

# Whartons Primary School

# Fortnightly Newsletter

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2015

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back and Happy New Year to you all. The new year has begun with gusto, not least the weather which has displayed elements of all seasons over the past couple of weeks; it is always positive to think that the days are now getting longer again.

We have welcomed new additions to the Whartons community this term including children and staff, they have already settled well and in true Whartons style everyone has made them feel at home and helped them to find their way around. It is always lovely to see just how all our children rally around new friends.

## Assembly Themes/Learning To Learn Skills

We will be focusing this term on *Going for Goals* in our whole school assemblies and PSHCE lessons in class. Through this theme we will be introducing 5 key learning skills: Reflection, Resilience, Relationships, Resourcefulness and Risk Taking. These learning skills will form the basis of a new whole school approach to talking about learning which will encourage children to improve their own Learning to Learn skills. Each week over this half term we will introduce the children to one of the skills and explore how using these skills can improve outcomes for children and help them to learn more effectively. Once all five themes have been introduced and the children have developed an understanding of what each skills means to them i.e. resilience for an EYFS child may be rebuilding a tower when it collapses and resourcefulness for a Y6 children may mean using research engines and asking probing questions of their peers in order to find the answer to a tricky problem, we will introduce learning journals or learning skills reflection time. Children and staff already approach learning using many of these learning skills but by bringing the skills together; assigning them a symbol and talking about them regularly across school, we aim to develop the children's understanding of how developing learning skills is key to progress and the ability to lead their own learning in the future.

Well done to the following children who have made a great start to the Spring term and have already displayed positive learning behaviours:

Rec - Seb & Miles

Year 1 - Martha & Michael

Year 2 - Lea & Keiran

Year 3 - Caleb & Jake

Year 4 - Leah & Sam

Year 5 - Aimee & Ben

Year 6 - Rebekah & Oliver

## Mad Science

The children thoroughly enjoyed the assembly on Monday which was led by the Mad Science organisation. The visiting scientist chatted to the children enthusiastically about the wonderful world of science and showed them some amazing investigations; including sending Miss Donnelly flying round the hall on a hover board, the children were beside themselves. The Mad Science organisation run after school clubs for children who love to investigate and their assemblies always whet the children's appetites. If your child is interested please fill in a form and return to reception.



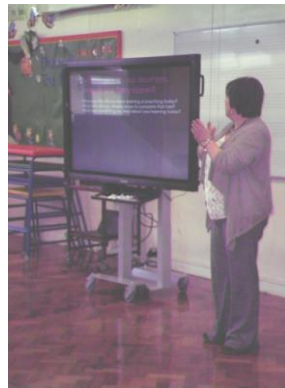
## New House System

Last term, through conversations with our school council and questionnaires completed within our classes, it became apparent that our current House system needed a bit of a shake up! Lots of children felt that much more could be done within school as part of our house teams and it was felt by many that more regular events were needed. Children also stated that they felt house points needed to be used (and celebrated) more within school and that, after earning so many points, it should go towards them earning a house award. So, with this in mind, January has seen the beginning of 'The Big House Relaunch 2015!' Over the past week, children from Reception to Y6 have been busy coming up with some exciting new names for our houses. These are currently waiting to be judged by our school council before we take the final choices to classes for a vote on our favourite. We will of course keep you updated with the final choice and subsequently which houses your children will be in. Keep checking the school news for further information!



## Interactive Board

It was very exciting to lead the very first whole school assembly of 2015 using our brand new all singing, all dancing interactive board. Through your fundraising and the generosity of the Parents Association we have been able to purchase the portable 65' inch board with inbuilt sound system and touch technology. The new board will enhance not only my assemblies! But also can be moved around school to areas where there are no interactive whiteboards and enable presentations and workshops to be run anywhere. The board is also capable of 'talking to' our iPads so that children can take pictures or video clips and these can be shared with the rest of the class via the board. This will be especially beneficial to support children's ability to reflect on their learning, for example in PE, and consider how they could improve. We will have to purchase certain software and be trained on these features, but watch this space.



## Morquio Society Assembly

As many of you may be aware Sam Brown from Year 2 has Morquio Syndrome which can affect him in a range of ways. However, Sam has been part of a drugs trial for the past few years which has had great impact on holding back the progress of the disease and its symptoms. As the trial comes to an end there is a question mark over future funding of the drug and Sam's family with the support of Greg Mulholland will be taking their concerns down to London. I feel as a school we need to show our support for Sam and it would be helpful if children understood a little more about Sam's condition so that we can lend our voice to the campaign. The Morquio Society will be visiting school to take an assembly on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January to talk to the children about Morquio Syndrome, this will not be at all graphic or upsetting for the children just a very basic explanation of some aspects, age appropriate to the whole school. The children will then work in their classes to write letters (KS2) or make posters for Sam and his family to take with them to the Prime Minister with the message, keep Sam happy and well so he can continue to learn with us at the Whartons. If anyone would like to discuss this in more detail please contact the office.

## Dates For Your Diary

w/c 18<sup>th</sup> January - Behaviour Week

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January - School Disco (further details to follow)

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February - Heather Sharpe Storyteller in school

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February - Break-Up for Half Term

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February - School Re-opens

All have a very enjoyable weekend and remember to put the school disco in your diaries. Also be sure to look at the website under the new calendar tab where you will find a monthly overview of upcoming events, in addition we have added a few policies to the website including the draft homework policy.

Regards

Julia Dickson (Head Teacher)