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November 2020 Newsletter

Dear Parents

Let us start positively and pictorially and go through other bits and pieces later...

During the week of Parent Consultations – where staff phoned you to update you on your child's academic and pastoral progress (thank you to all the teachers who stayed late every night and to Mrs Jenny Smith - DHT - for organising Class DOJO) the **Roving Bookshop** visited us again...and the children loved it!



The children spent over £1200 on lovely books for themselves (a record for our school) and in the process raising £240 commission to buy new library books.

New classroom chairs!

As you may have seen our chairs arrived in the summer and are now in all the classrooms adding colour and comfort to the children's learning environment!



A huge thank you to the donors of monies to make this happen. You are very kind and this makes a difference now and for years to come.





Apologies for mentioning the 'Christmas' word (before we even have had Halloween and Firework night) with my half term, to make your own Christmas cracker homework. Please forgive me.

I just thought that as we won't be having any awful plastic tat crackers at the children's Christmas dinner you would like

a 'heads up' (advance warning) that we would like children to bring their own crackers to the table; wear their own hats; play with their own toys; make their own BANG and read their own jokes – eco friendly and plastic free!

On the Christmas front (November 5th has been and gone now) we will be having a special 'virtual' service that we will upload on to the website – ssshhh – I haven't told the teachers yet!

Breaktimes and wellies



As you have been aware by my Lockdown #2 letter today we are organising breaktimes in a more separated way.

However, I would like children to go on the field and walk and talk and even Den build at lunchtimes.

Therefore, as in the past, if your child wishes to bring in a spare pair of wellies or other types of boots they can use them to go on the school field.

Community support and charity work.



Recently, I made a final donation of old books and PE equipment to the Books2Africa charity in Canterbury, Kent. We should find out next year which country, town and village received our donations. My car was full to the roof! We still have other books we intend to sell at some stage to raise funds for our school. <https://books2africa.org/>

Friday 13th November

....will be a non-school uniform day in support of Children in Need. We endeavour to wear spotty clothes in support of theme 'spotacular' but be as colourful and fun as you like – for a £1 donation to the charity – staff as well!



<https://www.bbcchildreninneed.co.uk/>





Before that we will be commemorating Armistice Day on the 11th November by ringing the school bell and observing a minutes silence to remember those who were killed or injured in the two World Wars and subsequent campaigns since.

Thank you to everyone who has bought poppy related items to support the Royal British Legion. The poppies etc...will be on sale all next week when I will also be leading assemblies based on World War 1.

School redecorating and wrapping up warm.

As previously mentioned and as you may have noticed the school is having a makeover. Nothing radical but all the wood work is being repaired and repainted white and with the other colours painted a richer blue and yellow. The works will be finished by Christmas and hopefully you will all get to see it in the new year.

As the weather gets chillier but COVID-19 prevails it is imperative we maintain the ventilation in and around the school. Common sense will prevail and windows will not be wide open but doors and windows will be open in the classrooms, corridors and school hall to a sensible level to ensure the free flow of air needed for ventilation. On cold days we encourage children to wear jumpers, fleeces, vests and even thermal type 'skins' to keep warm. I will endeavour to maintain a sensible balance of warmth and safety in school. Coats can be worn inside if children are really feeling the cold if temperatures dip – that goes for staff too!

INSET day – Monday 2nd November - Wellbeing



On Monday Mrs Lucia Smith (ELSA), Mrs Lisa Greenwood (SENCo) and myself led a staff training day based on Wellbeing of staff, children and parents. We covered many things and have plans to develop ideas and strategies moving forward.

We will endeavour to keep you informed accordingly. Latest wellbeing newsletter can be found via the link on our website below...

<http://droxfordjunior.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Healthy-Schools-Newsletter-Autumn-Term-1-2020.pdf>

New school promotional video and virtual tours of the school for new children and parents.

We will be updating our website with a new promotional video of the school this month. The intention is to celebrate all that we do here and share it for all to see. We will combine short interviews with children and staff with footage of lessons and mix the pre-existing drone footage we already have on our original school film.

Not only can we celebrate what we do here with the video but we can also use it to promote the school and use it as part of 'virtual' tours. We will be holding a virtual tour at the end of this month – details to follow.



Staffing

As the Year 5 / 6 children may testify, we have five student teachers completing their teaching degrees with us. They are from Winchester University and not only work under our strict risk assessments but the Winchester University / Government guidance also. Having students in school again is not only great for the children but also for the teachers and school as well. They have been welcomed with open arms are already doing really well. They finish early December and then return for 9 weeks in 2021 when they will be in Years 3 & 4.

Exciting (old) news – Mrs Jenny Smith is expecting her third child and will be starting her maternity leave early 2021. From the start of the Spring term to the end of the academic year her teaching maternity cover will be Mrs Louise Wright who currently teaches in school anyway and knows the Newtown children very well.

Lockdown letter

The link to the letter I also sent out today can be found via the link below. I just wanted to add a little thank you to all of you involved in collecting children at the end of the day. I know you are really trying to socially distance with 3 / 4 parents inside the fence and 5 / 6 outside – and I can imagine how difficult it must be, especially with cars going by – so thank you.

<http://droxfordjunior.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Lockdown-2-information.pdf>

And finally...

School dinners

I just wanted to end with saying a MASSIVE thank you to Claire, Mel and Georgie our school cooks. Between them they are not only cooking for our school – between 80 – 100 meals a day – from scratch but also for Meonstoke Infants and Newtown Soberton Infant school. They are working so hard at the moment and I just wanted to show appreciation. And...they have added a third menu option (pictured here) which gives an added option and is delicious!



There – a far more cheery and positively pictorial newsletter than my October version.

Take care and be safe.

Matthew Dampier
Headteacher

