

*Together we care, inspire and achieve excellence*



## **NEWSLETTER 5**

### **January 2018**

February 7th Parents Evening 3.30 - 6.00

February 8th Parents Evening 4.00 - 7.00

February 12th—16th Half term

February 28th KS1 Gymnastics competition –selected children

March 7th KS2 Gymnastics competition –selected children

March 8th Mountains workshop -Chopin and Gershwin classes

March 12th Visit to West Stow - Ys1,2,3

March 12th Visit to Wimpole Farm - Reception children

March 13th Visit to Mariners Centre -Chopin and Gershwin classes

March 22nd Vivaldi class Sharing Assembly 9am

March 28th Church Service 11am ALL WELCOME

I can hardly believe that half term is here already—although I must admit Christmas seems an age ago and we are all in need of a break!

You may remember the School Council organising a collection of shoeboxes for Link to Hope before Christmas. I have received a heart-warming thank you letter from the charity. This year the boxes were taken to Central Romania.



If you would like to know more about where the boxes went and who they were given to the Shoebox Delivery Diary 2017 is on the charities website - <https://linktohope.co.uk/shoebox-appeal-2018/shoebox-delivery-diary-2017>

#### Attendance Matters

As you know the absence figure which will classify a child as a persistent absentee is set by the government at 10%. Any days missed from school, both authorised or unauthorised count towards overall attendance figures. But what does this actually mean in terms of days off school?

In the first half of the Autumn term if a child misses more than 5 days of school their attendance will be below the 90% threshold. This means that a single bout of an illness such as chickenpox which has resulted in 6 days off school will put the child into the persistent absence category. By the end of the whole autumn term the number of days absence allowed before hitting the threshold is 11. So the child who missed just 6 days will no longer be in the persistent absence category. However if they also had a cold and then a few days holiday they would still be in the category.

The threshold rises each half term so that by the end of the year only a child who has missed 19 or more days of school will be in the persistent absentee category.

To put some extra context onto the figures - if a child achieves 80% attendance this means that they have missed approximately 40 days of education over the academic year, averaging 1 day per week.

### Snacks in School

The Government funded Schools Fruit and Vegetable scheme is entering its 16th year providing daily fruit for 2.3 million KS1 children, 190 days each school year. The scheme is a crucial tool in the Change4Life campaign which is currently encouraging children to have a maximum of 2 x 100 calorie snacks each day. The aim is to cut children's sugar intake.

A recent survey of children aged 3, 5, 7, 11 and 14 led to an article being published in December stating that:

1 in 5 young people are obese at the age of 14

A further 15% were overweight

Mounting public concern to these statistics is resulting in Government policies targeting lower consumptions by young people of sugar, soft drinks, salt and saturated fat.

Healthy eating is especially needed at this time of year to ward off irritating coughs, colds and sniffles. Obtaining extra vitamin C from eating more fruit and vegetables can only help to keep those nasty germs at bay.

According to the School Food Standard, school fruit at mid-morning break is an important part of a child's diet. For children in KS2 who are not covered by the national scheme, we encourage

### **VR Prime Review**

On Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2018 Gershwin and Chopin classes were given the opportunity to try out some VR [virtual reality] headsets.

When it was Chopin's turn to try out the VR we were so excited, we were jumping with joy! We were sat down in front of the VR headsets. First our visitor (who lent us the VR headsets) told us what was going to happen then he went through some safety rules.

After that we got started. The very first picture was of a section of a Mountain; it was dusty and really sunny. We could imagine how hot the climate must have been!

The next picture was of Mt Everest! There was snow everywhere, this one was quite uncomfortable to watch because there was a massive snow avalanche about to fall! VR can be really frightening because you are basically in a whole different universe.

The next place we went to was Everest Base Camp. This one was really quite incredible it gave you the feeling that you were a climber. There were even people in the picture.

The next one was of Mt Fuji. It looks like a volcano although it has a kind of peak. It looked fantastic because it was covered with extraordinarily white snow that glistened in the sun!

Then we got to choose our own Mountain related pictures in groups. Some of the most interesting pictures were of the Great Barrier Reef, a volcano erupting and The Great Wall Of China.



After that our slot was over, but it was an astounding experience and we all enjoyed it very much!

### School Readers

We put a high emphasis on reading at our school -from the early days teaching children to read right through to developing a life long love of reading. As you know the best results come when a child reads and shares books with an adult regularly and frequently. This is most often done by parents and I know that for many of you reading with your child is as much a part of family life as mealtimes are.

Schoolreaders is a charity which matches volunteers with schools. They currently help over 4,000 children every week by providing a volunteer who spends time in school listening to children read and discussing their reading with them.

We are extremely lucky at our school to have several volunteer readers who listen to children read every week. Mrs Fisher comes in to work with children in Mozart class, Mrs Gibson works with children in Holst class and Mrs Parry [Ellie] listens to children across the school. Two other volunteers are just waiting for checks to be completed before they too will start to work in school.

### Premises

The roofing work is progressing well with an anticipated finish date before the start of the summer term. Thank you for your continued patience particularly regarding scaffolding and fencing around the entrances into school.

If you have been into school recently you may have noticed some new seating in the library area. We have tried several solutions to try to make the most of the limited space we have for our library and its position within the building. I am really pleased that we now have a clearly designated area which is being used almost continually by groups of children or whole classes. We have also purchased new rugs for the classes and are in the process of replacing carpets and vinyl flooring areas. Mozart classroom was done over the Christmas break and Gershwin and Holst classrooms will have replacement flooring when we return from the half term holiday.

We hope to receive planning permission for the Early Years canopy and mud kitchen by the end of this week and assuming all goes well we will be able to get this project started soon. We are also intending to replace the main gates into school and the fencing and gates leading onto the field / playground. The existing wooden fencing has begun to rot and anyone who has tried to open the pedestrian gate near the bike shed will know how ill-fitting it is!

Wherever possible we schedule work to be done in holiday time but of course this is not always possible.

### School Uniform

A growing number of children are arriving at school without the full, correct uniform. Most often it is missing ties, incorrect footwear or over fussy hair accessories. Children often tell me that they have 'lost' their tie / shoes /hairband. Please could you help your child to find these lost items and to ensure they wear them to school.

Can I also remind you that all children need a school book bag to bring their reading books, library books and diaries into school. Other bags are not suitable. Extra sports kit for clubs can be brought in a separate ruck sack.

## Sports Report

This half term has been a busy one for sports events in school. My thanks to Mrs Hagger and Mrs Thompson who accompanied the children to the Sportshall Athletics, to Mrs Mitcham who has organised several netball matches and to all the parents who have helped with transport.



### Sportshall Athletics

On the 25 of January some of the year five and sixes went to Birchwood to compete in the Sportshall Athletics.

We arrived and went into the hall to get ready for the field events that included javelin, chest-push and long jump. After the field events Furneux Pelham were in second with Summercroft in first.

The first running race was the obstacle race (Charlie, Zac, Henry and Isaac) and with one runner to go we were in second but managed to claw it back with a sprint finish. The next race was the girls obstacle. Third with one runner left a quick speed bounce finished us in second.

With a good team lined up for the boys hurdles we were sure to get a good result. With a slip at the beginning we were third with one runner left but as usual we managed a good sprint to finish us in second. At this point the scores were still the same.

As our first runner finished we were in second and managed to keep that the same to the end. As we moved on to the next races the scores were still the same. We had a good girls race and also finished in second. We had a good line up for the 4 by 1 mixed relay (Alex, Ethan, Elicia and Georgie) and with a good start we finished second. With one race we were in joint second. With an average start we needed a good finish which Alex managed to pull off and won us second place.

The final score was Furneux Pelham in third, Windhill in second and Summercroft in first. We then celebrated with the Olympic Torch.

Report by Zac

### Hertfordshire Cross Country

On Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 5 people from Gershwin class were very lucky to be chosen for a cross country run at St Albans.

The fantastic runners, were Zac B, Kai S, Elicia M, Ella B and Georgie F. They were all very pleased with themselves and all tried their best. We all came in a brilliant place, Elicia M, who came 48<sup>th</sup> out of 100 people, was quoted as saying that she was really proud of herself. Ella B, who came 47<sup>th</sup> out of 99 people, was exhausted and pleased at the end of 2 miles. Georgie F, who came 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 99 people, was so proud because she is now going to the nationals in Yorkshire in March. Zac B, was tired at the end and so was Kai S.

Report by Georgie

Huge congratulations to Georgie who will be representing Hertfordshire in the National Championships.

## Netball matches

On Monday January 29th some of the netball club players left school early to go to a netball match against Windhill 21 school in Bishops Stortford. The match was 10 minutes each way and we kept changing round places so that everyone had an opportunity to play in each position. We all played really well and the final score was 10–1 to Furneux Pelham! This was our first match against another school and to begin with we were quite nervous but in the end we enjoyed it. The team was Georgia, Georgie, Ella, Zac, Isaac and Aimee.

By Ella

Yesterday, 5<sup>th</sup> February, after months of training all the hard that work paid off. Six members of the netball team travelled to St Joseph's, Bishop's Stortford as part of our netball league. The players managed to win sixteen-four, which is a fantastic score! They arrived shortly before the match so they could fit in some extra practise. Although the opponent players were about double the size of Georgie, we still did our very best. The umpire & coach [Mrs. Mitcham] had the game running smoothly. She has done a brilliant job of coaching our team.

Amelie, Georgia, Isaac, Georgie, Zachary and Annie may have had a few butterflies but those soon disappeared as the scores rose. We are proud of our players, and we would be, even if they hadn't won. After shaking hands the weary sportsmen went home for a well-deserved rest.

By Annie & Lydia

We have some home matches planned for after half term so I hope to get some action shots of the netball team in action!