

# City of Rochester School Newsletter



## Spring 1

### Introduction from the Head

Welcome to the Spring 1 edition of the newsletter. This term has been a busy one and I hope that you enjoy reading some of the highlights. Our school is growing in terms of pupil numbers and staffing; every half-term we have building and refurbishment works taking place to transform the learning space. This term we are creating a small learning pod, storage facilities and installing new walls and doors to create additional learning space. I very much look forward to welcoming our pupils back after the two week half-term break and to seeing you all at parents' evening on the 26<sup>th</sup> March where we will be showcasing pupils' art work. I wish you and your family a restful break and want to thank you for your continued support.

Alicja Emmett  
Headteacher

### Key Dates

5 March 2020 –  
World Book Day  
8-17 March Science  
Week  
10 March – Visit to  
the Astrodome  
20 March –  
Workshops with  
children's author  
26 March 2020 –  
Parents Evening &  
Art Exhibition

## News

### Curriculum News:

#### British Horse Society – Achieve Awards:

Pupils have been attending Squirrels Riding School to participate in the British Horse Society Achieve Awards. These qualifications are designed to develop young people's skills in equestrian care. Pupils have been learning:

About animal care

How to ride a horse

About Stable Management

How to put on a bridle

How to mount and dismount a horse

Colours and breeds of horses



## PE

In PE pupils have had the last two weeks trying something new! Pupils have been to Chatham Ski and Snowsports Centre to learn how to ski and toboggan! They have:

- Experienced descending a ski slope safely under supervision.
- Used specialist equipment and understood its purpose and name.
- Demonstrated the ability to listen to, understand and act on instructions received.
- Supported their peers throughout the activity and recognised achievements.
- Developed an understanding of associated hazards, be able to assess risks and understand how these may be controlled.

### Next Term

Earth class will be going orienteering in a variety of different locations. It will enable them to develop communication and teamwork as well as engage in physical activity outdoors.

The older pupils are going to be going to the gym to do circuit training and will learn how different muscles in the body work and develop their awareness of strength and toning. They will also be learning about the relationship between fitness and nutrition throughout the term.

## Equality and Diversity:

This has been a busy term for marking significant events in our **Equality and Diversity Calendar**:

- Holocaust Memorial Day
- National Storytelling Week
- LGBT Month
- Charles Dickens Birthday

Pupils in the upper school have been working on individual projects linked to a particular interest – Countries of the World. Pupils have selected a country that they are interested in. They have been learning some basic phrases using an on-line language programme, using the internet to research facts and information about their chosen country. In the coming weeks they will experience cuisine from their chosen country and will visit a place of interest linked to their project.

Holocaust Memorial Day is a difficult subject but our pupils showed empathy and an understanding of what the people went through during that time. They made and coloured candles to remember the victims and they were displayed on a board in our communal area.

In National storytelling week the students wrote book reviews about their favourite books and we had some great drawings of some of their favourite characters. Neptune looked at Julia Donaldson, chose a book and had a storytelling session. They wrote book reviews, made some puppets and watched one of the Julia Donaldson films. Some of the older students have been reading manga stories.



In LGBT History Month the older students have been hearing stories from the Stonewall charity about LGBT people and how they have been treated as they grew up.

We celebrate author's' birthdays every month in our library and books by the authors are recommended to the students. 7<sup>th</sup> February was Charles Dickens birthday. The older students studied some of his work in English.

PSHE this term has been about Dreams & Goals. The students have learnt about the difference between a dream and a goal and between short, medium and long-term goals as well as being resilient.

After half term pupils will embark on the next chapter of our Experiential Curriculum which is Robotics School. We have a specialist teacher joining the team for the term who will be teaching children how to code using Lego robots. The programme is aimed at helping to build children's confidence, creative problem-solving and STEAM skills (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths). Teaching children with autism to code is teaching them the thinking skills they need to manage daily tasks – routines, order and logic, that they would ordinarily struggle with (think about your morning routine). Studies have shown that coding improves overall brain health, mental wellbeing and mental resilience and addresses neurodiversity.

World Book Day is on 5 March, when pupils may come to school dressed as a character from a book.

On 10 March pupils will be visiting the Astrodome to coincide with Science Week. Here they will be looking at stars and galaxies.

On 20 March an author of children's books will be visiting the school to deliver workshops to pupils.

### **Other News:**

Attendance at school overall is currently 78.4%

We look forward to welcoming you to parents' evening on 26 March. As well as the usual meetings with teachers and support staff, we are very pleased to be able to showcase our very first City of Rochester School art exhibition where you will be able to see a range of fantastic art work produced by our very talented pupils. In addition, we will be holding a briefing on how to keep your child safe on-line.

I would like to remind parents/carers about the importance of uniform. This is mainly a reminder for the pupils in the upper school. I would like to see a real effort next term.

## **Ofsted**

We continue to make progress towards moving out of special measures. Our new Advisory Board members are supporting the work of the school and they have carried out an internal review of safeguarding and some aspects of the curriculum. Our review was extremely positive and shows that our school is making good progress.

## **City of Rochester School Announces:**

### **New Staff:**

- We are very pleased to welcome a number of new staff to our team – these being:
- Tim Force – Learning Support specialising in Sport
- Heather Goldsbrough – Learning Support and Challenging Behaviour Specialist
- Sophie Halbert – Early Years Foundation Specialist
- Louise Harper – Learning Support
- Stacey Harrison – Learning Support