with OfSTED, they praised our approach and recognised its positive impact. The best research suggests rather than setting classes or individuals to compete against each other (as some other schools do) that relaying where we are regularly and working together as one big team will work better.

Q. Why do we focus on attendance in school?

A. There are many reasons and that we are required to by the government! We also follow the policy set by our governors. However, the main thing is that if children are persistently absent from school, they will miss out on learning. The curriculum has significantly changed since we were all at school and now lessons build knowledge progressively. Missing out creates gaps in knowledge. It makes understanding so much harder for your child and actually makes knowledge gaps worsen. This leads to a lower chance of success in school and this is not what the vision for our school is. Working to improve attendance together is the best way. Doing everything in our power to support families is our job.

Q. We have to keep children off if they are ill. Why is this being marked down as absence?

A. Unfortunately, we cannot change the rules on absence codes. Other schools reward children by giving things like scooters for getting 100% and we don't do that. Children get poorly. That is a fact. It seems unfair to reward children who don't get ill. Working to improve attendance together is the best way.

Q. Why am I getting a letter about my child's attendance?

A. Not everyone gets these. They are supposed to be a supportive thing to tell you what your child's attendance rate is compared to their peers and is designed so that if you would like further support, we are here to do exactly that. Some families even receive improvement letters!

Q. How do you decide on what is authorised and unauthorised for illnesses?

A. We follow the NHS guidelines on this. They are here- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1070910/UKHSA-should-I-keep-my-child-off-school-guidance-A3-poster.pdf

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Kind Regards

Gary Tucker
Headteacher

Beacon Class

It has been lovely to welcome everyone back to class this week.

This term, our new learning focus will be The Stone age to the Iron Age. We will cover historical and geographical knowledge/changes during this period and learn how to investigate the past through different kinds of evidence. We will finish the story, Cosmic, during quiet reading time at the end of each day and begin a new book to base our English writing on, 'Wolf Brother' by Michelle Paver.

This term, children will bring home a yellow homework book which will contain different tasks for pupils to complete. These tasks could include: spelling, handwriting, Maths, research or SATs practice activities.

Please could children bring these books into school on Mondays?

Beacon have finished their swimming for the year so will be having PE on a Wednesday afternoon throughout this term. This will be dance and will be taught by Miss Day.

Maths is now being taught in two groups due to Year 6 pupils working on Year 6 specific curriculum coverage to support them with their SATs in May. Miss Day is teaching the Year 6 pupils whilst Mr Tucker is teaching the Year 5 pupils. This week, Year 5s are working on decimal numbers and Year 6s are deepening their knowledge of time, durations of events and converting 12/24-hour clocks.

Alfoxton Class

Welcome back. The class have really enjoyed their Christmas holidays and have come back full of eager enthusiasm for the next term. We are reading a new book in English, 'Varjak Paw' by SF Said. The children are really enjoying the chapters we have read in class. I am sure they will be able to tell the story so far, and what breed of cat Varjak and his family are. We are looking forward to learning more about the Varjak, his family and finding out why 'This cat must learn to fight'.

Triscombe Class

Triscombe Class returned after the Christmas holidays to find some changes to their learning environment. We have moved the home corner into the classroom, and created a cosy reading corner. The cloakroom area, which was previously used for the home corner, is now a dedicated Maths learning space where the children can work in their year groups. The children are really excited about the changes, and have responded well to them. They enjoy being able to role play in the classroom, with more space to develop their imaginative play. The quiet Maths learning space is also proving very beneficial, enabling the children to engage in some deep and thoughtful learning.

Important Dates

Tuesday 2nd January:

Inset Day

Wednesday 3rd January:

First day back

Friday 9th February:

Last day of term

Monday 12th-16th February:

Half Term

Monday 19th February:

First day back

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