



Stephenson Way Academy and Nursery School

July 2016 Newsletter

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Looking ahead

School staff have continued to work tirelessly this year to provide the children with many new opportunities and experiences. In terms of reading, writing and mathematics, children have continued to make good progress with their basic skills. Younger children have benefitted from our new approaches to teaching and learning in Early Years, with children having greater opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills, thus preparing them better for entering Y1. Pupils in Y1 and Y2 have undoubtedly benefitted from our new approach to teaching phonics and many more are now confident readers. Writing continues to be a strength of the school and children have had regular opportunities to write for different purposes across the curriculum.

In addition to academic subjects, children have had multiple opportunities to take part in enrichment activities. Visits, visitors and residential trips are now integral features of our curriculum and I know that the children have benefitted from the wide variety of experiences offered. Children who visited Dukeswood were excellent ambassadors for school and received many complements and accolades for their wonderful behaviour and attitude.

Also, during the spring term, school launched its Alternative Curriculum Pathway. This has been developed to provide children with a wider range of opportunities and experiences during the school day. Sports and environmental studies have been integral parts of the initial phase of the alternative curriculum pathway. In the new school year we're aiming to maintain these aspects but add further sports such as Taekwondo and further music opportunities with the introduction of a Samba Band and a school choir. As a result of these enhancements school's curriculum is continuing to be strengthened. This year children have greatly enjoyed studying the in-

teresting and engaging topics and themes introduced, producing some wonderful work both at school and at home.

As you'd expect, with the wide range of opportunities on offer at Stephenson Way, our popularity in the local area has continued to rise and there will be an increase in our pupil numbers in September. We feel that this is an endorsement of school's good work and also an indication that our children are extremely friendly and welcoming because every time a pupil joins us it takes them no time at all to make friends and feel at home. It's lovely that our children provide such a welcoming atmosphere. Well done to them.

As you'll undoubtedly be aware, Y2 and Y6 completed the new style SATs tests in May. The tests were much more challenging than any tests in the past. Our children applied themselves well and did all they could to reach the new, tougher national standard, gaining some pleasing results. For Y6, this was particularly hard because the new curriculum has only been in place for a couple of years. This meant that they'd only had 2 years to learn and prepare as compared to 4 years which would be the norm. Nevertheless, they did all they could to reach the standard.

As a school we look forward with great positivity to the challenges of the next school year and know that we can achieve even more for the children with the plans that we have to enhance academic, sporting, cultural, musical and arts opportunities. For now though, we can wish you all a happy summer holidays.

Mr Cassap

Return to School

School will re-open to children on **Tuesday the 6th** of September. Please note that the price of school meals will increase to £2 per day. A calendar with important dates for the Autumn term will be distributed during the first week.

The Wizard of Oz

The Year 6 and Performing Arts Society's performances of The Wizard of Oz proved to be a magical experience for those who attended the shows. As usual, attendance from parents, friends and governors was excellent and this spurred the children on to perform to an exceptionally high standard. Everybody who witnessed the show was blown away by the quality of the performance, which is testament to the dedication of the cast and staff. I'm sure that anyone who witnessed the show will agree that the quality of performance on both days was incredibly high, with the children's singing being exceptionally good. As a school we're very grateful for all of your kind comments and we'll do all we can to live up to expectations next year!



Summer Fayre

Wednesday saw the annual Summer Fayre, organised with help from the Friends of the School. The event proved a great success and was well attended by parents, children and members of the local community. With lots of stalls, rides and other activities it was a bumper event which provided a great afternoon of family fun for all who attended. Everyone had a chance to enjoy the attractions, which ranged from a teacup ride to the more traditional tombola and raffle, with many more besides. Many thanks to everybody who donated prizes for the raffle and items for the tombola, which proved very successful due to the range and quality of the prizes on offer. Thanks again to Mrs Robson and the friends of the school for helping to organise such a large event.



School Website and Twitter Account

Please remember to visit our school website regularly for photos, information, forms and news. Lots of items will be going live during the Summer Holidays and we will be continuing to update the website further next year. If you have any ideas about what you would like to see on our school website, please contact the school office with details. You can also follow us on Twitter.



Buildings Update

Work on the roof started at the beginning of July. Over the summer the lower site roof repair will be completed. However, work on the upper site roof will continue in the autumn term. In relation to the demountable classrooms, it is anticipated that all works will be completed ready for the Y2 children to move in after Christmas.

Extra Curricular Achievements

-At the start of the school year we were awarded the **Gold Mark** for sports provision. Sport is very important to us and this term we've had a number of great events, including sports week, sports days and the end of year staff versus children sports matches. Everyone had great fun during these events and this is one of our key reasons for promoting sports and games.

-School is well underway with work on developing an additional garden area on upper site. Over the course of next year, pupils will help to plant and grow fruit bushes and trees in our newly developed mini-orchard area. Our good work has been recognised recently in the local press and we have received awards from a range of organisations including the highest award (Level 5) from the **British Horticultural society**.

-Stephenson Way's Got Talent once again captured the imagination of the children, who were keen to showcase their talents. As a school we're very lucky to have so many talented children.

- This term heralded the launch of Newton Aycliffe's mini police project. Our Y5 children had a great afternoon meeting members of the local constabulary and witnessing first hand how the police helicopter operates. More news to follow about this initiative.

Attendance and Lateness

Can we remind parents that it is essential you 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. The school day starts at 8.50am however if your child is late you must bring them to the school office so they can be registered.

Breakfast and teatime club

For interested families, our breakfast and teatime clubs run at the start and end of the school day and provide children with a friendly, welcoming and positive experiences beyond the school day. **From September, breakfast club will be located on upper site.** The same procedures will be in operation, with children accessing breakfast club from 7:45 am.

Pupil Information Packs—Win a £50 Tesco Voucher

In September your child will bring home an information pack. It is essential that you complete all the forms and return the complete pack to allow our records to be totally up to date.

Please return this by 9th September to be entered in the draw.

Uniform

For 2016-17 please can you ensure your children wear the correct uniform for school. Children need to be in purple jumpers and grey trousers or skirts. Uniform, including PE clothing, can be purchased from the school office.