

COTON C of E (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL
Ishbel Coleman
Headteacher



Unlocking a Brighter Future

Dear Parents and Carers,

The half term has come and gone and we are looking forward to Easter. As I write, we are awaiting the arrival of “the beast from from the east” The flurries of snow we have had over the past couple of days have now given way to an almost cloudless blue sky. Let’s hope by the time you are reading this we are not in the midst of “snowmageddon” and instead scoffing at the “hysteria from Siberia” as one twitter wag described it.

If the snow does come our way, we will do all we can to keep the school open. Most of the children do live within walking distance of the school, but we must ensure that sufficient numbers of staff can get to school, safely, so that we can keep your children safe whilst they are in school. In the meantime, let’s just enjoy the early signs of spring that we see popping up all around us.



I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted And justice for the poor.

Psalm 140:12

Just before the half term, I spent quite a bit of time in Sapphire Class as they re-enacted the Rivonia Trial which saw Nelson Mandela and his co-accused convicted of sabotage and sentenced to life imprisonment. When giving evidence Mandela said:

During my lifetime I have dedicated my life to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons will live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal for which I hope to live for and to see realised. But, my Lord, if it needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.

The children undertook this challenging piece of work with great commitment. As lawyers they were sharp and incisive. As witnesses they were passionate and compelling and I have to admit that at times reality really was suspended and I found myself wondering if Rosa Parks and Emmeline Pankhurst really had been witnesses at Mandela’s trial. The result of the work for the children of Sapphire Class was that they truly were able to understand what Emmeline Pankhurst meant when she said that “justice and judgment lie often a world apart.”

In this period of Lent, let us remember those who are not as fortunate as ourselves to live in a country underpinned by democracy; the rule of law; individual liberty and mutual respect for, and tolerance of, those with different faiths or none. These are the values that we seek to impart to our children.

Tales from the Chalkface

Quicksticks Tournament

Coton Battles on in Freezing Conditions.

Coton C of E Primary School entered a South Cambs quicksticks hockey tournament for Years 5 and 6 at Comberton Village College. We fielded two teams; the A team and the B team - most of the Coton B team were Year 4, so we were definitely at a disadvantage!

As we fought through the bitter cold, Coton A team won 4 out of 5 games, with the B team winning 1 game out of 5. Despite this, the B team carried on and never gave up and we all defended exceptionally well. The A team's only loss was very close, with Harston and Newton winning 3 goals to 2. Both Coton teams won the "Spirit of the Games" award for their determination and teamwork. Two of the A team's players won the shooting competition, coming joint first.

For some of us, it was our first time representing Coton School: we returned to school feeling very proud, and our teacher and classmates were very impressed indeed with our efforts!

Joel and Hale

Sport Leaders.

Amethyst Class

Amethyst Class' recent topic was all about space. This was an exciting topic. The children created, and played in, their very own 'space station' and enjoyed counting down from 20 to slide down the space chute on the slide outside. They have been finding out about the solar system and the names of different planets. They benefitted from a visit by a parent who kindly shared their knowledge and enthusiasm about astronomy. The children thoroughly enjoyed an 'outer space' drama workshop. The topic finished with a science morning about the properties of different materials. The children made zip wires, explored magnets and electric circuits, mixed different materials with water and built a shelter roof out of different materials.

Space Station Amethyst



Topaz Class



Topaz class have been busy working on their topic of Spain, exploring Spanish artists and different regions of Spain. They have also been preparing for the Dance Share at Comberton Village College where they will perform and watch other children from the cluster primary schools and students from Comberton Village College (it is always good to see the ex Coton students at Comberton). They had a successful visit to the 'Turn around and see' exhibition based on stories connected with Lent.

Emerald Class



It has been a busy few weeks in Emerald Class! Children have been reading and writing traditional tales from different cultures, particularly linked with India as part of our 'Indus Valley' themes. In maths we have done lots of work on multiplication and division, and are now moving on to fractions. Children have been involved in lots of hands on investigating as part of our maths lessons. We really enjoyed having Miss Jones and Miss Wells with us before half term. They did a great science project about sound with the children, and also an interesting RE unit about Islam.

Here is what some the children in Emerald Class have to say about their school day:

- *We have been doing something really TOP SECRET. If you come to the science festival on 12th March you will find out what it is!*
- *Choir is a place that you learn to sing. Everytime choir is on (Thursday after school) you learn new songs.*
- *We need to get more adults to volunteer to work at Home Club or your kids can't go to Home Club!*
- *Fencing is a great activity after school. It's lots of fun and we play lots of games as well as fencing.*

BikeAbility

Year six recently completed a "bike ability" course. Before even getting on our bikes we had to ensure we were kitted out correctly: helmets, no baggy trousers and appropriate footwear. Then we had to perform the "ABC check" - Air, Brakes and Chain.

In two separate groups, we did many different tours around Coton. On the first lesson, we went outside on our playground and practised seeing when was the right time to go and stop and let others in front of you. At the end of the lesson, we were all given booklets that helped us prepare for a final quiz on Thursday- a sort of Highway Code for cyclists. We had to learn the meaning of signs and how to stay safe on the road.

The next lesson we went on the road, but in Coton, and we learnt the snake! The snake involved going in pairs and when the leader said something we all had to shout what they said if we heard it. We also had to obey the commands. So, if they said "stop!" we all had to... you guessed it- STOP! If the instruction was "rolling" we all needed to start pedalling and if they said "double up" then we needed to go in to doubles. That meant we had to go in our pairs and pedal next to them. When they said "single up" we had to pedal back into a single line.

On one of the lessons we had to practise using junctions. We practised signalling and when cars went by, we had to make the right decision whether to go or to stop and let the car go by.

We all had a great time! The year sixes in Sapphire class all highly recommend **BikeAbility**. And we all passed with flying colours!

Q.Q.

Sapphire class

Ruby Class

This term we have started our topic on the Great Fire of London, with our roleplay area taking the form of a large Tudor house. The children have written some lovely acrostic poems inspired by fire in English. We have also started learning about Samuel Pepys in preparation for writing a diary entry. We have looked at Tudor houses to make our own in art. We are making a Great Fire of London dance, thinking about how we can use our bodies or strips of paper to portray the start, progression and ending of the fire. In maths we have started a unit on shape, learning about 2D and 3D shapes and their properties.



Notices and Information

Parent Governor

I am delighted to inform you that Mrs Jane Hope was elected unopposed as a parent governor.

World Book Day

This year the school will be celebrating World Book Day on **Friday 2nd March**. Your child should come to school dressed as their favourite book character; please bring the book to read in class! When travelling in the Rockies in Montana a few years ago, I was alarmed to read a sign in a store window which read: ***Please leave all weapons in your vehicle*** alongside some equally alarming images of guns and hunting knives. I implore you to ensure all your budding young James Bonds, Percy Jacksons and Alex Riders also leave their weapons behind.

Head-lice

Head-lice are an ongoing problem in schools. The best advice is to check your child's hair regularly and, if you find evidence of the pesky blighters, treat the hair with a proprietary brand and then continue to comb through the hair with a nit comb- section, by section **for at least 10 days**. Government advice can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/head-lice-pediculosis> Alternatively, there are some very compelling videos on YouTube for the more entomologically minded of you.

Emergency contacts

If you change your phone number, please let us know as we have had instances where children have been ill and we have been unable to contact parents/carers. This has been distressing for the child. If you have listed other people for us to contact, please ensure their details are up-to-date. We appreciate your cooperation with this.

Magical Maths

Magical maths run a lunchtime club in school on Mondays. Spaces are still available. Visit their website at <https://magicalmathsclub.com> to sign up.

Easter Drama Workshop

See this week's parent mail for more information about Divergent Drama which is running an Easter drama camp at Orwell Primary or visit the website at: <http://divergentdrama.co.uk/>

Parent workshop

We are very lucky to have the services of Claire and Sam, Early Intervention Family Workers, here at Coton. Sam and Claire regularly hold parent workshops on topics such as sibling rivalry, understanding challenging behaviour, effective discipline and parenting styles. Sadly, this service is underutilized and I fear we shall lose it if more people don't attend. The next session is on **13th March between 2.00pm and 3.00pm**. Please do come, meet Sam and Claire and take the opportunity to get some free, practical advice on raising happy children.

And finally...

Rosa Parks said

"I have learned over the years that when one's mind is made up, this diminishes fear; knowing what must be done does away with fear."

Oh how I wish that were true! I am delighted and very proud to have been appointed as the permanent head teacher here at Coton and look forward to working with you, your children, the wider community and, of course, the wonderful staff I have inherited, for many years to come. But it is all still just a little bit scary!

Ishbel Coleman

Headteacher.