

Cornerstone Celebration & Communication

November 2015

Building our Community with Love, Forgiveness and Hope

Growing an Exceptional Learning Community



Class Updates



Year R: Hedgehogs

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

This half term we are planning activities and learning experiences based around the broad theme of 'Special days', this will include celebrations, festivals and Christmas and Diwali activities Obviously we are finding out more about the Christmas story as we build up to our Christmas Celebration of 'The Christmas Tail'. We will be looking at Change in Science through exploration of party food and decorations like balloons. In Maths we will be looking at numbers beyond ten and finding out about addition, we will be exploring 3d shapes, particularly parcels in our classroom post office.

In English we will continue working on nursery rhymes for a week before beginning writing labels, invitations messages, letters and cards. We will be completing Phase 2 phonics and assessing how well we are doing before moving on to phase 3 and supporting children who need more reinforcement.

Our outside provision continues to develop. After half term we will explore the Cornerstone Copse with the children so they will all need wellies by then. Whilst we have bought some rain suits we only have 15, some children have already been sad to miss out on puddle wading so wellies are essential!

The first week of December is National tree dressing week, we are going in to the copse to 'dress' a tree to 'encourage the celebration of trees in city and country, in the street, village green- anywhere in the public domain. It highlights our responsibility for looking after trees and reminds us of their enormous cultural and environmental importance'.

It is really important that you try to remember your child's water bottle please, as it's much easier for children to hydrate themselves independently if they have one.

Whilst we do try to minimise dirty clothes, we do see our uniforms as clothes to wear to play, learn and get messy in. During the last week Mrs Ross came home with trousers covered in shaving foam and purple paint on one day.

We are struggling a little to reunite children with PE kits after dance, multi skills and football, please check kits

before they come back and make sure they are labelled. Thank you for your help.

We need full PE kit including plimsolls in school on Tuesdays and Fridays.



Year 1: Dolphins

We have had a great start to the year and the children have settled in well to learning in Year 1. The children have particularly enjoyed finding out how to weave and challenging themselves with some tricky patterns. They have also enjoyed finding out more about animals and the United Kingdom. The children had fun creating their snowman Christmas cards, laughing at themselves being made into snowmen.

What will Dolphins be learning during this half-term?

In Autumn 2 we are going to continue our topic of Kingdoms, eventually bringing this topic to a close on Friday 27th November 2015 at our Project Celebration. We are going to create fact files about the animals and United Kingdom and write poems to share at this event. We will also continue to work on our maths skills, learning about sharing (division) and lots of (multiplication), measuring and time. Of course we will be spending time at the end of the term learning and rehearsing our Christmas Celebration performance with Hedgehogs.



Year 2: Penguins

What a busy but exciting half term we've had for Penguins. They have learnt about the continents and oceans in the world. This has led our Geography project based learning topic. We have taken virtual tours to various different capitals as well as a food tasting experience.

After travelling all over the world we touched down in the land of Traditional Tales. English learning was concerned with the story structures and the power of three! (Ask the children to explain). We enjoyed listening to stories with a twist before writing our own. We heard the true story of the Big Bad Wolf, How Cinderella was actually a nightmare and how Prince Charming was incredibly fussy! Our story writing ended with us adding our own twists.

In Maths we have been working really hard on our 'learn its'. A big thank you for your support with this, the impact is evident in the children's ability to quickly

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recall mentally. Alongside this we have been making connections between \times and \div facts. If we know one thing, we must know another.

What will Penguins be learning during this half-term?

This half term looks to be just as busy and exciting. Our project based learning will be science based surrounding habitats and animals. Before rehearsals for the Christmas Celebration start we will be embedding our work from this half term, working hard on joining our letters correctly and developing our ability to write for different purposes in English. Just a reminder that Home Learning and library books are due back every Wednesday.



Year 3: Dragonflies

Dragonfly class have been flying high straight into Year 3. It has been a fun filled and learning packed journey so far. We started the year off by looking at the very BIG idea of 'Creation' in our RE learning. We were so impressed with the deep thinking and philosophical questioning that came from this. The children found out how different religions believe the world began and what qualities a creator would need to have. This lead very nicely onto our learning about the very first people who lived in Britain back in pre-historic times.

Luckily for us, a box of ancient artefacts arrived on our door one morning. It was filled with stones, deer antlers, animal fur, fire bows, things that looks like stone axes and lots of other unusual things that we knew nothing about. Dragonflies turned into archaeologists and began to use the clues to start building up a picture about what Stone Age men and women might have used these for and how they lived. They pulled together all the facts we knew and created some 'real' and 'not so real' explanations of what the objects were used for.

It really ignited our interest in this fascinating age. Another source we used to find out more about the Stone Age was images of cave paintings. We even went on a virtual tour of the Lascaux caves in France. It inspired us to experiment with different materials in our sketch books and develop our artistic mastery of these to produce our own fantastic cave paintings.

Following on from this, we started to examine real rocks and stones. We found out how different rocks are naturally made and turned into palaeontologists to start examining fossils. Our science work also lead us onto investigating soil. We have well and truly learnt about what is under our feet.

We haven't just been stuck in the Stone Age this half term. We were lost things in September when we used a film/ book called "The Lost Thing" to inspire our Maths and English learning.

Then we moved onto instructional writing with our Great Revolting Bake off. Feel free to come and read our new recipe book featuring all of these not so delicious meal ideas. Finally we have finished off the half term by looking deeply at a story called 'Stone Age Boy'. The children have written some wonderful extracts for parts of this story that have a great impact on the reader.

In our Maths we have been consolidating and learning new key concepts in place value, addition and subtraction as well as investigating right angles and multiplication.

What will Dragonflies be learning during this half-term?

Our learning about the Stone Age will continue into this half term. We will be taking a closer look at changes from the Stone Age to the Bronze and Iron Ages. We will look more deeply at historical evidence and discoveries that have been made. We are hoping that our school trip to Butser Ancient Farm will bring this topic to life. We are hoping to showcase our learning journey by opening our own museum to teach others about these pre-historic times. Watch this space for when and where it will be held!

We will also be learning more about e-safety and how to be more confident about using the internet and general digital literacy skills.

Our English lessons will focus on writing playscripts and dialogues as well as using an exciting book as a stimulus for lots of different writing opportunities.

Science learning will be centred around the concept of light and shadows.

As we head towards Christmas time, we will be learning about angels and the concept of images in our RE. Around this time, Dragonflies and Penguins will be working together to get ready for a joint Christmas Celebration performance.



New classrooms

Many thanks to everyone for your patience and interest during the building work. It has been pleasing to see so many child-initiated 'building sites' appear outside the fenced off area. We were pleased that so many of you were able to come inside and see the completed classrooms in their empty form on the final Friday of last half-term.

For the rest of this academic year the classroom nearest the Hall (classroom 5) will be used as an additional group room, and can also be used for whole class art, DT and music sessions.

Classroom 6 will be used before and after school by Timeout. We thank them for their partnership with us in particular in regard to sharing the Hall.

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Classroom 7 will be transformed over the coming weeks and months into a new, larger and improved Library / Learning Hub. As well as books we plan to have some of the laptops and iPads available in the room to broaden the range of uses. Open Library will continue on Fridays after school and we would encourage everyone to come and share a story and choose a book for the weekend.

As part of this development we are seeking large decorative items such as cardboard cut outs of characters and cardboard trees to create an indoor reading forest corner. If you have any contacts or items that you feel might help to transform it into a magical reading world please speak to a member of staff.

New Permanent Build

The governor's Building committee and I have commenced meetings with Hampshire County Council's Buildings and Architect teams to start designing the new building and site for Cornerstone. We are also being supported in this process by the Diocese Building Officers and two parents (with significant expertise and experience in this field) who have been co-opted as Associate Governors for the duration of the process. We are confident that together we can achieve a design and build that will benefit our current pupils and pupils in the future. Our vision for the new Cornerstone is:

"Cornerstone is building its community on Love, Forgiveness and Hope, and Growing an Exceptional Learning Community. Children's learning, growth and welfare is the prime focus for all we do. The new school will promote and enable active partnerships between pupils, staff and parents and empower a creative, exciting curriculum in a wide variety of real and meaningful learning spaces. The design should offer maximum flexibility in terms of use of space for both now and the future."

There will be a public consultation meeting held at Cornerstone during this month to allow parents, local residents and other interested parties to discuss the process of Cornerstone moving to a new site (approximately 500 metres on from the current end of Bluebell Way). This will be followed by a second public consultation in March/April 2016 to share the design for the new build and site. If you wish to find out any more details about the process between now and that date please don't hesitate to ask me.

Cornerstone Rules

We introduced our new Cornerstone Rules last half-term. These were created by pupils and staff working together in Pupil Voice Groups. We are pleased that the children have responded positively to them and that they link explicitly to our Values of Love, Forgiveness and Hope.

Copies of the poster sharing these are accessible for the children to see in every classroom, in the corridor, the Hall and on the Parents' Notice Board. However for your information they are:

Love

- We are kind, friendly and helpful
- We listen carefully
- We look after our classrooms and school

Forgiveness

- We say sorry and try hard to improve
- We share and take turns
- We include everyone

Hope

- We are cheerful and positive
- We work hard to learn and grow
- We learn from mistakes and problems

Cornerstone PTA

Many thanks to the numerous parents from each year group who give their time, energy and talents to a range of events and projects to support the school. This year the PTA are fundraising to provide additional outside climbing equipment for all the children to enjoy. If you are able to support in any way please speak to Clare Nichols (Chair) or Amanda France (Vice-Chair).

Upcoming event for this term are:

3 Nov: School Discos (and non-uniform day)

27 Nov: Non-uniform day

5 Dec: Christmas Fair (11am-2pm)

Christmas Fair

The PTA's Christmas Fair will be taking place on Saturday 5 December, between 11am and 2pm.

There will a range of stalls, games and refreshments available. There will a raffle with many exciting prizes donated by local businesses. And of course there will be a chance for the children to visit Santa in his Grotto.

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Further details will be coming out in a letter from the PTA, but please do make sure this date is in your diary, as it is one of the highlights of the school year.

Parents' Evenings

We will be trialling a new online system for you to book your time slots for parents evening this half-term. The dates and times are as follows:

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

17 Nov: all classes (3.30-6pm)

19 Nov: all classes (3.30-6pm)

As always we aim to provide you with a detailed update on how your child is progressing in all aspects of their development and school life. However we also try to stick to time, which means 10 minute appointments. May I respectfully ask that if you require more time at the end of your appointment that you ask your child's class teacher to book a mutually convenient time to continue the conversation.

I would also like to thank the staff in advance for all the time and care they put into both preparing for and running these valuable evenings.

Home Learning

The aims of home learning are to develop a positive and enthusiastic approach to learning amongst the children and the whole school community. To support the children's academic progress and to strengthen the partnership between home and school.

Regular reading, both by your child and you to your child is one of the most valuable and hopefully enjoyable activities any parent can do. However the regular practice of phonics, key words and maths 'Learn Its' that come home are also crucial in helping children master basic knowledge and skills.

Please remember that you can view our Home Learning policy on the school's website by following this link:

<http://cornerstoneprimary.hants.sch.uk/pupils/home-learning/>

Performing Arts Club

Mrs Quick and her team have been working hard with the children. The date of the performance of "Eddie the Penguin saves the world" is the 27th of January. The performance will start at 2pm and 6pm, and are sure to be of high quality and enjoyable for both the cast and audience.

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.

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

WOW: Walk to School with Living Streets

Many thanks to everyone for all the support and efforts you have been putting into trying to walk, scoot or cycle with your children at least once a week. We know it has a beneficial impact on traffic, pollution levels and most importantly the children's healthy lifestyles.

Congratulations to Dragonfly and Dolphins class who won the September and October class competition respectively. Who is going to win this half-term?

Open Library

Mrs Maguire opens up the library after school on a Friday every week. This allows families to come in and share stories and books together. Hopefully it also gives you an opportunity to see the range of books we have on offer and to suggest other books to your child that they might like to borrow.

There will not be an Open Library on Friday 6 November, as we will be organising the layout in classroom 7, but we hope to be open again the following week.

Writing Anthologies and EPIC board

As part of our drive to inspire the children to produce exciting and effective pieces of writing we have started to upload Writing Anthologies onto our website, so that they can feel more like authors having their work published. Even if a piece of your child's writing has not been added please do find time to look at and read these pieces with them, as it will encourage them to be published in the future.

We have also renamed our writing board in the corridor as EPIC (Excellent Pieces in Cornerstone). Again the aim is to promote high quality pieces of writing, but also the two way process of written communication. Therefore if you are in school, please do read these pieces and leave a positive post-it comment that can be shared with the children. Parents Evening would be an ideal time for this.

Going forward, as the children get older, we hope that they will undertake more real writing tasks, such as blogging about their experiences on our website and writing sections of this newsletter for me. (They do already work with their teachers on producing the class updates).

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, but have not been visited so far. 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?

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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?

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: Light, Advent and Christmas. As part of our thinking about the theme of light we will consider the symbol of candles and explore the story of Diwali.

Messy Church in Whiteley

The final Messy Church of 2015 is on Sunday 6 December (4-6pm) and will be held here at Cornerstone. For those who have not attended before, everyone is very welcome to come and join in with the activities and crafts. These are followed by songs, a story and a tea together.

Remembrance Service

There will a Remembrance Day Service in Whiteley shopping centre on Sunday 8 November. Scouts, Guides, Cubs and Brownie groups will join Whiteley Church and members of the local community to mark this important annual occasion.

In school Dolphins, Penguins and Dragonflies classes will come together to share a minute's silence on Wednesday 11 November at 11am.

Website

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

We update details on our school website on a regular and ongoing basis. Our website is the central place to go for all information including dates, letters and policies. We also linked our Facebook page last academic year, so if you are not on Facebook you can still see the posts through the website.

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%.

As a whole school the attendance for the first half of Autumn term was: 97.3%

This percentage can be broken down into individual classes. For last half-term the attendance for each class was as follows:

Hedgehogs: 96.9%

Dolphins: 97.9%

Penguins: 98%

Dragonflies: 96.5%

Our aim is to work in partnership with families to keep children healthy and motivated so their attendance remains high. The Department for Education repeatedly reference evidence that proves this has a positive effect on progress and enjoyment of school.

Cash Payments

We would encourage you to use our online payment system whenever possible; please speak to Mrs Gadd or Mrs Jones in the office if you need a reminder of your log-in details.

If you do need to send in cash payments, then please ensure these are in a sealed envelope, clearly labelled with your child's name and the purpose.

Parent View

Thank you to everyone who has completed the online questionnaire about your views of our school last year, it was a fantastic percentage of our families when compared to other schools. 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".

Before and after school

Just a reminder that parents are welcome to allow their children who attend Cornerstone and younger siblings to use our Trim trail before and after school, however this is fully under parental supervision and responsibility. Please ask your children to refrain from climbing on other equipment on the school site, as they are not designed for this purpose.

I would like to thank the children and adults who have stopped scooting and cycling on the playground this academic year as we requested. The aim is to try and minimise bumps and collisions.

I would ask that other school resources, such as the bikes and scooters, hoppers and Connect 4 are not used by pupils or their siblings at the beginning or end of the day. Staff ensure that equipment has been packed away at the end of lunchtime and afternoon

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sessions. We have found that on some days staff are now having to go out onto the playground to tidy up again when families have left, which obviously stops them from carrying on with their other tasks.

Finally please be aware that the playground and field are often used for after school clubs and by children attending Time Out. Whilst we are very happy for families to congregate and chat and the children to continue developing their friendships, please can we ask that the school site is cleared by 3.45 pm at the latest to allow the children attending clubs and Time Out to use these places safely.

Facebook and Twitter accounts

Thank you to everyone who has been 'liking' and commenting in such a positive way to our Facebook posts and Twitter tweets this term. We hope that it is a useful way of sharing the news and achievements of the school.

Please can we remind you that these forums are for celebrating achievements and sharing positives of the school. Many parents will enjoy sharing posts with their children. 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

Mrs Ellen Flowers will be joining our staff team at the start of this half-term to provide additional support in Year R.

We are very fortunate to have Mrs Mandy Quick as our school's HLTA (Higher Lever Teaching Assistant) who provides high quality cover for class teachers. During this half-term we are trialling releasing Mrs Quick from her Year 3 morning duties to create greater flexibility and capacity for cover across the school, and to enable her to continue her valuable ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) work.

Mrs Fiona Hull will be supporting Ms Fran Pretty in Year 3 during morning sessions.

Staff INSET days

Staff Inservice Training days are extremely important for the professional development of the staff, particularly in a school where we are Growing an Exceptional Learning Community, and have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning your children will experience.

The next INSET day is on Friday 29 January.

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

On INSET 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 2015

3 Nov: Non-uniform day
3 Nov: YR & Y1 Disco 3.30-4.30pm
3 Nov: Y2 & Y3 Disco 5-6pm
12 Nov: Parents Evening 4-7 pm (YR & Y1)
17 Nov: Parents Evening 3.30-6pm
19 Nov: Parents Evening 3.30-6pm
20 Nov: Perform Drama workshops
27 Nov: Non-uniform day (Christmas Fair donation)

December 2015

15 Dec: Christmas lunch
15 Dec: YR & Y1 Christmas Celebration 9.30-10am
15 Dec: Y2 & Y3 Christmas Celebration 2.15-2.45pm
16 Dec: Y2 & Y3 Christmas Celebration 9.30-10am
16 Dec: YR & Y1 Christmas Celebration 2.15-2.45pm
18 Dec: Last Day of Autumn Term

January 2016

4 Jan: First day of Spring term 1
27 Jan: Eddie the Penguin performances 2pm & 6pm
29 Jan: INSET day

February 2016

12 Feb: Last day of Spring term 1
22 Feb: First day of Spring term 2

March 2016

24 Mar: Last day of Spring term 2

April 2016

11 Apr: First day of Summer term 1

Please remember you can access term dates for this and next academic year on Hantsweb at:

http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/schools/school_holidays

Many thanks for your continued partnership and support.

Yours sincerely

Mr Tim Clarke
Headteacher

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