

On Thursday 21st March 2019 we held a parental forum meeting. I think, the small number of parents who attended found it useful and informative. The following was discussed:

School Aim and Vision:

Mrs Moore presented the work done with School Council and the staff. We have produced a new whole school vision statement updating one which has been in place for a number of years. The new vision statement sets out what we aim to offer the children in our care:

“At Holystone Primary School we provide a welcoming, positive and safe environment in which children can develop a love of learning and an everlasting thirst for knowledge. Working together as a whole school community, it is our vision that children become self-motivated, confident individuals who strive to achieve their hopes and dreams. We want our pupils to thrive, learn how to make wise and informed decisions and communicate effectively. Children have curious minds, which we will guide to help them become resilient and independent learners equipped for an ever changing world. Our school is a caring, supportive place where children and adults enjoy learning, respect each other and are inspired to be creative, think for themselves and embrace new challenges.”

We will aim to ensure that this statement will underpin what we do over the next few years. It is not something that we expect needs to be remembered verbatim however, to assist us in embedding the vision in a way that we feel is both memorable and fun, the school council have created four colourful characters to encapsulated the four core values that we feel are the driving factors in the vision statement. These core values are things that we feel will become the way we talk about our vision on a daily basis. The four core values are: Respect, Resilience, Community Spirit and Independence. Each of these values has its own mascot and they incorporate the aspects of these Value that the children considered to be important:



Buzz-bee is our mascot for **Respect**. He carries a flag declaring - ‘Bee Kind, Bee Considerate, Bee Patient’, he carries a jar of manners, he has a heart, he has good listening antenna and it reminds the children that it stings if we are unkind.

Indianta is the character that the children came up with to represent **Independence**. He stands on his own two feet and is responsible for his own actions. He is an explorer who is setting off on life’s adventure. He carries a bag and a watch so he can be organised and prepared for anything.



Our character representing **Community** has been christened **Clarence**. He’s our community spider showing you are never too small to make a difference. His web links the whole world together, both small communities and big

communities. He has big eyes to ensure he can see what is going on and he has eight-legs to allow him to stand up for what he thinks is right.

Lucky is our mascot for the value **Resilience**. She has managed to climb up our resilience rainbow using some of our resilience statements to help – I can't do it....yet; learn from your mistakes; believe in yourself; keep on trying; listen to others; self-esteem; ask questions; smile. She knows it is ok if it feels like you are climbing a mountain, her different coloured boots represent the different steps we take and she keeps on smiling even if the journey is difficult.



These characters will be appearing in and around school in the coming months and we hope they do become a lasting symbol of our core values.

Easter Eggs – Decorated Eggs

To celebrate their launch, this year our Decorated Easter Egg Display, to be held on Thursday 4th April in the large hall, will be themed around the four characters and we are looking forward to filling the hall egg based depictions of Lucky, Clarence, Indiana and Buzz-bee.

Catchment Review

Following several questions from concerned parents, I outlined the latest position from the Local Authority on possible changes to the school catchment. There appears to be no likelihood of any changes for pupils entering Reception in September 2020. However, it is probable that a consultation will begin in October/November of 2019 to consider possible changes for Reception entry in 2021. As yet, there is no clear indication as to what these changes would potentially involve. The school governors have been pushing for some time to have more information around this as any change to catchment is not only emotive and stressful for residents in the area who are hoping to send their children to our school, it also has a long-term practical impact on potential school numbers and funding. We will be awaiting further developments and obviously should a consultation period open, we will ensure parents can have their say.

Whilst 2021 does look the most likely time for any changes to be implemented, the longer term plans for further development behind the school and over the metro line as laid out in the council's long term plans could also have an impact, possibly delaying this further.

E:safety

Internet safety is something that is regularly in the media. There are many things parents can and should be doing to ensure that children avoid difficulties whilst working on-line outside of school but it is often difficult to keep track of the Apps or games our children are

using. At the forum meeting, I highlighted a fantastic website which has a wealth of ideas and suggestions for parents and I strongly advise that you take a look at the guidance and resources it offers. The website link is:

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers/resources-parents-and-carers>

They also suggest some steps you could take to support your child:

What can I do right now?

- Maintain an open dialogue with your child and encourage them to talk to you about their internet use: for example who they're talking to, services they're using, and any issues they may be experiencing.
- Create a family agreement to establish your children's boundaries, and your expectations, when on the internet. A template agreement can be found at www.childnet.com/have-a-conversation
- Give your child strategies to deal with any online content that they are not comfortable with – such as turning off the screen, telling an adult they trust and using online reporting facilities.
- Consider using filtering software to block unwanted content. In addition to filtering, remember that discussion with your child, and involvement in their internet use, are both effective ways to educate them about the internet.
- Encourage your child to 'think before you post.' Online actions can impact not only yourself but the lives of others. Content posted privately online can be publicly shared by others, and may remain online forever.
- Understand the law. Some online behaviour may break the law, for example when downloading or sharing content with others. Be able to recommend legal services.
- Familiarise yourself with the privacy settings and reporting features available on popular sites, services and apps.
- If your child is being bullied online, save all available evidence and know where to report the incident, for example to the school, service provider, or the police if the law has been broken.
- Familiarise yourself with the age ratings for games and apps which can help to indicate the level and suitability of the content. Also see if online reviews are available from other parents as these may be helpful.
- Set up a family email address that your children can use when signing up to new games and websites online.
- Encourage your child to use nicknames (where possible) instead of their full name online, to protect their personal information, and create strong passwords for every account.

Sign up to our Childnet newsletter at www.childnet.com.

School Library

With the support of the PTA, we are currently converting the old classroom off the link corridor into an IT and library learning space. Due to severe budget constraints, we are doing this on very limited finances. The IT area will be completed first, then we will start to develop a school library area. We will be appealing for donations of books in the coming months so if you have any good quality books that you no longer require then could you please put them to one side in readiness for our appeal. Thank you.

Questions:

A query was raised by a parent around Y7 admissions, this is following some issues experienced by parents of Y6 pupils around Y7 admissions for September 2019. My answer

to that question was based around the fact that we are a George Stephenson catchment school. Anyone who lives in Holystone's catchment is automatically in George Stephenson's catchment. Parents are entitled to view and apply for any school they wish, even beyond North Tyneside's boundaries however, if the school you apply for is over-subscribed, there is a risk that a place may not be offered, especially if you live outside of its catchment area. You can highlight three preferences on an application form for Y7, however, if this does not include your catchment school and all of the preferences you apply for are oversubscribed, you will not automatically be offered a place at George Stephenson. Should this happen, then a place at the nearest school with places in North Tyneside may be offered.

We will hold a parental meeting in September for our current Y5 pupils to give further advice around the process.

We hope to run another forum in the not too distant future and we hope that they become a valuable tool for communication moving forward. Please feel free to submit any questions or you may have to the enquiries@hsps.org.uk email address.