



Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door...

Edgar Allen Poe



I thought of those lines as I drove out of Coton on All Hallow's Eve just as darkness was beginning to fall. Lighted Jack-o- Lanterns had been placed outside many houses inviting the children of the village to "trick or treat". I remember my own "guising" days in Scotland, nearly half a century ago now: no Amazon Prime to deliver costumes, no face painting for added ghoulishness and my lantern was carved out of a turnip! There is a lot of talk these days about how the old days were better. Don't believe a word of it! I am proud to be the headteacher of a forward looking school which is at the heart of a multi-national, multi- ethnic, multi- racial, multi-faith community and is within walking distance of one of the most innovative and vibrant cities in the world.

Where does the time go? We have had Halloween, are just about to enjoy Bonfire Night and, before we know it, we shall be stocking up on mince pies and carrots to leave out for Rudolf! I hope you had the time to indulge in some rest, relaxation (and maybe even a smattering of the "three Rs") with your children at home, or away, over the half term holiday. The first half of term was, as always, very busy with children getting to know their new teachers, settling into class routines and taking part with enthusiasm in activities in and out of class. I had the joy of seeing that enthusiasm first hand when I joined Emerald Class on their trip to West Stow, about which more later.

Harvest Festival:

On the last Day of the half term the whole school walked to the lovely St Peter's Church where the children deposited dried and tinned foodstuffs and personal hygiene items for collection by Jimmy's Night Shelter in Cambridge.

Each class sang a song, performed a play or read a poem or prayer they had written thanking God for the Harvest. Together the children of the school raised the roof as they sang with their usual gusto of Autumn Days and jet planes waiting to be refuelled. (Thank you to the adults in the congregation who joined in too!) Our thanks go to the Reverend Rebecca Gilbert, and church warden Julia Hill, for enabling us to hold our harvest festival in the church.



Football

The sporting calendar got underway in mid-October when children in years 5 and 6 took part in the small schools' football competition. A number of the players had never represented the school before in the competitive arena and they were understandably nervous. The team played six games in total, winning two, drawing two and losing two. A valiant effort on the part of a young and inexperienced team: well done all of you!



Parking/Drop Off

Can I please remind parents to keep the safety of our children and parents in mind at all times when dropping off/collecting your children. Please ensure you do not park on the double yellow lines or park over driveways and do be mindful of those you share the road with, particularly pedestrians and cyclists.

Blue Badge Holders:

A Blue Badge helps those with physical disabilities to be able to park closer to their destination. I would like to make all parents aware that we have parents and carers who are Blue Badge Holders. As Blue Badge Holders they are legally allowed to park on the double yellow lines when they drop their children off in the morning or pick them up in the afternoon.

West Stow

Emerald Class spent a fantastic day out at West Stow, home to one of England's great archaeological sites. It is the site of an early Anglo-Saxon village, occupied from AD 420-650- over 400 years before the Norman Conquest. The site, surrounded by 125 acres of unspoilt countryside, has a hands-on museum and a marvellous re-creation of an Anglo-Saxon village. The children were able to explore the re-created village, examine artefacts and even dress up as Anglo-Saxons.



Nut allergy Reminder

Please ensure that no products containing nuts are brought into school in snacks or in lunchboxes.

Something that doesn't get said often enough...

I was telling the children at assembly this week that whilst in a restaurant in Lisbon at half term, what I thought was the Adele song *To make you feel my love*, was playing. I love the song and thought it just a schmaltzy song about being in love. It had been a hard week for us all in school just before half term and as I listened to the words a little more closely:

When the rain is blowing in your face And the whole world is on your case, There's nothing that I would not do, Go to the ends of the earth for you,

it dawned on me that they could have been written about, and for, our school community. The song was actually written by the Nobel Laureate for Literature, 2016, one Bob Dylan. So a huge thank you to all our staff at Coton for your hard work and commitment to our children. Thank you, children, for being kind, thoughtful and enthusiastic about all aspects of school life and thank you parents and carers for your continued and sincere support to our school and children.

Agora

A big thank you to all our parents who have been extremely patient and understanding with us since the beginning of term when the scale of the problem with the Agora on-line payment system became apparent. We have been working hard on your behalf with the software company to try to solve the issues but if you are still having problems please email the school (office@coton.cambs.sch.uk) and we will endeavour to resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

Some sad news:

Anne Cass, who has been staffing the office on Wednesday to Friday since February, is leaving on 8th November. We shall be very sorry to see Anne move on but completely understand her desire to work closer to home and her own children's school.

And finally...

If you are off to a firework event in the next few days, please enjoy yourselves, safely. Below is a link to advice from ROSPA on how to keep safe around fireworks and bonfires:

<https://www.rospa.com/home-safety/advice/fireworks-safety/>



Some reminders:

- 5th November: Bonfire Night lunch in school
- 8th November: 11th October, 9.30am: Open morning for new parents and carers at 9.30am
- Tuesday 13th - Friday 16th November: Year 6 trip to Hilltop
- 20th November: weight & height screening
- 6th December: NHS eyesight screening

Ishbel Coleman

Headteacher.