



Stephenson Way Academy and Nursery School

Autumn Term 2016 Newsletter

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Dear parent,

It's been a successful term in school. Children have continued to make good progress in all academic subjects and have clearly enjoyed their studies. Teaching and learning is well matched to needs and this means children are receiving the support that will help them to be successful in the long term. Throughout this term, children have had many opportunities to learn a wide range of skills and we have further refined our assessment systems in order to help us pinpoint exactly what pupils need to learn. Children have continued to do well with their writing and now have more opportunities to reason and apply skills in mathematics through the introduction of reasoning sessions in mathematics.

At the start of the year we introduced a number of new and exciting initiatives to enhance children's experiences at school and these have proved to be extremely successful. September heralded the official launch of our Alternative Curriculum Pathway. The purpose of this element of school is to give children wider experiences in sport, music, art, enquiry, the environment and media studies. A significant number of children have accessed this additional provision and have enjoyed the opportunities afforded to them.

Our newly formed choir and samba band have acquired new performance skills quickly and have flourished under Mr. Self's tuition and have enjoyed singing in harmony and drumming while marching.

Sports provision has been further developed with weekly training and practices taking place for our school teams and developing players. In addition to traditional British sports, we have added martial arts to

our curriculum and a number of children have enjoyed learning basic Taekwondo skills with Miss. Hatfield. For the second year running school has achieved the gold mark for sports, as recognition of the high quality curriculum and teaching in this aspect of school's work.

Our creative and performing arts curriculum continues to be a vital and enjoyable enhancement to school's curriculum. It's now in its third year and its popularity with pupils continues to grow. Many children have become confident performers and have a clear talent and potential. It is hoped that we will be awarded the Gold Arts Mark at the end of the year for our work in this aspect of school.

Our main curriculum is now very successful in developing children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There have been many great opportunities for children to learn in and outside of school both locally and further afield. There have been many visits and visitors this term and these have enhanced children's enjoyment of school. We've had things as diverse as hunting for a Gruffalo in Sedgefield to solving a Victorian crime at Beamish Museum. Another major development has been the introduction of the "mini police" group. Working in collaboration with Durham Constabulary we have been able to give the children a wide range of experiences and unique opportunities. We're looking forward to doing more work with the police in the new year.

On behalf of the school I would like to thank you for your continued support and I wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

T. Cassap

Friends of the School

A big thank you to the Friends of the School for their support with the Monsters' Ball this year. It was great success and the children enjoyed their day. The friends have been working tirelessly behind the scenes and have identified a number of events for the coming year, which we're very excited about. Watch this space for further information. If you would like to join the Friends of the School then contact Mrs. Robson for further details.

School reopens for the Spring term on Wednesday January 4th 2017 until then have a lovely break.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all the staff.

Nursery fun

Nursery children have had great fun this term. They have enjoyed the many opportunities that are planned each week. In particular, the children enjoyed Halloween and Christmas activities, enjoying learning alongside their parents. Santa even made an appearance!



Website

Please visit our school website because it has many new galleries which give an indication what children are learning in school. In addition, new information about the curriculum and learning will be added over the Christmas break. The site also contains important forms and letters and a list of useful websites to support learning. Our Twitter account will be reactivated from January so you will be able to keep up to date with what is happening in school on a daily basis. www.swans.education



Supporting Charities

Macmillan

School would like to give a big thank you to everyone who supported our Macmillan coffee morning in September. The Year 6 children, who organised the event, ensured that the morning ran smoothly and that everybody felt welcome and were able to enjoy a great social occasion with their family. The event raised a fantastic £848.70 for Macmillan Cancer Support.



Children in Need

In November, school participated in Children in Need. The children enjoyed a wide range of activities during the day with the highlight being a dance "spot-a-thon" led by Mrs Hume and Miss Whitfield. Across school, children dressed up in spots and made donations to Children in Need. The day was very well supported and over £235.24 was raised for the charity.



Christmas jumper day

For the second year running we took part in the National Christmas jumper day event. It was great to see so many different jumpers on show! This year the £361.19 donation will go to the Butterwick Hospice.

Breakfast, teatime and after school clubs

We're currently examining ways to improve our extended provision. We will be continuing to provide breakfast club in its current form but are looking at ways to enhance our clubs and after school care. More information will be provided in the new year. I assure all parents that our out of hours provision will continue but we're keen to enhance it so that children receive wonderful opportunities between 7:45 am and 5:15 pm

Improving Attendance and Lateness

School attendance has improved this term, and we would like to thank parents for making every effort to ensure their child attends school every day. Currently our attendance figures are meeting the government target of 95%. Persistent absence is also decreasing. We understand that some absence is unavoidable. If your child is going to be absent then can we remind you that it is essential to contact the school on the first morning of absence before 10am, to provide us with the reason why your child is not at school. This is so we can authorise absences on our system.

New Year 2 building



It's been a long wait, but I'm delighted to inform you that the new Y2 building will be ready for use in January. The building will be signed over to school on the 20th December and will be ready for use from the 9th January. We can't wait to be in! Many thanks for your patience while the building works have been taking place because I know they've affected your daily routines.

Eco Awards

School has received a number of accolades for its environmental studies provision in the last year. During the summer term we were awarded Level 5 by the Royal Horticultural society. This is the highest award a school can receive. Our latest award, is a prestigious Eco Award from Durham County Council, and it recognises school's invaluable work in promoting recycling and waste management.

Sporting Success

Our sports teams have competed well this term and we're very proud of their efforts. Their attitude, sporting behaviour and all round good conduct has been a credit to the school. Well done to our netball and football teams for some excellent performances this season.

Information from the office

Dinner money for the first week back will be £6.00, Otherwise, dinner money is £10.00. If you intend to change your child's lunch please give the office a week's notice. If you have changed your **contact details** please let the office know as soon as possible so that we're able to contact you in case of emergency.

This term's book fair raised a record £800 with £480 going to school to buy more prize books for your children.