

Cornerstone Chronicle

November 2014 No 9



Building our Community with Love and Hope

It has been a busy and positive start to the new school year. It has been very pleasing to see the way the children have settled so quickly into their new classrooms, developed their friendships and engaged so enthusiastically with their learning. This is particularly true of the children in Bumble Bees class, who although quite tired by the end of last half-term, have settled in quickly and confidently.

Class Updates...

Year R Bumble Bees



Highlights in Bumble Bees during last half-term.

We have had a marvellous half term getting to know each other, exploring early friendships and becoming secure within the Cornerstone environment. We have explored the Golden Rules together and are generally working really well as a class. Through 'Super Bees' we have explored our similarities and differences, our super skills and the things we can learn together and from each other. We have worked really hard and completed Phase 2 of Letters and Sounds and I have taught the following sounds: s a t p l n m g o c k c k e u r f h b. We have worked on writing numbers 0-9 and counting forwards and backwards to 20, we are comparing totals and noticing when we have more or less. In writing many of us are writing emergently, or using a few letters/graphemes we know, I am encouraging the children to begin by writing phonetically plausibly (see last homework).

What is going on in Bumble Bees during this half-term?

Through our new work on 'Celebrations' we will be exploring how we celebrate (thank you for any holiday home learning you sent in). We will be looking at birthdays, christenings, weddings, days out parties, Christmas, fireworks and other festivals which will increase our cultural awareness. If you would like to come in to school to talk to the children about celebrations special to your family, please let Mrs Ross know. We would also be interested in borrowing special items to create a Celebration display in December.

We will continue on to phase 3 in phonics, to addition and subtraction in number and to introduce 3D shape. We are going to explore Change through hot and cold in Science and Change in Music. We will also be preparing for the Christmas service where year R are going to be angels and stars, you may want to start thinking about costumes? Don't get too excited they need to be able to walk and sit in it!

Year 1 Ladybirds



Highlights in Ladybirds during last half-term.

We had a fantastic start to the year with our special delivery of animals. This helped us to decide which animal would be the best pet to have in school. Ladybirds persuaded Mr Clarke to let us have a pet fish although to begin with wanted to bribe him with chocolate and money. We also enjoyed

looking for clues that the Big Bad Wolf had left behind, however, he was not so bad after all as all he wanted was a friend.

What will Ladybirds be learning during this half-term?

Over this half term Ladybirds are continuing to look at animals and will be making a class zoo so please do not be frightened if there are some animals wandering about on Friday 21st November. We will also be enjoying a trip to the cinema to watch Mary Poppins and looking at different types of art. We will be continuing to find out about the United Kingdom and how they are similar and different.



Year 2/3 Butterflies

Highlights in Butterflies during last half-term.

What a busy half term for Butterflies! They haven't stopped! Our learning this half term was about Places around the world focussing on Continents and Oceans. We learnt about festivals, clothing and food from our chosen country. Our learning finished with a trip to Wagamamas in Whiteley where we made and tasted food.

We also helped support the Basics Bank in Fareham during Harvest following a visit from one of our Governors who volunteers there. We quickly realised that the Basics Bank gives **Hope** to others which is one of our school values.

What will Butterflies be learning during this half-term?

This half term looks to be just as busy. We are starting our learning on Remembrance in respect of those who died 100 years ago. We will be thinking about those that died and why it is important to remember. Alongside this we will be taking a look at Habitats, especially those of birds. We will be looking at designing a bird box following a series of investigations to find out which shape would be best, what size to make them and how big to make the hole.

Please continue to make sure Homework Folders come back into school on a Wednesday as well as library books.

One of our PE sessions is on a Monday morning. Children can come to school in their PE kit bringing school uniform to change into. Our other session is on a Thursday. Please ensure shorts, t-shirt and plimsolls/trainers are in school for those days.

Church School Values

As you are aware our two school Values are **Love** and **Hope**. These were discussed and chosen by the Governing Body and senior staff before the school opened. We will be sending out an online survey to yourselves this year to gain your perspective on these Values and your thoughts on other Values we could also embrace and promote with your children.

As a school we would describe the concept of **Love** within the Christian faith as: the key to all relationships, the respect and care we have for ourselves, others, the world around us and God. That **Love** should be out-going and self-giving, generous and gracious.

We describe **Hope** as the desire and belief in positive outcomes. Church schools are places of **Hope** for every child and adult, to transform themselves and their lives in exciting and holistic ways.

We hope that you agree these are powerful values for us to develop with your children, which will help them grow and mature as well rounded, thoughtful and considerate people.

Collective Worship themes

During this half-term we will be exploring the themes of: Love, Signs & Symbols, Advent and of course Christmas, with the children. The children have opportunities to share their thoughts and opinions. 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 such as Reverend Philippa Mills and Reverend Fiona Gibbs (from St. Luke's Church in Hedge End) sharing stories from the Bible and prayers related to these themes.

School development Plan

The key priorities for school development have been discussed and agreed with both staff and governors. These are as follows:

1. Ensure that all pupils achieve high standards so that from each starting point they make rapid and sustained progress and learn exceptionally well.
2. Ensure that teaching is never less than consistently good and frequently outstanding across all subjects, providing the appropriate climate and support to secure this.
3. Senior Leaders and governors work closely to provide leadership that further develops the confidence and commitment of all stakeholders in growing Cornerstone as an Exceptional Learning Community.
4. Embrace and develop our strong Christian Values and bring them to life ensuring they are reflected and lived out in the daily life of our school and community.
5. Ensuring that the children and staff's well-being is high priority and that all members of the community demonstrate positive, thoughtful and Values based behaviours.
6. Develop the effectiveness of leadership at all levels in having positive impacts for children.

These priorities can also be accessed on our school website. Should you have any questions to ask about these priorities please speak to Tim Clarke.

Exceptional Learning Community

The staff and governors have already started discussions about this aim for us as a school. The aim is that as an ELC we help every member of our community to learn, grow and develop themselves in a wide range of ways. That through this learning journey children and adults are engaged and

empowered, and develop a range of skills and attributes to help them be happy, successful and fulfilled in the world of the 21st century.

We will be discussing this aim with the children as well over the course of this year and producing an online survey to gain your thoughts and perspectives. By the very nature of learning this concept will grow and develop as more people join in the conversation and as we reflect on it in future years.

Should you wish to ask any questions about this aim or to share your thoughts and opinions, please speak to Tim Clarke or any other member of staff.

"Billy No Buzz"

The children, and indeed the staff, are getting very excited about the forthcoming performances of "Billy No Buzz" on Wednesday 19th November. We are sure it will be a successful performance and an experience the children will remember and cherish. Many thanks to the children, Mandy Quick and all the other adults who have supported for their hard work and enthusiasm.

Harvest and Shoebox appeal

Many thanks again for all the contributions that families made to both of these worthwhile charity causes.

It was also wonderful to have so many family members joining all the children, staff and Reverend Philippa for our Harvest Worship in October.

Cornerstone PTA

Thank you to everyone involved in the running of the school disco event at the end of last term. It was wonderful to see the children enjoying themselves so much and the evening was smoothly run and a huge success.

Many thanks to those new parents who have joined this fantastic group of hard working volunteers who help provide so much for the children of our school.

Plans are already taking shape for the next main event: our Christmas Fair, which is on Saturday 6th of December. There will be many stalls, different activities for the children to take part in, a range of very impressive raffle prizes, and of course a chance for the children to meet someone special (dressed in a red suit with a white beard).

The PTA are also running an After School Film Club event on Tuesday 16th December from 3.15 – 5.00 p.m. Further details to follow.

Parent View

Thank you to everyone who has completed the online questionnaire about your views of our school. It would be really beneficial to gain a wider range of 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 link on our website under "Parents".

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Home Learning

Thank you for all the time and support you have given your child already this year with their Home Learning. There have been some fantastic and creative animals arriving in Ladybirds class at the start of this half-term. Home Learning for all classes is given out on Thursdays and collected in by the following Wednesday.

Please do keep supporting your child with daily reading as it will develop their skills and their love of reading.

Messy Church in Whiteley

More families are joining in these community occasions, which prove to be a special time for families and for children to think and explore. There are always a range of fun activities based around a theme which are followed by songs, a story and a meal.

If you have not attended before but would like to do so you will be very welcome.

The final date for this term is Sunday 7th December.

Parentmail

You may not have yet registered with us for Parentmail. It is a quick and efficient way of us sending you letters and newsletters. It is also a useful way of storing previous communications to check details. Many schools in Hampshire use this system.

If you are interested in taking advantage of Parentmail please talk to Dawn Gadd in the school office. 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.

Facebook and Twitter accounts

Thank you to everyone who has been following our Facebook and Twitter feeds. We also appreciate the feedback that many parents have given us.

Our aim is to increasingly use these social media platforms as ways of celebrating achievements and sharing news and ideas. Please remember if you have any specific queries about your own child we would appreciate you coming into school to speak with us directly.

Website

We have updated many sections on our website, which is a valuable central source of information for parents and the wider community. You can access a range of policies, information about curriculum and assessment and photos of the children learning. We are also very pleased that our school's Google calendar and our Facebook page are now linked. This means that you can access the most up to date calendar of events and even if you are not on Facebook can see what is being shared and celebrated.

School uniform

In order to give parents more choice when purchasing school uniform we have registered with the Tesco School Uniform service. We are pleased to advise that embroidered polo shirts, sweatshirts and cardigans are now available to purchase via the following link:

<http://www.clothingattesco.com>

Tesco will donate 5% to the school on all purchases made via our web page.

Skoolkit will continue to also be our uniform supplier and as before will stock all of our uniform items.

Please make sure all items of uniform are clearly named.

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.

Governor Updates

We welcomed two new governors at the start of term: John Foxwell (Foundation governor) and Vaughan Thomas (parent governor).

Towards the end of last term we undertook a parent governor election process. Many thanks to both Nicky Ellis and Jon Howell who enthusiastically volunteered to join the Governing Body. We received just short of 100 votes from you and offer our congratulations to Nicky Ellis who was successful in the election.

The Chair of Governors for this year is Reverend Sandy Matheson and the Vice-Chair is Andrew Saunders. You can contact both Sandy and Andrew through Dawn Gadd in the school office.

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. Interesting a recently published report by the Sutton Trust (an educational charity) have commented on how many other countries invest greater amounts of time into staff development.

The final three INSET days for the year have been set and are:

Friday 30th January

Monday 23rd February

Friday 1st May

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



November 2014

03 Nov First Day of Autumn Term 2
11 Nov Parents Evening 3.30 – 6.00 p.m.
12 Nov Butterflies trip to “Rock Up”
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.
25 Nov PTA meeting 7.00 p.m.
28 Nov Non Uniform Day

December 2014

6 Dec Christmas fair 9.00 – 12.00 p.m.
15 Dec Christmas Service 9.30 – 10.00 a.m.
16 Dec Christmas Service 9.30 – 10.00 a.m.
16 Dec Christmas Lunch
16 Dec PTA Film Club 3.15 – 5.00 p.m.
19 Dec Last Day of Autumn Term

January 2015

05 Jan First Day of Spring Term 1
12 Jan PTA meeting 7.00 p.m.
30 Jan Professional Day – Children do not attend

February 2015

13 Feb Last Day of Spring Term 1
23 Feb Professional Day – Children do not attend

May 2015

01 May Professional Day – Children do not attend

Many thanks for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Tim Clarke
Headteacher