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IN GOD’S LIGHT

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31ST January 2018

**JANUARY UPDATE**

Dear Parents / Carers,

January is always a quieter time in the school calendar – as it is head down and crack on once the excitement of Christmas has passed; but there’s still plenty to look forward to this term.

**Reading and Homework:**

We are so pleased to see so many children reading every day at home! And what a difference it is making. At 3pm on Fridays, those children who have been awarded ‘Reader of the Week’ by their teacher get to spend ERIS with me in the library, with light refreshments. This will be a real treat once the new library is in place – the grand opening is Thursday 1st March: World Book Day.

**Homework Club:**

On Fridays at 12:40pm, children who are behind with their homework will be sent to Homework Club with me in the Year 5/6 classroom. Children who would like to come along to get ahead are more than welcome too. Each week we will read, practice tables, learn a spelling rule or learn a new skill, such as sign language. Key Stage Two children should have their lunch on first sitting if they’re having hot lunch, or bring their packed lunch with them.

The minimum requirement for reading is 5 reads per week. Tables and Spellings should be practised every day. Not for long – 5 or 10 minutes.

**World Book Day Thursday 1st March:**

Our theme is “The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe” as we are lucky enough to have M&M Productions in again to perform. More information will follow from Miss Hornett nearer the time. The children will be dressing up as usual, as a character from their favourite book. Our new library will also be opened by local author of world fame, Sue Bentley.

**Parents Evening:**

Parent’s Evenings will be held on Tuesday 6th March between 4.30pm and 7.00pm and on Thursday 8th March between 4.00pm and 6.30pm. **A form will go out after half term.** At this meeting, you will receive an interim report that will detail your children’s current attainment and progress. The teachers will explain it more detail at your meeting, so please do make an appointment. If you’re unable to attend, do let us know so that we can accommodate you.

**The children are only in school 52% of the year. It is vital that we work together in order to ensure that your child gets the very best start in life.**

**Summer Dresses:**

Following much debate and discussion on social media, the final results are in. There will be a phased transition, so when it is time to buy your new Summer dress, please buy red check. Many thanks for your thoughts and views. Change is always challenging and everyone will always have an opinion; especially if you have strong ties to the school – but inevitably there will be change as we must raise standards (many of you will have seen the article in the Chronicle, based on last Summer’s results). We must show off all the good that goes on at Pattishall because we are more than just a ‘Good’ school. Part of this process is improving presentation and attendance, both of which are commented upon in the Ofsetd framework. By smartening up and unifying the branding of the school, we change our mindset and the mindset of others.

We have many channels through which you can communicate with school. Please rest assured that the decisions made are not mine and mine alone. We are working in unison to raise standards and improve the school for the benefit of your children. If you wish to discuss this further, come and see me.

**Presentation:**

Presentation is still high priority. Tucked in shirts, buttoned up cardigans and shiny shoes put us all in the right mindset. Thank you for your on-going support. Another project I am exploring is the rejuvenation of the classrooms: many need painting and new furniture. If you’d like to make a donation, or offer some time to help decorate, do let me know so I can organise a working party.

We are changing to red gingham summer dresses from the light blue. Please do note that blue dresses will be acceptable until the end of this academic year. Thank you.

**Attendance:**

It has been a bad winter for colds and flu. This has seen our attendance dip below our overall target of 95%.

Reception – 92.6%

Year 1 – 96.1%

Year 2 – 95.2%

Year 3 – 93.9%

Year 4 – 94.2%

Year 5 – 95.9%

Year 6 – 90.3%

The children are only in school for 190 days out of 356 each year. It is paramount that children are in school as much as possible so that their brain develops by building and strengthening neural pathways. Days off ‘here and there’ result in gaps, as connections haven’t been made in the brain.

If a child misses just one day a week, over the course of their school career they will miss **two years** of schooling.

*“Every lesson in school matters and children who have time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well at school…”* Department for Education 2006

90% attendance = half a day a week; over Key Stage Two and this adds up to **a whole term off** school.

Attending school on a regular basis is the key to your child doing well at school and will set them up with good habits for later life and the working world. Benefits include:

* Making friends and feeling included
* Learning new things and developing skills
* Increasing their confidence and self-esteem
* Improving social skills
* Be part of the school team
* Having better career prospects
* Achieving their potential and fulfilling aspirations

‘Every Lesson Counts’ is a national campaign to improve attendance and raise standards. Further information about school attendance and parental duties can be found on [www.parentscentre.gov.uk](http://www.parentscentre.gov.uk).

From after half term, we will be rewarding the classes with attendance over 95% with an extra 10 minute Friday afternoon playtime.

If you are struggling with your child’s attendance, support can be gained from the Local Authority. Please click on the link to find out about the help on offer and penalty notices:

<https://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/schools-and-education/information-for-school-staff/pupil-support-and-inclusion/attendance-and-behaviour/Pages/support-with-a-child's-attendance-issues.aspx>

**Church of England School:**

As a church school, we value our community and would love to share our worship with you. On Mondays at 10:55am we are lucky enough to have John Atkin, Rev Doug, Rev Richard and Richard from the Lighthouse Trust continuing to lead our worship. **If you are able to attend, we would love to see you there**.

Just a reminder that each class teacher has chosen a symbol to display in the class’ reflective area / ‘Book Nook’. The children will be learning more about their symbol as the year progresses, as well as the symbols of other faiths and symbols that are found in more than one religion. If you have any resources to support the development of these areas, please do let us know.

All money from the cake sales will go to developing the book nooks for each class – so the more money they raise, the more they will have to spend on books, decorations and resources.

Please note in our calendar of events below, the choir and a group of children will be taking over the Sunday Family Worship on Sunday 4th March. Hopefully the first of many.

Family services are at 9.30am, are approximately 30 – 40 minute long, involve the children and there is always a craft and refreshments: a great way to meet people and be part of the community.

**Rules and Values:**

Following the implementation of our Behaviour Policy, our rules are simple: THINK, CARE, SEEK BUILD.

We encourage the children to THINK

Think before they act, think before they hit ‘enter’, think carefully, think of other’s feelings before they speak, think deeply, they show self control.

We teach the children to CARE

Care for others, care for themselves, care about their work, care for the environment, care for property, they are gentle and kind

We insist that the children SEEK

They seek forgiveness, friendship, love, joy, patience, peace, answers, success

We show the children how to BUILD

Build relationships, knowledge, neural pathways, respect, build a future

Our Values are: kindness, patience, love, joy, gentleness, goodness, peace, faithfulness and self-control.

**Website:**

Watch this space….

**Social Media:**

All classes are now on Twitter you can follow them on Twitter, or keep and eye on our Facebook page as I re-tweet all of our news.

**Class Dojo:**

All classes are now signed up with Class Dojo. You will be given the option to log in to view your child’s Dojo points in the near future. Parents already using this function have commented that they have enjoyed discussing what their child’s point was awarded for.

Within Dojo, the classes can decide on what their focus should be for their points; and in turn the weighting of each Dojo – so what they want to be rewarded more generously for. E.g.: in Y5/6 they can earn 3 points for Perseverance, but only 1 for settling to a task.

Teachers may communicate class messages through Class Dojo as well as Twitter. Parents may communicate through Dojo too: **although please do continue to inform the Office with regards to absence.**

Teachers are aiming to award between 10 – 15 Dojo points per week. We are running the House Point system in tandem to see if both systems are necessary: it may be that we find that House Points are better recorded through Class Dojo – but it is an organic process and time will tell.

**Growth Mindset:**

We continue to use the language of Growth Mindset in school. For more information on Growth Mindset, please have a look at: <https://www.mindsetworks.com/science/> There’s even a mindset quiz you can take to see what your own mindset is like. The interim report you will receive in March will comment on your child’s Growth Mindset.

**Mindfulness:**

Mindfulness goes hand in hand with Growth Mindset. When you practice Mindfulness, the prefrontal cortex physically grows; grey matter forms in the hippocampus (the memory hub in the brain) making recall easier; and neural pathways bypass the amygdala (the prehistoric brain that serves your fight/flight/freeze responses: i.e: your fixed mindset voice).

Mindfulness is now being prescribed by GPs for depression, anxiety and anger as a result of the neuroscience behind it.

**Engaging in extended periods of screen time is the opposite of mindfulness: it hinders brain development.**

If you're interested, I can recommend: **"Sitting Still Like a Frog"** - great for bedtime routines.

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/aw/d/1611800587/ref=mp\_s\_a\_1\_1…](https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/aw/d/1611800587/ref=mp_s_a_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1506715788&sr=8-1&pi=AC_SX236_SY340_FMwebp_QL65&keywords=sitting+still+like+a+frog&dpPl=1&dpID=418v-S99S%2BL&ref=plSrch)

**Community:**

Please can I ask that we all consider the local residents by not parking across driveways, on bends, narrow pavements or yellow lines: if we can car share where possible or walk to school, I would be most grateful. As a village school in the heart of the community, we all need to work together to ensure each other’s safety.

**Healthy Schools:**

Please continue send in healthy snacks separately, as children will not be able to go in their lunch boxes before lunch. Thank you. A sweet treat at lunchtime is preferable, as there is more time to digest and process the sugars, meaning behaviour and concentration is better for learning.

**Staffing:**

We are interviewing for an Administrator in Early February. Unfortunately, Rachael Hayward was unable to continue with us after a devastating change in family circumstances. We send her our thoughts and prayers and wish her all the very best for the future.

**School history:**

If you follow us on Facebook, you will know that I am really keen to find out more about the history of the school, having stumbled across the old Log Books, Admissions Books and Discipline Books! My enthusiasm was peaked when an Espo delivery driver called in and was so excited as Pattishall was his school in the mid 1970’s. He was even more excited when we found him, his brother and sister in the handwritten admissions book. It meant so much to him to know that he was written into the fabric and the history of the school.

I have started up a new Log Book for future generations to read and enjoy, as I am fearful that our brilliant school’s day-to-day activity will be lost to the electronic age.

We would like to hold an exhibition for the whole community in the Summer Term to celebrate the 120-year timeline of Pattishall CE Primary School. If you’ve been part of that history and can comment on the changes made over the years, or if you have any artefacts we can copy or borrow, please do let me or Mrs Jeffrey know as soon as possible.

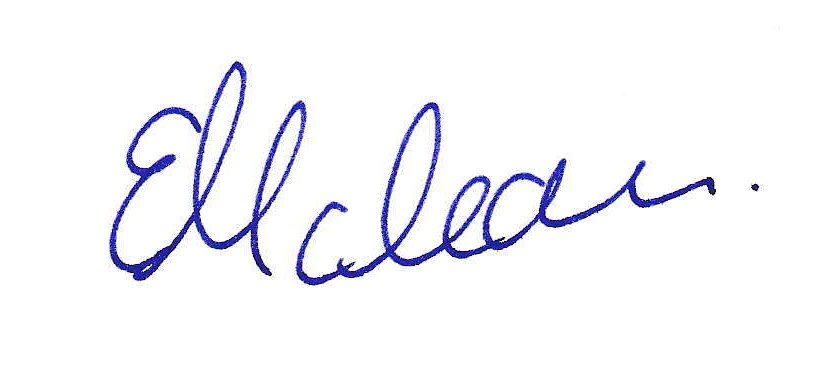
**Calendar of Events:**

* 09/02/2018 FOPs Pancake Flip
* 19/02/2018 Year 3/4 Visit (current Year 1/2) 6pm
* 19/02/2018 Year 5/6 Visit (current Year 3/4) 6.45pm
* 20/02/2018 Individual and Family Group Photos
* 23/02/2018 Year 5/6 Kingswood Deposit due
* 28/02/2018 KS2 Cross Country at Bugbrooke Rugby Club
* 01/03/2018 World Book Day - more information to follow
* 01/03/2018 Library Grand Opening with Sue Bentley
* 01/03/2018 Year 4/5 Basketball at Campion
* 02/03/2018 FOPs Disco 6pm
* 04/03/2018 Holy Cross Sunday Family Service Take Over!
* 06/03/2018 Parents Evening from 4.30pm
* 08/03/2018 M&M Productions – The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe
* 08/03/2018 Parents Evening from 4.00pm
* 09/03/2018 Year 3/4 Class Assembly in the hall - 9.15am start
* 09/03/2018 Year 1/2 Collective Worship in Holy Cross 2.30pm – Mother’s Day theme
* 12/03/2018 EYFS Mother’s Tea Party (with Prefects serving tea and performances by the Choir)
* 16/03/2018 Mums (as it has been Mother’s Day) in just before 3pm for ERIS (any parent/carer welcome)
* 19/03/2018 Shakespeare Week in school
* 22/03/2018 Year 5/6 High 5 Netball at Campion
* 28/03/2018 Stations of the Cross Service in Holy Cross 2pm – all welcome
* 29/03/2018 (Maundy Thursday) Close for Easter at 3.15pm

As ever, I appreciate your support in my quest to make Pattishall CE Primary School the very best it can be for the benefit of your children.

I am also appreciative of the efforts you go to during the 175 days when your children are at home – learning never stops and it is all about experiences. That is what accelerates brain development. The more you interact with your child and the more experiences they have, the better developed their neural pathways and the more mindful they will be.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs E. McLean

