

Cornerstone Celebration & Communication

September 2015

Building our Community with Love, Forgiveness and Hope

Growing an Exceptional Learning Community



The staff having been working hard over the summer holiday preparing for another exciting year of growing, learning, laughter and fun with your children. 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.

The staff and I will do everything we can over the coming year (and years) to help your children learn, thrive and enjoy life. Please remember that home school partnerships are very important to us and crucial for your child's wellbeing and development. If you have any questions or queries at any point please do not hesitate to talk to a member of staff.

Class Updates



Year R: Hedgehogs

What is going on in Hedgehogs during this half-term?

Hedgehogs will be spending a lot of time getting to know each other and establishing expectations. We are embedding this work within an over-arching initial theme of 'Marvellous Me'. This will allow us to explore similarities and differences, talk about our families and our lives. We are also going to encourage Superhero and Princess play because they are fairly 'marvellous' too!

At the end of September we will begin work on 'Rhyme Time' to start thinking about Literacy; rhymes we know and some we don't. This will help with reading and writing. Phonic sounds will be gradually introduced from 28 September and we will be holding a parent workshop on 1 October at 6pm to talk about how we do this and how you can support your child.

In Maths we will be introducing numbers to ten and learning rhymes to help write them. We will use various materials to encourage counting of numbers to 20. We will be looking at shapes around us and ordering objects by height and weight.

PE days are Tuesdays and Fridays, although the PE kit should be in school all the time.

We are all delighted to be working with your children. It has been a pleasure to meet them and you in your homes; thank you for welcoming us.



Year 1: Dolphins

What will Dolphins be learning during this half-term?

During this half term the children will begin learning about our project on Kingdoms. This will incorporate finding out about the United Kingdom, the animal kingdom and also discussion about God's kingdom and how animals are used for Hindu gods in R.E.

As part of our United Kingdom learning we will begin to understand how to read a compass, identifying north, south, east and west and other directional language. We will use this knowledge when looking at maps of the United Kingdom and when programming Bee-Bots to move around on big floor maps. This learning during topic will be supported through some of our maths learning of direction and positional language. Also in maths we will be learning about the number system, knowing the value of each number, place value and then applying this in addition and subtraction.

In science the children will be learning about animals and humans, especially the characteristics that tell us the type of animal group it belongs to e.g. mammal, reptile and whether they are carnivores or omnivores. This will help the children in understanding why certain animals live in different environments and will aid the children's research of the animals that we will look at in depth.

Throughout English we will be looking at some narratives consisting of animals and using these to write our own stories about animals using repeated phrases, to broaden our language and our understanding of rhyme. Throughout both aspects we will be working on the basics of writing, understanding the difference between a letter, word and sentence and trying to use capital letters, full stops and finger spaces correctly. Also we will be encouraging the children to use all their phonics old and new within their writing.

PE will be taught on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

"This is a happy school where pupils achieve well in terms of their personal, as well as academic development and are growing up as responsible caring young people." Ofsted 2015



Year 2: Penguins

What will Penguins be learning during this half-term?

This half term we will be travelling around the 7 continents of the world. The children will be learning the names of these and will be able to find these locations on a world map. To complement this learning the children will be asked to choose a country to research. This will involve the children researching traditional foods, dress, customs and traditions as the basis for their home learning.

In Maths we will be checking our number knowledge of numbers to 100. Through the maths 'Learn it' we will be developing our instant recall and mental maths ability.

In Art we will be looking at the artist Andy Goldsworthy, his style of art, and building up to creating our own. RE and Geography link with the topic of Special Food, closely linked with Harvest. The children will be taken on a virtual culinary trip around the world.

It would be helpful if the children could bring in a pair of wellies that can stay in school. It proves very helpful for visits to the copse and for rainy days.

PE days are a Tuesday and Thursday so please ensure the children have the appropriate kit in school.



Year 3: Dragonflies

What will Dragonflies be learning during this half-term?

To start off the year in Dragonflies, we will be spending time exploring the concept of creation and learning how different groups of people believe the world began. Following on from this we will launch our project 'Could you survive the Stone Age?' Linking to the idea of creation, we will use evidence to find out about life in Britain in and beyond pre-historic times. Our learning journey will begin in the Ice Age and take us through the Stone Age period from Palaeolithic caves and the Mesolithic period to the New Stone Age (Neolithic). In Science we will be investigating Light and Shadows.

In our writing, we will take inspiration from 'The Great British Bake Off' and learn to write instructions for a recipe book. Following this we will move onto writing narratives in the form of a play script. Our maths learning for the first half term will be focused on number and place value, the four operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division), problem solving and reasoning, fractions, shape and measures.

We will also begin to learn a new language. As a school we have chosen to learn Spanish in Key Stage 2.

PE days for Dragonflies will be Tuesdays and Fridays, although this might change as the year progresses.

New classrooms building programme

We were pleased with the progress that was made with the installation of the three new classrooms towards the end of last term. Work will continue during this half-term with the completion date being set as Thursday 22 October.

Access around the school site will remain as it did at the end of last term. Families will still be able to enter and exit the Gibson Close gate at the start and end of each day. The area where the builders are working will be fenced off throughout the works to ensure the children's safety, although no doubt they will remain very interested.

Once the build is completed our aim this academic year is to use one room for the Time Out before and after school club. This room will also be used during the day for small group work. We will set up one of the other rooms as a dedicated art, craft and DT room, with all the resources easily available for classes or groups to use. The third classroom will be used for additional storage, which will free up more space in the hall, and will include a larger space for PTA storage.

Obviously in the future one room each year will be needed as the next classroom. The current proposed schedule for moving Cornerstone to a new three form entry permanent site off the extended Bluebell Way is for September 2018.

Learning Values

Last year the staff spent time over the course of the year exploring and debating the overarching values we want to help promote with your children in their learning and their growth as people and learners. From a 'long list' of over forty ideas we agreed on the following eight:

Independence /**I**nterdependence

Not giving up

Self-motivated

Positive attitude

Inspired by challenge

Risk taking

Empowered

This year we will discuss these in more detail with the children to explore ways of making them meaningful and memorable for them. One possible idea is to create Learning Superhero characters, but we will make a decisions in partnership with the children, so we wait to see.

Cornerstone Rules

Last year in their Pupil Voice groups Y1 and Y2 children shared their thoughts about the Golden Rules. Which did they think were most important? Did they think there were some ideas that were missing? Did they like the title of "Golden Rules"? Why are these rules helpful? Are they helpful?

Following these discussions we have created a new set of "Cornerstone Rules" although from Y3 onwards we will refer to them as "Cornerstone Responsibilities" as we link them on occasions to the national "Rights, Respect and Responsibilities" initiative.

The new rules have been grouped under the school's three Values of Love, Forgiveness and Hope, to help the children develop their understanding of these Values being central to all we do as a school. We are finalising a new poster which will show the Values, Learning Values and Cornerstone Rules / Responsibilities and how they link. Once this has been agreed we will email a copy to you.

Cornerstone PTA

We are extremely fortunate to have such a hard working, dedicated and generous group of parents. Last year they organised and ran a range of exciting fund raising events, and indeed have continued to do work behind the scenes over the summer holidays.

If you have not attended a meeting before or would like to support at events please speak to Claire Nichols (Chair), Richard Faulkner (Vice-Chair) or any member of staff.

The PTA Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be taking place on Tuesday 29 September at 7pm at school. Everyone is invited to attend.

Home Learning

The primary school years are crucial for children's education and their enthusiasm and attitude towards learning and school. 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 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, is time well invested. 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, reading to them, discussing and enjoying books together. Educational research consistently demonstrates how valuable a regular time spent reading is for children in all aspects of their learning.

Parent survey July 2015

Many thanks to the 16 families who responded to our end of year questionnaire, which we aim to be an annual process. We have carefully read and considered all the responses. Overall the responses were very positive and supportive, as well as celebrating many of the aspects of the school there were also some good ideas shared about how the school can continue to improve.

A separate letter has already been sent home discussing the responses in more detail, but below are a few headlines:

- 81% of those who replied stated their child have 'very much enjoyed' their year at Cornerstone, with no negative responses.
- 94% of responses thought that school communication was useful and effective, or highly useful and effective.
- Face to face communication, texting and emailing where the three most popular forms of communication.
- 75% of responders felt that staff were very approachable and listened and responded very well to questions and requests.

Time of the school day

Just to confirm the start and end times of the school day.

8.45: the classroom doors are opened.

8.50: registration starts.

9.00: all children are expected to be in their classrooms.

3.15: end of school day and pupils are handed over to parents from the classroom door.

Performing Arts Club

Thank you to Mrs Quick who is running this fantastic club again this year on Mondays after school. It will start on Monday 14 September. It is a wonderful opportunity for children to develop their acting, singing and dancing and experience performing to an audience. Initially this club is for Y1-Y3, although after October half-term the YR children will be invited to be part of one of the dances if they wish.

This term the Performing Arts club will culminate in performances of a short musical called "Eddie the penguin saves the world" on Wednesday 25 November (at 2 pm and 6 pm).

Gardening Club

Also thank you to Mrs Ross who is running this club as she did last academic year. The club will be starting in Thursday 17 September for pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3, and will run for the first half-term.

Netball Club

Mr Clarke will be starting this new club which will run on Fridays for this first half term. It will be open to children in Years 2 and 3. This club will start on Friday 18 September.

Other clubs

Please note that Multi-skills will continue as a free of charge club through our Sports Partnership with Henry Cort, and is open to all year groups. However it will now be running on Tuesday evenings after school.

For details about other clubs on offer for your children please visit the school website and click on the "Parents" link on the homepage. To sign up your child for any of the school clubs, please collect a letter from the school office.

WOW: Walk to School with Living Streets

We have signed up to a scheme organised by Living Streets and recommended by the Local Authority which encourages children to walk (or cycle / scooter) to school at least once a week. If they manage to walk to school 8 times during a month they will be awarded a badge. There will also be the opportunity to log journeys and see how each class is doing each week.

There will be a launch event on Wednesday 16 September at which further information will be provided.

Family Fun Run Friday

We will be continuing this weekly event up until October half-term at least. Thank you to those who regularly take part. We would appreciate it if more adults would like to join in by strolling, jogging or running a few laps as it helps provide the children with more positive healthy role models.

Open Library

Open Library will be starting in a few weeks' time but this year on Friday after school. It is a lovely opportunity for families to come and share books in the school library and maybe for your child to choose a new book to read with you over the weekend. We will let you know when these sessions will start.

EPIC writing

Excellent Pieces In Cornerstone. We saw a wonderful range of wonderful writing on this display in the school corridor last year. We are looking forward eagerly to see what the children can produce this academic year. Please remember everyone is welcome to come and read these pieces and to leave a comment to the author on a post-it. It is a very valuable way of helping the children appreciate the purpose of writing as communication with other people and to raising the expectations and standards of their work.

SIAMS Inspection

SIAMS stands for the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools. All Church of England schools are inspected every 3-5 years. We are due to be inspected at some point during this academic year. The inspection will focus on four key questions.

1. How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?
2. What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community?
3. How effective is the Religious Education?
4. How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?

Following our Good Ofsted report last year, we are confident that the children, staff and school as a whole will be judged in a positive manner and look forward to welcoming the inspector whenever they visit.

Should you have any questions about this process please feel free to speak to myself, another member of staff or one of the governors.

Collective Worship themes

During this half-term we will be exploring the themes of: Love, Spirituality and Harvest.

When exploring Love the children will consider the importance of this as one of our school Values, about the care and respect we should show each other and ourselves and the love that parents have for their children.

The theme of Spirituality links with the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural learning which all schools undertake. The children will be considering who they are and how they can be better people towards others and the world around them.

When we explore Harvest we will consider where our food comes from, how some other people are less fortunate than ourselves and be organising a Harvest Worship. Donations from families will be much appreciated for this as usual.

Each theme will be explored over a few weeks and through a range of whole school, class and singing Collective Worships. The children will also benefit from

visitors like Reverend Philippa Mills discussing the themes with them as well.

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 practical activities based around a theme, Reverend Philippa then shares a story and leads the children in singing some songs. The afternoons conclude with the families sharing a tea which includes some rather delicious cake! If you have not attended before but would like to do so you will be very welcome.

We were very pleased to host the first Messy Church of the year at Cornerstone on Sunday 6 September.

The dates for the rest of this term are:

Sunday 4 October

Sunday 1 November

Sunday 6 December

Website

We continue to work hard to keep details on our school website up to date. Our website is the central place for all information including dates, letters and policies. We also linked our Facebook, so if you are not on Facebook you can still see the posts through the website.

The website address is:

<http://cornerstoneprimary.hants.sch.uk>

Attendance

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%. From this September Hampshire are changing the criteria for schools and any pupil with attendance below 90% will be considered as a persistent absentee, and schools will be expected to work with families to improve the attendance.

You are probably also aware, following the letter we sent out last term, that from this September any 10 sessions (half days) of **unauthorised** absence will result in Hampshire issuing a Penalty Notice.

We appreciate that unfortunately children are sometimes ill and occasionally there may be more serious medical reasons for absence. **These reasons count as authorised absence** and will not count towards a possible penalty notice.

There is much evidence which links high levels of attendance to high levels of achievement, enjoyment of school and to improved life chances.

We appreciate this is a sensitive subject for families, and that parents want to support their child and the

school and do the best within the guidelines. As always we will work in partnership with you over any attendance queries or difficulties for the benefit of your child, and appreciate your understanding.

'Teachers to Parents'

'Teachers to Parents' is an efficient paperless system that is used in many schools in Hampshire. It allows us to send you text messages as well as email letters directly to you and does not fully rely on children remembering to hand paper copies to you.

All parents at Cornerstone last academic year were signed up for this service. We will send letters home this week for all new parents to sign up for 'Teachers to Parents'. If you have any questions, please talk to Mrs Gadd or Mrs Jones 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.

Parent View

Thank you to everyone who has completed the online questionnaire about your views of our school last year, it was an overwhelming percentage of our families. 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 will re-send the parental permission form at the start of this year 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 25 September.

Some of you may also be users of Twitter. Cornerstone Primary has a Twitter account (@cornerstonecofe) which we use to share news and achievements in a similar way. However we have also been using Twitter to share with colleagues in other schools. These tweets will not be as frequent as our Facebook posts, and will be far shorter.

Please can we remind you that these forums are for celebrating achievements and sharing positives of the school. If you have any concerns or complaints we would appreciate you coming into school to discuss them with us in person. Many thanks.

Staff Updates

We are very pleased to be welcoming new members of staff to the Cornerstone team this term:

Miss Fran Pretty: Dragonflies Class Teacher

Mrs Fiona Lamey: Hedgehogs Class Teacher on Fridays

Mrs Helen Storey: Additional Support Assistant in Hedgehogs

Mrs Fiona Hull: Additional Support Assistant in Hedgehogs

Mrs Frances Maguire: part-time Learning Support Assistant in Penguins and Dragonflies and Librarian

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 2015/2016

Year R – Hedgehogs

Mrs Clare Ross – Class Teacher

Mrs Fiona Lamey – Class Teacher on Friday

Mrs Jeannette Hunter – Learning Support Assistant

Mrs Helen Storey – Additional Support Assistant

Mrs Fiona Hull – Additional Support Assistant

Year 1 – Dolphins

Miss Emma Leach – Class Teacher

Mrs Helen Adair – Learning Support Assistant

Year 2 – Penguins

Mrs Claire Riley – Class Teacher

Mrs Frances Maguire – Learning Support Assistant

Year 3 – Dragonflies

Miss Fran Pretty – Class Teacher

Mrs Mandy Quick – Learning Support Assistant / Higher Level Teaching Assistant

Mrs Frances Maguire – Learning Support Assistant

SENDCo

Mrs 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. The first four INSET days for the year have been set and are:

Tuesday 1 September

Friday 9 October

Monday 12 October

Friday 29 January

There will be one further INSET days before the end of the summer term, but the date for this has not been set yet.

On these days the school will be closed to the children. While 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 2015

1 Sept: INSET day

2 Sept: First day for Y1-Y3

W/b 7 Sept: Mornings for YR

14 Sept: First day for YR

21 Sept: My New Classroom 3.15 – 4.00 and 5.30 – 6.00 pm

29 Sept: PTA AGM 7pm

October 2015

1 Oct: Phonics & EYFS Parents Information Evening 6pm

9 Oct: INSET day

12 Oct: INSET day

13 Oct: PTA meeting 7pm

21 Oct: Harvest Worship 9.30 am

23 Oct: Last Day of Autumn Term 1

November 2015

12 Nov: Parents Evening 4 - 7 pm (YR & Y1)

17 Nov: Parents Evening 3.30 – 6 pm

19 Nov: Parents Evening 3.30 – 6 pm

20 Nov: Perform Drama workshops

25 Nov: "Eddie the penguin saves the world" performance – 2pm and 6pm

December 2014

15 Dec: Christmas lunch

15 Dec: Christmas Worship

16 Dec: Christmas Worship

18 Dec: Last Day of Autumn Term

January 2015

4 Jan: First Day of Spring Term 1

29 Jan: INSET day

February 2015

12 Feb: Last Day of Spring Term 1

Many thanks for your continued partnership and support.

Yours sincerely

Mr Tim Clarke
Headteacher