

Cornerstone Chronicle

September 2014 No 8



Building our Community with Love and Hope

It has been a positive and energetic start to the new school year. It has been fantastic to see the children coming in with smiles and enthusiasm and involving themselves straight away in school life. Our aim is to ensure this happy and vibrant start continues.

I would also like to personally thank the children, staff, parents and governors for welcoming me so warmly into the school community. I have enjoyed the opportunities to chat with you at the start and end of the school day and hope to get to know you all far better as time goes by.

I guarantee that I and the staff of Cornerstone Primary will do everything we can over the coming year (and years) to help your children learn, thrive and enjoy life.

Class Updates...

Year R Bumble Bees



Bumble bees have been coming to school part time and have been resting in the afternoons while Clare Ross and Jeannette Hunter made Home Visits. Thank you for welcoming our staff into their homes, which we have found invaluable in starting to get to know the children and to starting to build relationships with you all.

We have been finding out about the zones in the classroom and our outside environment. We really love the new play trail! We have been meeting new friends and getting to know them in our family Groups. We have met all of our adult leaders and by the time you read this we will have had our first lunch in school!

What is going on in Bumble Bees during this term?

The children will be learning about 'Ourselves' but within the context of 'Super Bees'. This will give us an opportunity to find out what each of us is Super Good at. We will also find out about other superheroes both real and imaginary.

Year 1 Ladybirds



Ladybirds have been focused at the start of term on the Hook event for their "Animal Kingdom" project. As you are probably aware they have had a Special Delivery which turned out to be a range of cuddly toy animals.

They have also discussed and organised classroom routines and agreed a Class Charter which is displayed in their room.

What will Ladybirds be learning during this term?

The pupils will be exploring different types of animals during this term and deciding which animals might be suitable to keep on a farm, a zoo, at home or even in school. Towards the end of the project they will be creating their own class zoo, taking on the role of zoo tour guides and inviting Butterflies class and then parents to come on a visit.

In English the pupils will be exploring traditional tales and the picture book "Dear Zoo". They will be writing letters to persuade myself to allow a school pet, and another letter to persuade someone to visit either: England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Island as part of their geographical "United Kingdom" project.

In Maths the pupils will be developing their adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing skills and their understanding of place value. They will be undertaking a range of problem solving, learn more about shapes and fractions and develop their understanding of position and movement of shapes on grids.



Year 2/3 Butterflies

Butterflies have been sharing their summer holiday experiences of travelling to different places in the world. They have also been starting to learn about the continents and oceans on Earth as part of their "Where in the World" project. They have also discussed and agreed classroom routines, devised an agreed set of class rules and created guidelines for all children for the use of the new Trim Trail.

What will Butterflies be learning during this term?

They will link this work to trying different foods from around the world and towards the end of the project will be creating information posters for a supermarket to inform customers about foods from different places in the world.

In English the pupils will be exploring narratives about personal experience. They will be writing letters to parents giving information about our Harvest celebration and collection of food items, as well as writing a review of our Harvest celebration for the website. They will also be producing a narrative about a modern day fairy.

In maths the pupils will be developing their mental and written skills and strategies for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They will also be using and applying these skills and their knowledge of other aspects of maths in a range of problems solving activities.

Hopes

In the first Collective Worship of the term I shared my hopes for us all as a school for this year with the pupils in Ladybirds and Butterflies classes. Some of my key hopes were:

*"I hope that we all Love and Hope.
I hope that we all learn and grow.
I hope that we are all kind and caring.
I hope that we all follow the Golden Rules".*

We also discussed the use of a dove as a symbol of peace and hope. The pupils have since been busy thinking about and writing their own hopes for the school year on paper doves which will be displayed in the school. Below are some of their thoughts:

*"I hope that we all stay friends
I hope that we try new things
I hope that we all share and care
I hope we listen to everyone."*

Collective Worship themes

During the rest of this half-term we will be exploring the themes of: Worship, Harvest and Teaching and Learning with the children. Each theme will be explored over a fortnight and through a range of whole school, class and singing Collective Worship. The children will also benefit from visitors like Reverend Philippa Mills discussing the themes with them as well.

Church School Values

As you are aware the school's Values statement is:

"Building our Community with Love and Hope"

The school staff and governors created this statement at the start of last academic year. We are very keen to explore these Values further and consult with both the children and yourselves to ensure that the Values we promote as a school are understood and supported by all members of our school community.

There will be further information about this in the coming months. However if you wish to discuss anything related to the school's Values or the 'distinctive and inclusive' nature of a Church of England school please talk to me.

Cornerstone PTA

Although I only attended one event last year, the Summer Fayre which was a marvellous and well attended event, I would like to thank the hard-working members of this group. The range of events that were organised last year and the funds that were raised to enhance the children's experience at Cornerstone were stunning. I would strongly encourage new parents to join this group, as a fantastic way of supporting your child's education but also a fantastic way of meeting other parents and having fun.

Home Learning

The primary school years are crucial for children's education. They develop key skills, learn crucial knowledge and develop learning attributes like creativity, questioning, logical thinking, embracing challenge and perseverance.

An important part of this learning journey for your child takes place through our home-school partnership and the time and support you give your child with their home learning.

There will be a range of tasks sent home over the course of the year to enhance your child's understanding and I would passionately encourage you to be as involved as you can. We appreciate that everybody has busy lives and it is not always easy to find time. However every time you can support your child's learning, it is time well spent. Home Learning for all classes will be given out on Thursdays and collected in by the following Wednesday.

One of the most valuable things any parent can do is to encourage a daily reading habit and a love of reading. This can include practising key words or sounds, hearing your child read and reading to them. Educational research consistently demonstrates how valuable a daily ten minutes time slot spent reading is for a child's education, not just at primary school but also for their future.

Performing Arts Club

Thank you to Mandy Quick who is running this club again this year on Mondays after school. This term it will culminate in performances of a short musical called "Billy No Buzz" on Wednesday 19th November (at 2 pm and 6 pm).

Gardening Club

Also thank you to Clare Ross who is running this club as she did last academic year. The club will be starting in October and will take place on Thursdays after school for pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3.

Other clubs

For details about other clubs on offer for your children please visit the school website and click on the "Parents" link on the homepage.

WOW writing

Wonderful Outstanding Writing that makes a reader go WOW!

This is a new initiative we are introducing this year to help promote the importance and reason for writing for all the children. The aim is to help them more fully understand that this is an invaluable way of communicating with other people.

We are developing a display board to showcase excellent writing throughout the year and if your child's work is displayed they will also receive a new WOW certificate in Celebration Worship on Fridays. Visitors to our school, including yourselves, will be asked to contribute as well by using post-its which will be available to leave a message to say what they liked about a particular piece of writing. This should help the children appreciate that writing is still a two-way interactive process with a reader.

Messy Church in Whiteley

It has been lovely to see children and families from Cornerstone enjoying some of the previous Messy Church afternoons held in the Community Centre on the first Sunday of every month. The session begins at 4 pm and finishes by 6 pm.

There are always a range of fun activities based around a theme, Reverend Philippa then shares a story and leads the children in singing a couple of songs. The afternoons conclude with the families sharing a tea of bread, cheese, cucumber, carrots and cake!

If you have not attended before but would like to do so you will be very welcome to join in the fun

The dates for the rest of this term are:

Sunday 5th October

Sunday 2nd November

Sunday 7th December

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Attendance target

As a school we have to set a target in line with national expectations for the children's attendance, which this year we have set at 97%.

We appreciate that unfortunately children are sometimes ill and occasionally there may be more serious medical reasons for absence. However we are also aware of a great deal of evidence which links high levels of attendance to high levels of achievement, enjoyment of school and to improved life chances.

As always we will work in partnership with you over any attendance queries or difficulties for the benefit of your child.

Parentmail

Parentmail is an efficient paperless system that is used in many schools in Hampshire. It allows letters to be emailed directly to you and does not fully rely on children remembering to hand paper copies to you. We would strongly encourage you to take advantage of this service.

If you have not yet registered with us for Parentmail please talk to Dawn Gadd in the school office if you are interested. As a school we can make available copies of letters that have a reply slip to save you printing such letters out, although we will also happily accept hand written reply slips for those letters as long as they contain the same information.

Parent View

Thank you to everyone who has completed the online questionnaire about your views of our school last year. It would be great to get all of your views to help us continually reflect on procedures and practices and ensure we are meeting the needs of the community. Therefore if you have not completed the form so far we would appreciate it if you could log on to www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk or follow the hyperlink on our website under "Parents".

Facebook and Twitter accounts

Thank you to everyone who has been 'liking' and commenting in such a positive way to our Facebook posts this term. We hope that it is a useful way of sharing the news and achievements of the school. We have recently re-sent out the parental permission form to ask if you are willing for your child's work and photo to be uploaded onto the page, and we would appreciate it if those forms could be returned by Friday 26th September.

Some of you may also be users of Twitter. Cornerstone Primary has a new Twitter page (@cornerstonecofe) which we aim to use to share news and achievements in a similar way. However as we will also be using Twitter to share with fellow education colleagues in other schools these posts will not be as frequent, and will obviously be far shorter.

Website

We have been working hard to update the details on our school website over the first few weeks of term and will be continuing to add other information and documents during the course of this academic year.

The dates for this term have been added to the "Calendar" section as a short term measure. Our aim is to link our new school Google calendar to the website so that you will have immediate access to future dates.

Staff Updates

We are very pleased to be welcoming new members of staff to the team this term. As well as myself, we welcome Emma Leach: Ladybirds Class Teacher
Jeannette Hunter: Bumble Bees Learning Support Assistant
Justine Holman-Payne: Midday Supervisory Assistant
Tracey Murphy: Cleaner

I know that our new members of staff have settled in well and quickly and hope they have a rewarding and positive time working at Cornerstone Primary.

Class Structure 2014/2015

Year R – Bumble Bees

Clare Ross – Class Teacher
Anne Jenkins – Cover Class Teacher
Jeannette Hunter – Learning Support

Year 1 – Ladybirds

Emma Leach – Class Teacher
Mandy Quick – Learning Support Assistant

Year 2/3 – Butterflies

Claire Riley – Class Teacher
Helen Adair/Jo Copestake – Learning Support Assistants

SENDCo support

Val Brown

Staff INSET days

Staff training days (also known as INSET days) are extremely important for the professional development of the staff and have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning your children will experience. In particular this year schools across the country are spending a significant amount of time working on the new National Curriculum and developing new assessment systems since the removal of levels by the Department for Education.

The next two INSET days for the year have been set and are:
Friday 24th October
Friday 30th January

There will be two further INSET days before the end of the summer term, but these dates have not yet been set.

On these days the school will be closed to the children. We appreciate that this can cause some inconvenience for families organising childcare arrangements, but these training days have a positive effect on both staff and pupils.

Dates for your Diary



September 2014

25 Sept School Photographer – Individual Photos
29 Sept My New Classroom 3.15 – 4.00 p.m.
6.00 – 6.30 p.m.

October 2014

09 Oct Parents Phonic Workshop 3.30 – 4.00 p.m.
6.00 – 6.30 p.m.
23 Oct Last Day of Autumn Term 1
24 Oct Professional Day – Children do not attend

November 2014

03 Nov First Day of Autumn Term 2
11 Nov Parents Evening 3.30 – 6.00 p.m.
13 Nov Parents Evening 4.00 – 7.00 p.m.
17 Nov Road Safety Week
19 Nov Billy No Buzz Performance – 2.00 p.m.
6.00 p.m.

December 2014

15 Dec Christmas Service 9.30 – 10.00 a.m.
16 Dec Christmas Service 9.30 – 10.00 a.m.
19 Dec Last Day of Autumn Term

January 2015

05 Jan First Day of Spring Term 1
30 Jan Professional Day – Children do not attend

February 2015

13 Feb Last Day of Spring Term 1

Many thanks for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mr. Tim Clarke
Headteacher