



Principal Informer

Issue 2 : Thursday, 25 September 2014

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Dear Parents/Carers

It is heartening for us to see how well the children are now settled in their new classes, and the positive comments that I am hearing from you on the playground.

Tuesday was the first AIB meeting (Academy Improvement Board) of the year. The board is attended by myself, members of EMLC Academy Trust, a challenge advisor, Mark Elms, and two parent representatives, Mrs Zaffar and Mrs Carter. Prior to the meeting Mark Elms and the Trust had a tour of the school. They were impressed with how well behaved our children were in lessons, how smart and polite they were and how purposeful the school was looking. They also commented favourably on how much consistency is emerging with marking and feedback across the school and with the curriculum. At the meeting academic targets and the school improvement plan were discussed. It was recognised that we have a great deal of hard work in front of us, but that the start of term has been very successful. When the school improvement plan has been agreed, I will inform you of the priorities that we are developing in school.

One of our early pushes has been on handwriting and presentation. We are teaching a cursive handwriting style across the school. Two weeks ago children were printing across the school. Now, having had the cursive style modelled and taught, the number of children effectively joining their letters and developing their own style is increasing daily. I am sure that you will be able to see the difference when you see your children's work. When we have our new website up and running, we will be able to demonstrate the cursive style to parents so that you can support and model it at home.

Tomorrow, 26 September we are closed to children. This is the third of our five scheduled training days and we will be developing the way that we teach reading in the school. This will have a huge impact especially with children in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. We are adopting a nationally recognised strategy, 'Read, Write, Inc.' This strategy will support the rigorous teaching of phonics, and will effectively teach the mechanical process of decoding our complex language for children to make them effective readers. There is also a catch up programme for children who have not 'cracked the code' and have difficulty decoding further up the school. No child will be allowed to leave our school who are not confident readers and who do not reach at least national expectations by the end of Year 6. The school is again closed on 10 November 2014 for the same purpose. Following this we will do a curriculum evening for parents to inform you of the new approach being taken. Miss Lewis (Assistant Principal) is leading this initiative.

Leave during term time – IMPORTANT

Parents/Carers are politely advised that leave of absence requests during term time will not be authorised. Unauthorised attendance may result in a penalty notice of £60 per child, per parent if a child has unauthorised leave. Children must be in school at all times if they are to reach their potential. Last year overall attendance at our school was 92%, compared to 96% nationally. We must improve on this. It is also not expected that a child will be taken out of school for routine medical, dental appointments etc. This too will be classed as unauthorised leave.

Attendance

School attendance target for 2014/15:

96%

School attendance to date:

95.3%

Number of days lost to unauthorised leave to date:

118.5

Healthy snacks and water bottles

We have a duty to promote healthy lifestyles to children. From Monday children will only be allowed to have pieces of fruit or healthy fruit bars for their break time snack. **Crisps and chocolate bars will not be permitted.** Please remind your child to keep their snack in their drawer so that they do not have to rummage in their lunchboxes at break time. Children in Nursery, Reception and Key Stage 1 already receive free fruit. We consider this to be an adequate snack for their playtime and that no supplementary snack from home is necessary.

Also, we want to keep your child hydrated throughout the day. This is essential for your child to be ready to learn. To do this efficiently please would you send your child to school with a secure, labelled water bottle. We will encourage the children to take them home each day, but would ask that parents remind them too when collecting at the end of the day. Children in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 will be given cups to drink from during the day.

Year 5&6 Learning Logs

Thank you to all parents who attended the Learning Log meeting last week. There is a great deal of enthusiasm about them and we cannot wait to get started. Unfortunately, due to a problem with the supplier, the books for the learning logs have not yet been delivered to school despite being ordered in good time. We are expecting them soon and we will make a start then. We apologise for the inconvenience.



Harvest Festival

The children will be celebrating harvest festival in school on Friday, 3 October. Each year group will present either a song or a poem to each other. They will reflect on where the food that they enjoy each day comes from. They will also reflect on those less fortunate. We would like the children to bring into school some dried food or food in a tin no sooner than Friday, 3 October. This year the food will be donated to the Northampton Food Bank.

New School Website (UNDER DEVELOPMENT)

We have removed the school website from the internet and we are in the process of developing a new website. The new website will be the first port of call for parents. It will have key dates and school information as well as celebrating what we do brilliantly and how you can support at home. Principal Informer, school letters, Helping Hands correspondence will be able to be viewed online. There will also be help for parents with how to support the learning process at home.

Please refrain from parking on the double yellow lines and zig zag lines outside school. This causes danger to children and parents crossing the road. The children's safety should be our priority.



Helping Hands Annual General Meeting

Helping Hands is certainly a positive and determined group of people seeking the best for our school. They have got a programme containing lots of exciting events in school over the course of the academic year. Please join them for their Annual General Meeting on 1 October at 2 pm in the school hall for coffee and cakes. They are a very friendly and inclusive organisation and it is key that we work together to ensure the best for our children. Hope to see you there!

Medicines in school

Please be advised that the school cannot administer non prescribed medicines. For children who have occasional medicines prescribed by their GP, we would request that, as far as possible medicines are administered before and after school. When this is not possible and you wish school staff to administer medicine, please ensure that you complete a permission slip via the school office. No prescribed or non prescribed medicines should be left with children during the school day. Thank you.

Children who go home for lunch

Please would parents be aware that if you choose to take your child home for lunch, then you must collect them promptly from the school office and they must be signed back in by the parent when returning to school. Please note that Reception/KS1 lunches start at 11.45 and end at 12.45. Key Stage 2 children have their lunch between 12.15 and end at 13.15. If taking your child home for lunch, they must return no sooner than 5 minutes before the end of the relevant lunch time.