

Dear Parents

Welcome to the first of our February newsletters.

We hope that the following information may be of interest to you all...

## **Themed Week:**

The final week of this half term will see Thingwall celebrate our locality with a science, maths and geography smorgasbord of activities! We plan to base the week around a series of science, maths and geography investigations and we are also welcoming in various exciting visitors. Miss Swinhoe (one of our current Schools Direct Associate Teachers) will deliver two exciting days of science investigations, Freddy Fit will visit us on the Wednesday to help us to understand how we can improve our health and well-being through physical activity, a representative from the RNLi will visit to advise us on water safety (vital as we are surrounded on three sides by water) and we will also introduce the children to the outside improvements we have recently made with Jim Rumble from Acorn to Oaks Forest Schools.

## **Class Assemblies:**

Congratulations to Year Three for an incredible assembly last week. You were really professional and a pleasure to watch. Well done Mrs Mitchell for co-ordinating the whole production with such imagination and flair. Mrs Holroyd and Year Four will be performing their class assembly on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> February (apologies for any confusion over dates with this) and their production is looking every bit as promising! Jane Laird from Wirral's Wider Opportunities Music Programme has been working closely with Year Four all year, providing weekly sessions on vocal tuition and recorders. Their assembly will see them perform songs and music linked to the topics they have been studying so far this year.

We will be selling hot drinks and biscuits prior to this assembly priced at £1.00 so if adults would like to arrive any time after 9.15am, Dylan Sutcliffe's mum will be happy to serve you from the canteen. She needs one of the Year Four parents to give her a bit of help so, if anyone is able to, please contact the School Office at your earliest convenience. Many thanks for your support.

## **Parent Governor Vacancy:**

As you will be aware the closing date for votes for the Parent Governor Vacancy was last Wednesday. Miss McCormick (Poppy in Year Five's mum) won the vote and we are delighted to welcome her to our Governing Body.

## **Thingwall in the Community:**

As you will be aware from previous newsletters we continue to enjoy very strong links with the primary schools in our locality. Thingwall is one of a cluster of six local schools who benefit from working very closely together (other schools in the group are Gayton Primary, Barnston Primary, Heswall Primary, Irby Primary and Pensby Primary). Not only do we liaise very closely over our Schools Direct Associate teachers, we also share expertise and drive forward the curriculum in all our schools to ensure the best possible standards for all the children in our care. We thought we would aim to give you an overview of this close collaboration at least once a term. Below is just a snapshot of the work we have done together so far this term...

Science Festival - Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January saw the cluster of schools gather at Heswall Primary for an evening based around the science curriculum with 30 different organisations converging at the school to deliver all manner of practical science investigations around the theme of light, earth and space. My particular favourite was the jumping bean stall which demonstrated how forces can act on an object with quite surprising results! Mrs Holroyd's favourite was the inflatable planetarium. A great evening was had by all and our thanks go to Nicky Bolton who is Heswall's Deputy Head, the Heswall staff (who were shattered after waving good bye to Ofsted only the day before) and the cluster's Science Co-ordinators.

Maths Moderation - January 25<sup>th</sup> saw all teachers come to Thingwall Primary where we worked in our year groups to moderate a selection of maths books from across the schools to ensure continuity, progression and challenge. Thanks go to Mr Bettridge, our Deputy Head for co-ordinating the evening. We were pleased that Ladymount RC Primary were also able to join us for this valuable session.

Admin Meeting - Last week saw Mrs Hamel gather with the other secretaries at Gayton Primary to discuss our Service Level Agreements and how we can work together to ensure best value with our everyday purchases (paper, toilet rolls etc).

Termly Chairs and Heads meeting - This Friday will see the Chairs of Governors and Head Teachers from all six schools meet at Barnston Primary where we will discuss the progress of our collaborations and ensure we are getting best value for our money which, in the current climate of shrinking school budgets, is a topic that weighs heavily on all our shoulders. Rest assured we will not compromise on the quality of education your child receives, no matter how tight the budgets become in future years.

Foundation Stage Subject Leader meeting - Last Wednesday saw all Subject Leaders visit Irby Primary to discuss resourcing, assessments and good practice in SEND and our Foundation Subjects (History, Geography, Computing, RE, PE, PSHE, Music, Art/DT). Again, this was an excellent session and all six schools agree that we are all learning a lot from each other. Our thanks go to Mrs Palmer, the Head Teacher at Irby Primary for organising such a worthwhile session.

Google Expeditions - Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February is our first day back after the half term holiday and we are excited to welcome Google Expeditions into school as part of a joint project with Barnston Primary. Exciting details to follow, watch this space...

### **Annual Parent Questionnaire:**

Your child will be coming home tonight with log on details for our annual questionnaire for parents. Please log on and answer a few questions about us if you have the time as we really do appreciate any feedback about your view of the school. This is the sixth year we have done an on-line questionnaire and last year saw us receive a whopping 71 responses - our biggest uptake yet! This type of feedback is invaluable to us and really helps us with our commitment to whole school improvement. As one parent commented last year

“This is such a valuable tool in helping me to feedback what I think about Thingwall. The fact I can log on from my mobile in my lunch hour makes it really easy to get my voice heard - thank you for doing a great job for all our children!”

Please take a few minutes and tell us what you think. The survey will remain open for four weeks and will close on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

### **School Dinners:**

You will notice an additional question on our on-line survey this year and one which we would really value a response for. It is puzzling us why we are not getting as many children to stay for a school dinner as in previous years. We would really like to know what factors may change your child's mind and tempt them to take up the offer, if only for one or two days per week. Many thanks in advance for your help in this matter.

### **CAPE Parking Issue:**

CAPE have asked us to politely remind you that their car park is to only be used for parents who are using the before/after school club facility. It is becoming rather congested and Emma feels that parents may be using their car park when collecting from our school at either end of the school day. Apparently the problem is getting so serious that occasionally CAPE staff have been unable to gain access to the car park and park their cars which has made them late for work. Many thanks for your co-operation in this matter.

## **Celebration Corner**

This section is for any out of school achievements your child may want to celebrate...

**Year Three** - Well done Year Three for an amazing class assembly - what a professional production.

**Evie (Year Three)** - Congratulations to Evie who took part in a horse riding dressage competition over the weekend in Greasby. She received two trophies and two rosettes for gaining the most points in her group. Congratulations Evie, what lovely news!

With Best Wishes and we hope to receive the feedback from your questionnaires very soon.

Miss D L Cronin